

# Pitchford & Drinkhall exact doubles revenge

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Liam Pitchford and Paul Drinkhall exacted revenge for last year's Men's Doubles defeat by emerging victorious in a repeat of the 2012 final against Darius Knight and Daniel Reed.

The first game started well for Pitchford and Drinkhall as they marched into a 6-1 lead but the left-hand, right-hand combination of Reed and Knight began to work well and levelled the first game at 7-7. However, a lucky edge from England's no. 1 followed by two more lusty blows set up an 11-8 opening game for the top seeds.

The second game was a similar affair, tightly fought, but one that Pitchford and Drinkhall once again came up trumps on. A couple of thin edges from Pitchford cemented the steady progress as they secured a 2-0 lead 11-7.

However, Knight and Reed fought back in the third with a much more positive start to lead 7-3. They continued that progress to lead 10-5 but had to use a timeout at 10-8 following Pitchford and Drinkhall's comeback. Ultimately it worked with the defending champions winning the next point to stay in the hunt.

Their recovery was short-lived though as Pitchford and Drinkhall won the fourth game 11-5 and secured their first title together – Drinkhall's first since partnering Knight to three consecutive wins 2007-2009.

**Liam Pitchford/Paul Drinkhall bt Daniel Reed/Darius Knight 3-1 (11-8, 11-7, 8-11, 11-5)**

## **Semi-finals**

The top seeds Drinkhall and Pitchford eased through their semi-final against Gavin Evans and David McBeath with minimum fuss.

Although there was an evenly contested first game that Drinkhall and Pitchford scraped through 11-9, they blew open big leads in both the second and third games to seal their straight games victory. Leading 8-1 in the second game, they strolled home 11-5, while a 6-1 lead in the third was confirmed by the same scoreline.

Defending Champions Reed and Knight were made to work hard for their final place after a five-set match against Chris Doran and Sean Cullen.

You could understand Doran feeling negative following his dramatic 4-3 defeat to Sam Walker just moments before in the Men's Singles, however, despite dropping the first game, Doran and Cullen fought back to level in the second.

It appeared as though normal service was resumed in the third with the left-hand, right-hand combination taking it 11-4 but another tense 11-9 game for the underdogs in the fourth forced the semi-final into a decider.

In the end, Knight and Reed did enough to edge through 11-7.

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