

Paul and Liam march on in Russian singles

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Paul Drinkhall set the tone for the day with a 4-0 victory

Paul Drinkhall and Liam Pitchford are through to the last 16 of the Russian Open thanks to back-to-back 4-0 victories today.

Drinkhall was first on court and the English No 2, seeded 21, beat Viacheslav Burov of the host nation 12-10, 11-5, 12-10, 11-8.

He then dominated Japan's Kenta Tazoe 11-3, 12-10, 11-9, 11-2 to move into tomorrow's last 16, where he will face sixth seed Eonrae Cho of Korea.

Pitchford, the 14th seed, made short work of Egyptian Ahmed Saleh, with a scoreline of 11-6, 11-8, 11-8, 11-4 in his match in the round of 64.

He followed up with a matching result against 32nd seed Zoran Primorac of Croatia, although the Chesterfield man had to fight to get on top before completing a 12-10, 17-15, 11-8, 11-0 victory.

He will play the fourth seed Koki Niwa of Japan. The last-16 matches start at 9am UK time on Saturday.

Pitchford and Drinkhall also reached the last 16 of the men's doubles, having seen off Singapore duo Zhikang Wu and Zhaoxu Xin 3-1 (11-3, 6-11, 11-7, 11-5) in Ekaterinburg yesterday.

But they saw Russian opponents Alexey Liventsov and Mikhail Paikov battle back from 2-1 down to win 3-2 (11-9, 6-11, 2-11, 11-7, 12-10).

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