

Sibley stunned by opponent's comeback

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Kelly Sibley

Kelly Sibley saw a 2-0 lead evaporate as she was beaten in her historic first Team GB match at the European Games in Baku.

The English No 1 stormed out to an early 11-6, 11-9 lead against Lithuania's Ruta Paskauskiene.

But the experienced world No 79 got on top and came back to win 4-2 (6-11, 9-11, 11-5, 11-3, 11-5, 11-6) to book a tie against 13th seed Xue Li of France in the second round on Wednesday.

Sibley said: "I felt like I came out the blocks quite quickly and caught her off guard. I knew I had to do that, because I have played her a few times before.

"I have beaten her a couple of times and those times when I did I have come out quickly and caught her cold.

"I did the same again today, I was 2-0 up but then she upped her game and I struggled to keep with the pace.

"I knew what I had to do, I had to vary the spin a little bit, but once she found her rhythm she was very difficult to break down.

"It is difficult when it is not going your way, but I'm experienced enough now to know what I need to do. I did try to do that, but she had all the answers. She was seeing the ball like a football.

"So I'm very disappointed, especially because of the great start, but all credit to her because she fought back and I had no answers towards the end."

In the men's singles, Liam Pitchford and Paul Drinkhall have both been seeded into the second round.

Drinkhall, seeded No 16, will play the winner of the match between Adam Pattantyus (HUN, world No 63) and Matiss Burgis (LAT, 131).

Pitchford is ranked No 13 and will face either Ruiwu Tan (CRO, 70) or world No 212 Admir Duranspahic or Bosnia-Herzegovina. He could potentially face No 2 seed Timo Boll of Germany in the third round.

The men's second round takes place on Wednesday.

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