

Davies wins bronze in Class 1

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Paralympic debutant Paul Davies won the bronze medal in Men's Class 1 at ExCeL with a dramatic 3-2 victory over Korea's Lee Chang Ho – doubling the Great British Table Tennis Team's medal tally after Will Bayley's silver medal on Sunday evening.

Team GB had three more medal chances on Monday morning with Davies, Sara Head and Ross Wilson all in bronze medal action but the Welshman was the only one able to secure the win.

Davies started quickly in all of the games although a 7-5 lead in the first game was wiped out as Ho levelled at 9-9. The nineteenth point – always crucial in any table tennis game, went to the Korean who then duly won the first game 11-9 as the pressure mounted on Davies.

The 45-year-old, however, is too experienced to let nerves get the better of him and another excellent start, this time 7-1 in the second game all-but ensured that the Brit would level the match. Although Ho fought back, Davies did seal the game 11-7 – keeping himself in sight of a Paralympic medal.

Despite another good start in the third game where he led 4-1, the Welshman trailed throughout the remainder of the game until he pulled himself level at 9-9. This time the game went to 10-10 where once more the Korean secured the vital points for a 12-10 game and a 2-1 lead.

Davies needed his trademark quick-out-of-the-blocks start and he delivered in style. A 7-0 lead was converted to an 11-5 game as the match headed to a deciding game.

This time the Brit couldn't get away at the start, which allowed Ho to lead 5-3. However, that was the last time the Korean would lead in the match as Davies took four consecutive points to lead 8-5 before manufacturing four match points at 10-6.

Nerves jangled when the first two slipped away but there was no mistake on the third as Davies won the fifth game 11-8 and ensured that he would be going home with the bronze medal around his neck.

Davies' teammates were less fortunate in their bronze medal play-offs as both Sara Head (Class 3) and Ross Wilson (Class 8) fell to defeat in four and three games respectively.

Head won the first game of her encounter with Russia's Alena Kanova 11-2 but that was as good as it got for the Welsh girl as Kanova stormed back with three strong games in a row to dent Head's dream of a Paralympic medal. She will, however, get another chance in the team event next week where GB has high hopes of success.

Likewise 17-year-old Ross Wilson might be able to bounce back from his defeat to Sweden's Emil Andersson next week when he takes part in the team event. Wilson started well in all three of his games against Andersson; 5-2 in the first, 4-1 in the second and 4-1 in the third, but he couldn't maintain his momentum throughout as Andersson fought back to win 3-0 (11-8, 11-9, 12-10).

Bronze medal play-off results:

Class 1 Paul Davies bt Lee Chang Ho (KOR) 3-2 (9-11, 11-7, 10-12, 11-5, 11-8)

Class 3 Alena Kanova (RUS) bt Sara Head 3-1 (2-11, 11-5, 11-5, 11-3)

Class 8 Emil Andersson (SWE) bt Ross Wilson 3-0 (11-8, 11-9, 12-10)

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