

Parker and Drinkhall sole survivors in Austrian Open

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It's been a New Year to celebrate for English number 1s Paul Drinkhall and Joanna Parker. After announcing their engagement they became the only two English players to reach the first round in the Austrian Open.

After winning his opening group game on Wednesday, Drinkhall followed that up with a comfortable 4-1 victory over Serbian Bojan Crepulja to advance to the first round where he will play Frenchman Emmanuel Lebesson (76). That will take place on Friday at 13:30 with the winner facing either Huang Sheng-Sheng (HKG) or Alexey Smirnov (RUS).

Meanwhile Parker, who suffered a 4-3 defeat to Linda Creemers on Wednesday, bounced back to beat both Petra Petek (4-0) and then Andrea Todorovic (4-2) to reach the last 64 in Wels. There she faces the difficult proposition of Czech international Iveta Vacenovska (26).

For the rest of the English matches on Thursday there was little joy to report. All three of the doubles pairings lost with Parker and Kelly Sibley losing despite leading 2-0 and also having three match points at 10-7 in the final game to Krisztina Ambrus and Dora Madarasz.

Drinkhall and partner Darius Knight also fell to a 3-2 defeat to talented French youngsters Enzo Angles and Antoine Hachard while Knight was also unfortunate to suffer at the hands of another Frenchman Simon Gauzy when he lost his singles group game 4-3 to confirm his exit.

ITTF World Tour Austrian Open (Wels, Jan 23-27th) Results

Mens' Singles Qualifying Groups:

Group 5:

Paul Drinkhall bt Bojan Crepulja (SRB, 329) 4-1 (11-4, 11-6, 11-7, 9-11, 11-7)

Group 20:

Simon Gauzy (FRA, 124) bt Darius Knight 4-3 (11-3, 8-11, 9-11, 11-2, 12-10, 4-11, 11-8)

Womens' Singles Qualifying Groups:

Group 6:

Li Fen (SWE, 275) bt Kelly Sibley 4-0 (11-7, 11-8, 11-6, 11-7)

Group 18:

Joanna Parker bt Petra Petek (CRO, 462) 4-0 (11-7, 11-4, 11-5, 11-8)

Womens' Singles Pre-Round:

Joanna Parker bt Andrea Todorovic (SRB, 219) 4-2 (11-9, 11-5, 7-11, 11-7, 9-11, 11-5)

Men's Doubles Qualifying Rounds:

Enzo Angles/Antoine Hachard (FRA) bt Paul Drinkhall/Darius Knight 3-2 (5-11, 11-7, 6-11, 11-8, 11-8)

Stefan Fegerl/Feng Xiaquan (AUT) bt David McBeath/Gavin Rungay (SCO) 3-1 (13-11, 12-10, 4-11, 11-9)

Women's Doubles Qualifying Rounds:

Krisztina Ambrus/Dora Madarasz (HUN) bt Joanna Parker/Kelly Sibley 3-2 (7-11, 7-11, 12-10, 11-9, 12-10)

Boys' Under-21 Qualifying Groups:**Group 4:**

Stephane Ouache (FRA, 309) bt David McBeath 3-0 (11-7, 11-6, 11-7)

Fixtures:**Mens' Singles Round of 64:**

Paul Drinkhall vs Emmanuel Lebesson (FRA, 76) Friday 13:30

Womens' Singles Round of 64:

Joanna Parker vs Iveta Vacenovska (CZE, 26) Friday 09:00

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