

England set for Bulgaria test

Author: **Russell Moore**

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England's men will travel to Bulgaria next week as they hope to close in on a promotion-decider with the Czech Republic later this year in their Joola European Championships Qualification campaign.

Victory in Bulgaria's capital, Sofia, is a must for the men if they wish to get promoted from the Challenge Division ahead of the next European Championships in Schwechat, Austria (Oct 4-13th).

England will be without 19-year-old Liam Pitchford for the trip to Bulgaria on Tuesday as he has only just finished treatment for his hip injury and will be given time to recover.

Instead, England's number 1, Paul Drinkhall, will be joined by Andrew Baggaley and Daniel Reed for the match. A positive result in Bulgaria will mean England stand a chance of promotion if they beat the Czech Republic when the teams meet later on in Group A.

So far, the Bulgarians have lost all of their three matches and are likely to have to battle against Netherlands to stay up. However, England can't afford to take things lightly as promotion may come down to games difference with just the team finishing top earning the leap into the top tier.

Joola European Championships Qualification

Challenge Division Group A

Bulgaria vs England

(Tues 5th February 2013 – Sofia 16:30 GMT)

Men: Paul Drinkhall, Andrew Baggaley and Daniel Reed

Coach: Jia Yi Liu

Current Challenge Group A Standings

Country	Played	Won	Lost	Games Difference	Points
Czech Republic	4	4	0	12 – 2	8
Romania	4	3	1	10 – 5	7
Slovakia	4	2	2	8 – 8	6
England	3	2	1	7 – 4	5
Netherlands	4	0	4	1 – 12	4
Bulgaria	3	0	3	2 – 9	3

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