

Wetherill win lights up opening day

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David Wetherill's superb comeback win in Men's Class 6 against Italian opponent Alecci Raimondo lit up the first day of the Paralympic Games as the Great British team got off to a good start in ExCeL.

Wetherill was one of the first Brits to take the stage in this home Paralympics and the pressure could not have been more intense. He would have felt it even more when he fell 2-0 behind to the experienced Italian.

However, from that position Wetherill rallied with the help of coach Greg Baker hauled the game back level at 2-2 with 11-8 and 11-4 games. It seemed as though the momentum was with the Englishman but there was another twist to come in the final game.

Raimondo managed to work his way into an 8-6 lead and it looked like all of Wetherill's earlier efforts would count for nothing, but he found another gear and took five of the last six points to win the decider 11-9.

Wetherill was understandably overjoyed: "It's unbelievable to play here. I think I've just been on a journey to the moon!" He added: "My friends came to support me, it was just incredible."

Coach Baker echoed his sentiments: "The support was incredible, it was only the first match! It was as though we'd just won the gold medal!"

Wetherill's victory wasn't the only British success on day one as fellow compatriots Sara Head, Sue Gilroy and Will Bayley all triumphed in their opening fixtures.

Head came through a five-game nerve-rattler against Korean Choi Hyun Ja 3-2 (8-11, 11-9, 5-11, 11-9, 11-5) while Gilroy and Bayley both won 3-0 as they hope to comfortably progress through to the medal matches.

Friday will see decisive matches in the group stages played with only the top players qualifying for the knock-out stage, from there on it's a straight fight for the medals.

Day One Results:

Women's Class 3

Sara Head bt Choi Hyun Ja (KOR) 3-2 (8-11, 11-9, 5-11, 11-9, 11-5)

Women's Class 4

Sue Gilroy bt Ahmed Fadia (EGY) 3-0 (11-5, 11-7, 11-7)

Men's Class 5

Cao Ningning (CHN) bt Scott Robertson 3-1 (7-11, 11-6, 11-4, 11-9)

Men's Class 6

David Wetherill bt Alecci Raimondo (ITA) 3-2 (7-11, 4-11, 11-8, 11-4, 11-9)

Men's Class 7

Will Bayley bt Yuttana Namsaga (THA) 3-0 (11-9, 11-7, 11-2)

Men's Class 8

Mathieu Loicq (BEL) bt Aaron McKibbin 3-2 (11-6, 12-10, 7-11, 6-11, 11-9)

Sun Churen (CHN) bt Aaron McKibbin 3-0 (11-4, 11-6, 11-9)

Women's Class 11

Anzhelika Kosacheva (RUS) bt Victoria Bromley 3-0

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