

# Defending Champions make steady progress

Author: Paul Stimpson

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Defending Champions Daniel Reed and Darius Knight serenely advanced to the semi-finals of the Men's Doubles late on Saturday night at Ponds Forge.

Knight, who had earlier won the Mixed Doubles with Kelly Sibley, partnered Reed into the last four after two successive 3-0 victories. Their wins over Adam Harrison/Laurence Sweeney and Mike O'Driscoll/Stephen Beerling hardly saw them break sweat as they set up a meeting with Chris Doran and Sean Cullen.

Doran and Cullen won their opening match 3-0 (12-10, 11-9, 11-9) against Kim Daybell and Daniel Lowe, before recovering from 1-0 down to beat Damien Nicholls and David Meads 3-1 (7-11, 11-7, 11-6, 11-8).

In the top half of the draw, the top seeds Paul Drinkhall and Liam Pitchford successfully made the last four, but not before they were pushed to five games by Alim Hirji and Will Maybanks.

The English numbers 1 and 2 beat George Downing and Sam Mabey 3-1 in the second round but only just scraped past Hirji and Maybanks. However, despite the lower ranked pair levelling at 2-2, they were embarrassingly beaten to zero in the decider 3-2 (11-2, 11-13, 11-4, 8-11, 11-0).

Drinkhall and Pitchford will meet Gavin Evans and David McBeath after the regular grand prix duo also saw off their own stern test against Lewis Gray and Sam Walker 3-2 (12-10, 8-11, 9-11, 11-4, 11-6).

## **Men's Doubles Semi-Final Draw:**

**Drinkhall/Pitchford vs Evans/McBeath**

**Doran/Cullen vs Reed/Knight**

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