

Davies leads further GB medals in Germany

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Welshman Rob Davies followed up his bronze medal in the singles in Slovenia with a silver medal in the men's class 1 singles at the Bayreuth Open in Germany today and there were further medals for the GB Para Table Tennis Team as Aaron McKibbin and Jane Campbell both took bronze medals in the men's class 8 and women's class 3 singles respectively.

Davies, a former rugby player from Brecon, did not drop a set in his three group matches and then beat Silvio Keller of Switzerland 3-0 in the semi-finals to set up a final against the world number four Chang Ho Lee of Korea. Davies, world ranked number six, won the first two sets and then led 5-0 in the deciding fifth but was unsettled by a disputed call when leading 7-4 and went on to lose the set 12-10 and the match 3-2.

"I'm disappointed to lose in the final but pleased with the results," said Davies afterwards. "I wanted to test myself against the Korean and I had a good start but then I let it slip. My tactical match play wasn't as good as it should have been and if I can play tactically better next time against him then it could be a different result."

McKibbin, gold medalist in the men's class 8 team event in Slovenia, continued his good form with an improved singles performance in Germany. The 21 year old Sheffield based Londoner, who is world ranked 15, won all three of his group matches including a 3-0 defeat of the Belgian world number 10 Mathieu Loicq, before going on to defeat the talented Brazilian Israel Stroh 3-1 in the quarter-finals, recovering well after losing the first set.

In the semi-finals he came up against the world number two Emil Andersson from Sweden and although losing the match 3-1 he had chances to turn the match around and showed improved form against the Paralympic bronze medalist.

"I think it is the best I've played all season," said McKibbin, "so I'm happy with my performance. I usually have very close matches against Loicq but I think I played tactically well against him today and felt in control of the match. I played better against Andersson than in previous matches but he played very well so I have to take a lot of positives out of the last two days."

London based Jane Campbell, world ranked number nine, was competing for the first time since March and won all three of her group matches before beating Federica Cudia of Italy 3-0 in the quarter-finals. Her reward was a semi-final against the Paralympic champion and world number one Anna-Carin Ahlquist of Sweden and she also showed improved form against the best player in the world, taking a set before eventually losing 3-1.

Torpoint's David Wetherill, making his first international appearance since London 2012, won all three of his group matches in the men's class 6 event including a 3-1 success over world number six Thomas Rau of Germany. He progressed to the knockout stages but went out in the last 16 to Valentin Kneuss of Switzerland.

Wetherill fought back to level at 2-2 but lost a tight fifth set 11-9.

Despite winning two of her three group matches in the women's class 3 event Sara Head, from Beddau in Wales, was left to rue her 3-0 loss to Hatice Duman of Turkey and the two sets she lost to Federica Cudia in their five set encounter as she lost out on a place in the quarter finals on countback.

All five GB players are in action in the team events which conclude on Saturday, June 1.

Francesca Bullock

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