

GB beat Australia in final warm-up

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Kelly Sibley proved her fitness in Preston

The GB table tennis team won their final warm-up match before the Olympics on Monday night as both the men and women defeated Australia 4-1 in Preston's Guildhall.

The teams, who are now heading off to the Olympic village, will both be looking forward to the draw, which takes place tomorrow at ExCeL.

GB will head in with extra confidence after the comprehensive victories.

19-year-old Liam Pitchford got the hosts off to the perfect start with a 3-0 win over Oceania Champion William Henzell who sits fifteen places above him in the world rankings.

This start was made all the worse for Australia as their number three, Robert Frank, twisted an ankle in the warm-up which led to him needing hospital treatment, the injury leaving him a doubt for the Games.

That left Justin Han to face England's number 1, Paul Drinkhall, which was no challenge for the four-times National Champion who dispatched his Australian counterpart in three straight games.

Further victories followed for Andrew Baggaley and Liam Pitchford in the doubles to give GB an unassailable 3-0 lead before Henzell earned some consolation with a tight win over Drinkhall.

Baggaley, from Milton Keynes, then sealed the 4-1 win with a 3-1 victory over Han.

The story was similar for the girls when they brushed aside the Australian's 4-1 with their sole defeat coming in the doubles match as they dominated the singles.

Irish Champion Na Liu started the victory with a tight 3-2 win against Jiang Fang Lay before two wins for Joanna Parker and one for Kelly Sibley gave GB the comfortable victory that sends them off to London in high spirits.

Sibley, in particular, proving that she has overcome any fitness concerns she had with her hip as she completed two matches well over a week before she is due to compete in the team event.

Results:

Mens:

GB 4-1 Australia

Liam Pitchford bt William Henzell 3-0

Paul Drinkhall bt Justin Han 3-0

Andrew Baggaley/Liam Pitchford bt Justin Han/William Henzell 3-1

William Henzell bt Paul Drinkhall 3-1

Andrew Baggaley bt Justin Han 3-1

Womens:

GB 4-1 Australia

Na Liu bt Jiang Fang Lay 3-2

Joanna Parker bt Miao Miao 3-0

Miao Miao/Vivian Tan bt Kelly Sibley/Na Liu 3-1

Kelly Sibley bt Jiang Fang Lay 3-1

Joanna Parker bt Vivian Tan 3-2



Naomi Owen and Kelly Sibley

By Brian Kean/Russell Moore

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