

2010 WTTTC Re-cap

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Kelly Sibley picked up a few big wins last time out in Russia

With the 2012 Liebherr World Team Table Tennis Championships just over a week away it's time to look back at last time out in 2010 when the English men's and women's teams competed in Moscow.

The WTTTC are run biennially but, even two years ago, the English sides comprised of many of the players competing next week in Dortmund: Paul Drinkhall, Liam Pitchford, Andrew Baggaley, Daniel Reed, Kelly Sibley, Joanna Parker and Hannah Hicks.

In fact, in the only change from the 2010 squads, Jessica Dawson will head to Germany instead of Karina Le Fevre who played in Russia.

We start our review with the men's team who began in the second division group E alongside Slovakia, Slovenia, Thailand, Iran and Luxembourg.

They started well with a 3-1 victory over Luxembourg but could only follow that up with a defeat of the same scoreline to Slovenia, who had world number 58 (in May 2010) Bojan Tokic in their ranks.

The next two fixtures continued the trend of one win, one defeat; after beating Thailand 3-0, the team lost to Slovakia 3-0 with a disappointing defeat for the then world number 96 Drinkhall against world number 177 Erik Illas.

In the final group match, England again lost disappointingly to Iran with Noshad Alamiyan inflicting defeats on both Drinkhall (3-1) and Pitchford (3-1).

That meant England were battling for places 37-48, in essence, fighting to avoid relegation, which was not what they wanted.

In the first match they beat Latvia 3-0 with Baggaley (197) picking up a re-assuring 3-0 victory over Martin Burgiss (136). That meant they faced Scotland in the second match.

With pride to play for it didn't start well. Grand Prix regular Gavin Rungay beating Drinkhall 3-0 (11-3, 13-11, 11-9) to set the cat amongst the pigeons. However, England won the next three matches 3-0 to seal the win against our closest rivals.

In the final match for 37th place, the team lost 3-1 to Vietnam despite Reed's (351) excellent victory over Kien Quoc Doan (200). The end result being a 38th place finish, which didn't live up to the men's world ranking of 31st.

[Click here to see the full results of the men's team.](#)

The women were more successful in their campaign despite having to play the toughest sides in the Championship Division. Like the men they were ranked 31st in the world but eventually excelled to come 21st in Moscow.

The women were in group A alongside China, Austria, Italy, Croatia, and Poland. They began in good form by defeating Austria with Sibley, Parker and Hicks each achieving one win to come through 3-2 even though the Austrians had world number 47 Li Qiangbing in their side.

After that there were four successive group game defeats but that can only be expected against the tough calibre of opposition in the Championship Division.

However, in the first two matches there were big scalps for world number 164 Sibley. She beat Wenling Tan (76) 3-0 in the 3-1 loss to Italy (who the girls face again in the group stage this year) before she also beat Cornelia Molnar (89) 3-1 in the 3-1 loss to Croatia.

The two matches that followed were difficult 3-0 losses with the players from China and Poland situated well in the world's top 100. Poland had; Jie Xu (69), Qian Li (23) and Natalia Partyka (48) while China had Liu Shiwen (1), Li Xiaoxia (7) and Ding Ning (4). The match between Ding Ning and Hannah Hicks in particular saw a 488 place gap in the world rankings.

In the play-off games that followed there were 3-2 results in all three matches with Sibley twice holding her nerve in the final match to win the game for England.

Although the first match resulted in a discouraging 3-2 loss to the USA, the next two matches against France and Czech Republic ended in positive five-end victories.

Sibley won twice against France to seal the win while two wins for Parker against Czech Rep meant that England finished in 21st place. It wasn't enough to stay up because of the team's world ranking but it was a great result nonetheless.

[Click here to see the full results of the women's team.](#)

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