

# It's title No 2 for Tin-Tin and Sam in Redbridge!

**Author:** Paul Stimpson

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Action from the Mixed Doubles final (picture by Alan Man)

An inspired timeout turned the tide as Sam Walker & Tin-Tin Ho came from 1-0 and 5-1 down to beat Danny Reed & Kelly Sibley and win the Mixed Doubles title in Redbridge.

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The defending champions versus the Commonwealth Games bronze medallists was a mouthwatering prospect on paper and so it proved.

And it was Glasgow heroes Reed & Sibley who drew first blood at 11-5. And when they moved smoothly into a lead in the second, something had to change from the perspective of the pair on the other side of the table.

Whatever was said at the timeout worked as Walker & Ho worked their way back into the game and took it 11-8. The third was an even fight but the champions kept their noses in front to take it 11-9.

We were heading for a decider when Reed & Sibley motored into an 8-1 and then 10-2 lead, but Walker & Ho took a run of five points to force their opponents into a timeout.

But what worked for the younger pair did not work for Reed & Sibley and within a minute of the resumption, it was 10-10. Two more points was all that was needed and Walker & Ho had their second titles of the weekend after Friday's Under-21 victories.

Walker admitted: "I was a bit sceptical about the timeout from Howard (coach) but it turned out it was right and it worked.

"We managed to get ourselves back into it and won the third as well. But then it was 10-2 in the fourth, but we were fighting and didn't want to give them the set.

"In the end we played two good points to win it. We played the tight ones quite well."

Ho added: "Howard just said we had to do something different and find a way to get back into it – just try anything we hadn't tried. We both just relaxed and played and started to dominate more."

Sibley was gracious in defeat, saying: "They're a good combination and we know we can't give them cheap points. They took their timeout and had nothing to lose at 1-0 and 5-1 down.

"Fair play to them, they kept fighting and played really well."

Earlier in the competition, Reed & Sibley started smoothly by beating Tom Jarvis & Denise Payet in three, but it was a bit harder for them against David McBeath and Emma Vickers, who levelled at 1-1 and opened up a healthy lead in the fourth before the Glasgow medallists came back to win it 3-1 (10, -5, 9, 7).

In the other quarter-final in the top half, Darius Knight & Hannah Hicks were staring down the barrel against Mike O'Driscoll and Yolanda King as their opponents took a 2-0 lead and led in the third. But the England duo found something when it mattered to turn it around and win 3-2 (-4, -7, 8, 6, 4).

In the bottom half, Walker & Ho lost the first to Matt Ware & Karina Le Fevre but won it 3-1, while Maynard & Tsaptsinos saw off Chris Doran & Abbie Milwain by the same scoreline, 13-11 in the deciding fourth.

The first semi-final was relatively straightforward as Walker & Ho always had control in a 3-0 victory over

Maynard & Tsaptsinos (9, 5, 9).

Reed & Sibley saw their England colleagues Knight & Hicks level at 1-1 but the top seeds regain the initiative to take it 3-1 (5, -7, 6, 3).

### Men's Singles



Mike O'Driscoll during his epic against Tom Jarvis (picture by Alan Man)

The top seven players left in the tournament are into the quarters as the competition builds to a big finish.

The exception is Adam Nutland, who profited from the absence of Andrew Baggaley due to a stomach bug to become 'honorary third seed'.

He will face in-form Sam Walker in the last eight, with Paul Drinkhall facing Darius Knight, Liam Pitchford up against Danny Reed and David McBeath lining up against Chris Doran.

Most have found little to inconvenience them, though Reed and Knight were forced to hold off determined opponents in the last 16.

Reed's tricky opponent was Adam Harrison, who closed from 3-0 down and saved four match points before Reed finally shook him off 4-2 (2, 8, 5, -9, -8, 10).

In Knight's case it was Gavin Evans who forced the higher seed to up his game, which he did to take it 4-2 (7, 6, -9, -10, 8, 9).

No such alarms for Pitchford against Sam Mabey – a 4-0 win (4, 5, 8, 4) – or Drinkhall, who defeated Tom Jarvis 4-0 (7, 6, 6, 1).

That obscured a great day for Jarvis – but to flesh out that story we have to turn back the clock to the very start of the knockout rounds and those players fighting out to have a crack at Drinkhall.

Jack Bennett was the first, booking his place with an epic seven-set success against Luke Savill, coming from 1-0 down to lead 2-1 before keeping his nose in front in a 4-3 (-8, 8, 7, -8, 10, -9, 6) win.

And Bennett took a set off Drinkhall as well – the fourth, 11-9 – before bowing out.

17-year-old Bennett, from Eastbourne, said: "That was hard. He controls everything, you're fighting for everything and you just have to keep fighting and look to get in.

"When I had game point (in the fourth) I just wanted to get in and give it a go and had nothing to lose. It was a very good experience."

Drinkhall's next opponent was to be Jarvis or Mike O'Driscoll, the young pretender against the veterans' champion from yesterday. It took – at best guess – 56 minutes to discover who would face Paul in what is undoubtedly a contender for match of the Championships.

The last set had everything – an edge ball to bring up a match point for Tom, a missed serve by Mike to bring him another. The youngster had to save two match points as well as the set took on the appearance of the irresistible force against the immovable object. Eventually an O'Driscoll return went off and Jarvis had it 15-13 for an end score of 4-3 (-10, 11, 11, -7, 8, -7, 13).

O'Driscoll said: "It was very good, very tight, but quite bitty and I don't think either player could get ahead.

"After winning the first, I thought I had a strategy but he surprised me and kept going. His flick was good and he just hung in there a bit better than me.

"The chance to play Paul was the icing on the cake and that's the disappointment."



Matt Ware takes on Damien Nicholls (picture by Alan Man)

Thriller mark two of the day came when Harrison took on Helshan Weerasinghe. It looked rosy for the former when he led 3-0 and had match points in the fourth, but Weerasinghe showed great fight to take it 16-14 and then level the set score.

With the momentum, the consensus in the hall was he would go on to win, but Harrison had other ideas and took it to seven, Weerasinghe's frustrated reaction earning him a yellow card. The final scoreline was 4-3 (5, 10, 2, -14, -8, -5, 7).

Elsewhere in the early rounds, Marcus Giles staved off a comeback from Ian Musk to book a chance to face Chris Doran, winning it 4-2 (5, 7, -7, -11, 9, 11).

In the groups, Semi Idowu's five-set victory over Mark Frith (11-9, 7-11, 7-11, 13, 3) saw him advance from Group 20, while William Hornsey's 3-2 success against Luke Walsh (-6, 11, 8, -8, 8) proved the key result in Group 21 behind winner Ian Musk.

Artur Caltabiano may rate as the unluckiest – or most frustrated – player of the day as he lost all three matches in Group 12 in five sets. To make matters worse, he led in all three – 2-1 against group winner Alex Ramsden (-8, 9, 9, -5, -5) and 2-0 against both Shayan Siraj (11, 8, -8, -4, -9) and runner-up Daniel McTiernan (9, 8, -7, -9, -10).

Stephen Joslin's 3-2 win over Sujay Jagannathan (6, -5, -8, 7, 1) saw him join Adam Harrison in advancing from Group 3.

Meanwhile, in Group 8, Tim Denby beat John Payne in the final match shootout for second place, the score being 3-2 (9, -4, 10, -8, 9).

Cadet Masters bronze medallist from last week, Ethan Walsh, was third in Group 4, but led group winner Sam Mabey 2-0 before Mabey came back to take it 3-2 (11-13, 9-11, 11-4, 11-5, 11-3).

### Women's Singles



Yolanda King in action at Redbridge (picture by Alan Man)

The top seven seeds are through to the quarter-finals with relatively few alarms between them and will be joined by Natalie Slater, who beat Abbie Milwain in the longest match.

Slater was never behind after taking the first 15-13 but it went the distance before she could complete a 4-3 win (13, -6, 5, 11, -9, -2, 3).

Top seed and favourite Kelly Sibley brushed off Amy Humphreys 4-0 (11-2, 11-6, 11-5, 11-6), while second seed and Under-21 champion Tin-Tin Ho needed five to see off Isobel Ashley.

Commonwealth Games athletes Hannah Hicks and Karina Le Fevre went through in four straight against Emily Bolton and Emma Tovey respectively and the seven seeds were completed by Maria Tsaptsinos, Emma Vickers and Yolanda King.

Back at the start of the competition, one group of only two players was decided in five – Kate Cheer beating Under-21 semi-finalist Bolton 12-10, 6-11, 11-9, 5-11, 11-8.

In Group 2, Lisa Radford took second behind Lois Peake courtesy of a 3-2 victory over Sarah Horsnell (-6, 9, 6, -9, 6).

And Denise Payet came from 2-0 down to overhaul Ashley and win Group 5 (-7, -10, 6, 11, 9) – though Ashley still progressed in second place.

The preliminary rounds saw a couple of epics as the format moved to seven sets.



Hannah Hicks in action at Redbridge (picture by Alan Man)

Emma Tovey and Jas Ould shared one of them, the former coming out 4-3 after a match which ebbed and flowed – the final margin 11-5, 5-11, 11-5, 6-11, 5-11, 11-3, 11-9.

The other saw Humphreys see off Zahna Hall, the latter fighting all the way, particularly in the sixth, before Humphreys took it 11-5, 11-9, 8-11, 6-11, 11-6, 13-15, 11-9.

### **Men's Doubles**

Gavin Evans & Tom Jarvis lowered the colours of Chris Doran & David McBeath in four sets to get into the semi-finals.

Jarvis, playing in between his epic singles match against Mike O'Driscoll and his clash against Paul Drinkhall, and Evans took the pivotal third on their way to a 3-1 (7, -4, 14, 6) victory.

Elsewhere, no surprises in the other quarter-finals as top seeds Liam Pitchford & Paul Drinkhall shrugged off Jon Hall & Ian Musk 3-0 (8, 8, 5).

Matt Ware & Tom Maynard needed four to get past Danny Lawrence & Sam Mabey, as did second seeds Danny Reed & Sam Walker against O'Driscoll & Helshan Weerasinghe.

The big guns had come in for the second round and Pitchford & Drinkhall wasted no time hitting their straps, taking Adam Harrison & Joseph Langham-Ferreira down 3-0 (2, 5, 4).

Hall & Musk mounted an impressive comeback to end the interest of David Meads & Damien Nicholls 3-2 (-6, -8, 7, 13, 6) and set up their crack at the top seeds.

Reed & Walker were also in good nick with a three-straight win over Garth Kinlocke & Liam McTiernan (9, 6, 5) in their opening clash.

Fourth seeds Ware & Maynard were inconvenienced by a couple of rising stars in the shape of Alex Ramsden & Billy Forster, seeing their young opponents battle back from 2-0 down to level before experience told and the seeds advanced 3-2 (6, 7, -8, -10, 7).

Luke Savill & Marcus Giles made sure Evans & Jarvis had to fight to claim their 3-0 victory (8, 13, 13).

Another remarkable second-round match saw Lawrence & Mabey seal a rollercoaster against Gabriel Achampong & Chris Lewis, despite a blank in the fourth, winning 3-2 (11, -10, 7, -0, 8).

### **Women's Doubles**

Straight to the quarter-finals in the Women's Doubles, and Abbie Milwain and Natalie Slater found Amy Blagbrough and Isabelle Joubeily tough nuts to crack, as the two Cadet players took an extended third 16-14, though the older pair did win in four.

Lois Peake and Emma Tovey took the third off Tin-Tin Ho and Maria Tsaptsinos, but Karina Le Fevre and Emma Vickers needed only three, albeit close, sets to see off Emily Bolton and Cherith Graham (9, 8, 10).

Denise Payet & Kate Cheer had a walkover against Sanya Clements & Evie Collier and will play Le Fevre & Vickers in the last four, while Milwain & Slater play Ho & Tsaptsinos.

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