

Men's doubles results

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BAGGALEY & PITCHFORD NICK A GAME FROM CHINA STARS

England players Andrew Baggaley (Buckinghamshire) and Liam Pitchford (Derbyshire) did well to take the first men's doubles game against Chinese stars Ma Lin, the 2008 Olympic singles champion, and Zhang Jike, the current world men's singles champion, in their quarter-final clash at the ITTF Pro Tour Final at the ExCel Arena, London today.

There were some good attacking rallies as the Englishmen won the game 11-9, helped on by several errors from Ma Lin. Unfortunately, as the match continued the Chinese assumed dominance and there were few more rallies and plenty of mistakes, Ma and Zhang winning 9-11, 11-6, 11-5, 11-7, 11-4. The English pair considered they had done well, particularly as they hadn't played together since the Commonwealth Games, whereas the Chinese are often playing together. Liam Pitchford said, "We worked well together". Andrew Baggaley said, "We did played well at first until they quickly got used to us and stopped us playing. It was so difficult to stop them flicking and getting in at the beginning of the rally – they did it every time."

The other Chinese doubles pairing of Ma Long and Wang Hao were given a tough fight by the Portuguese pair of Tiago Apolonia and Joao Monteiro. In some fierce counter attacking rallies the Portugal pair took a 2-1 games lead and very nearly the fourth game, but then Ma and Wang totally took over to conquer 9-11, 11-4, 10-12, 12-10, 11-4, 11-2.

Robert Gardos and Daniel Habesohn had a straight games win, 14-12, 11-9, 11-7, 11-7, over Chuang Chih-Yuan and Wu Chih-Chi (Chinese Taipei) to retain a European interest in the men's doubles. They will face Ma Lin and Zhang in the semi-finals. Yang Zi and Zhan Jian of Singapore defeated Jiang Tianyi and Tang Peng (Hong Kong) in closest match of the event so far. From a deficit of three games to one down they clawed back the last three games by the closest of margins to triumph 11-1, 9-11, 7-11, 7-11, 11-9, 14-12, 12-10 and will now meet Ma Long and Wang.

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