

Walker shines on opening day of Euro singles

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Eighteen-year-old Sam Walker was the star on the first day of singles action at the 2013 Liebherr European Championships with two groups wins including another upset – this time against Lubomir Pistej (SVK, 169).

The Workson-born player, ranked 430th in the world, had already beaten both Marko Jevtovic (115) and Zolt Pete (139) in England's victory over Serbia on Monday before he repeated the dose against the top seed in his group, Pistej, in a straight games victory.

Walker opened his account against Ireland's Paul McCreery, surviving an 18-16 first game to win 3-0, before holding his nerve in three tight games against the Slovakian. The Englishman now has two more group games, against the difficult Sas Lasan (SLO, 179) and the lesser known Dadi Freyr Gudmundsson (ISL, ur), to secure top spot in the group and progress to the last 64.

His England compatriots also had positive days for the most part with five of the seven other team members also winning in Schwechat during their opening singles matches.

Daniel Reed, Andrew Baggaley and Liam Pitchford were all successful in the Men's Singles while both Joanna Drinkhall and Kelly Sibley won their matches in the Women's Singles. Unfortunately both Tin-Tin Ho and Hannah Hicks tasted group stage defeats to their higher ranked opponents.

In the doubles there were wins for Baggaley and Reed as well as Drinkhall and Sibley although Hicks and Ho fell to defeat. Pitchford and Walker also conceded a walkover as the English no. 1s hip was rested.

2013 Liebherr European Championships (Schwechat, AUT) Results:

Men's Singles

Group 16:

Liam Pitchford (126) bt Aleksandr Lusin (EST, 838) 3-1 (11-5, 12-14, 11-1, 11-8)

Group 18:

Daniel Reed (228) bt Martin Storf (AUT, 368) 3-0 (11-8, 12-10, 11-7)

Group 22:

Andrew Baggaley (153) bt Samuli Soine (FIN, 724) 3-0 (11-6, 11-4, 11-3)

Group 32:

Sam Walker (430) bt Paul McCreery (IRL, 579) 3-0 (18-16, 11-3, 11-9)

Sam Walker (430) bt Lubomir Pistej (SVK, 169) 3-0 (12-10, 11-9, 11-8)

Women's Singles

Group 14:

Anna Todorovic (SRB, 255) bt Tin-Tin Ho (410) 3-0 (11-6, 11-9, 11-8)

Group 15:

Joanna Drinkhall (159) bt Amanda Fauvel (SUI, 734) 3-0 (11-6, 11-5, 11-5)

Group 22:

Maria Dolgikh (RUS, 198) bt Hannah Hicks (556) 3-1 (11-7, 10-12, 11-6, 11-2)

Group 24:

Kelly Sibley (213) bt Andrea Daubnerova (SVK, ur) 3-1 (11-9, 11-7, 10-12, 11-5)

Men's Doubles

Group 8:

Aleksandr Smirnov/Vallot Vainula (EST) bt Liam Pitchford/Sam Walker walkover

Group 14:

Andrew Baggaley/Daniel Reed bt Ludvik Persolja/Uros Slatinsek (SLO) 3-1 (11-4, 12-10, 7-11, 14-12)

Women's Doubles

Group 11:

Gabriela Feher/Aneta Maksuti (SRB) bt Hannah Hicks/Tin-Tin Ho 3-0 (11-9, 11-2, 11-6)

Group 12:

Joanna Drinkhall/Kelly Sibley bt Rahel Aschwanden/Rachel Moret (SUI) 3-1 (6-11, 11-6, 11-4, 12-10)

See also:

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Written by Russell Moore (October 8, 2013)

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