Bayley retains gold at Lignano Master Open

Author: Paul Stimpson

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GOLD FOR BAYLEY IN ITALY

Paralympic and European silver medalist Will Bayley took gold in the men's class 7 singles at the Lignano Master Open in Italy, successfully retaining the title he won in 2013. There was further success for the GB Para Table Tennis Team with silver for David Wetherill in the men's class 6 singles and bronze for Sue Gilroy in the women's class 4 singles.

Sheffield-based Bayley, 26, originally from Tunbridge Wells, avenged his 2013 European Championship final defeat by the Ukrainian Mykhaylo Popov, beating the world number three comfortably in the semi-finals 3-0.

Following that comfortable performance he went on to face world number four Jordi Morales in the final after the Spaniard beat world number one Maxym Nikolenko in the other semi-final. Despite the threat of an in-form Morales, the GB star was always in control and took the gold with a fine 3-0 victory.

Fellow Paralympian David Wetherill, from Torpoint, won the class 6 event at the National Championships last weekend and continued his good start to the season by reaching the final in his event before losing to the world number six from France, Bastien Grundeler 3-0.

Barnsley's Sue Gilroy reached the semi-finals but found world number one Borislava Peric-Rankovic just too good, the Serbian winning 3-1.

"It has been a good two days against tough competition," said GB Performance Director Gorazd Vecko. "We have three medals and for Will Bayley to beat the European champion 3-0 in the final is a really good result."

The tournament continues with the team competition that reaches its conclusion on Saturday.

by Francesca Bullock (March 21, 2014)