

Three medals for GB in Slovakia

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Posted On: **May 23, 2013**



Jack Hunter-Spivey recorded a career-best win in Slovakia

THREE MEDALS FOR GB IN SLOVAKIA

Paralympic bronze medalist Paul Davies took a silver medal today in the class 1 men's singles at the Slovakian Open and there were bronze medals for Will Bayley and 18 year old Jack Hunter-Spivey in the class 7 and class 5 men's singles respectively.

Davies, 46, from North Cornelly in Wales, recorded a 3-1 win in the semi-finals over the Swiss Silvio Keller and then in the final came up against the Italian Andrea Borgato, who had defeated the Austrian world number 1 Andreas Vevera in the other semi-final. Davies had chances to win the match but eventually went down 3-1.

Sheffield based Bayley, from Tunbridge Wells, who was trying to win his third gold medal of the season after wins in Italy and Slovenia, lost in three close sets to the world number 3 Maxym Nikulenko in the semi-finals. The world number 1 had looked untroubled in his earlier matches yesterday but was not able to produce his best in the semi-final today.

"I was definitely nervous today," admitted Bayley. "I really wanted to win three tournaments in a row and maybe I put too much pressure on myself. I don't think I played badly but when the games got tight I couldn't win the big points. But I have to take this defeat and learn from it. I will use it as extra motivation to train even harder over the next few weeks before the European Championships in September."

Hunter-Spivey, from Widnes, ranked 26 in the world, lost his semi-final to Ali Ozturk from Turkey 3-1 but had earlier recorded the best win of his career so far in the quarter-finals, coming back from 2-1 down to beat the world number 4 Mitar Palikuca from Serbia 3-2.

All five of the GB athletes competing in Slovakia progressed from their respective groups to the quarter-finals. Swansea's Paul Karabardak, 27, led world number 2 Mykhaylo Popov from the Ukraine in his quarter-final before eventually losing 3-1 and 18 year old Londoner Ashley Facey Thompson had a good win in the group stages over Sweden's Tobias Andersson before losing in the quarter-finals of the class 9 event to world number 5 Iurii Nozdrunov from Russia, ranked 21 places above him.

All five GB athletes are competing in the team events, which conclude on Saturday, May 25.

Francesca Bullock

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