

Wetherill's a gold star at the double!

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Posted On: June 29, 2015



David Wetherill

A young GB squad has won eight medals at the Romania Open in Cluj Napoca, including two gold medals for David Wetherill, a first gold medal for 21-year-old Martin Perry and first international medals for 20 year old Lucie Bouron and 22 year old Lee Wilkinson on his international debut.

Wetherill came through his group in the men's class 6 singles without dropping a set and was equally impressive in beating the American Ari Arratia in the quarter-finals and Jaun Carlos Sepulvedo Parva from Chile in the semi-finals. The 25-year-old from Plymouth went on to take the gold with a 3-0 win in the final against another Chilean Matias Pino Lorca.

"I did what I needed to do," said Wetherill, "and I'm really pleased to win the tournament. I feel like I've got a good mental strategy now."

Wetherill and Perry started their men's class 6 round-robin team event with a 3-1 win over Chile and they clinched gold with 3-0 wins over a Greek/Costa Rican combination and a team from Montenegro and Serbia.

"It's good to see the young players doing well here," said Wetherill, "and great to win gold with Martin – I know how much it means to him."

Perry was understandably delighted with his first gold. "I think I've had better performances," said the Paisley player, "but I had a real good fighting spirit."

"I was 2-0 down and match point down and I dug deep and came back to win one of the crucial matches 3-2 which I think showed my character. It is fantastic to win my first gold and to win it alongside someone with Dave's experience – hopefully we can win more in the future."

In the women's class 3 singles Bouron reached the semi-finals with a hard-fought 3-2 win over Ai Chu Wang from Chinese Taipei. She was not disgraced in a 3-0 loss to world No 5 Alena Kanova from Slovakia and took the bronze medal.

In the team event women's classes 2-5 were combined and Bouron and her Serbian partner Ana Prvulovic finished second in their group with a 3-0 win over Montenegro and a narrow 3-2 loss to Chinese Taipei. Their reward was a semi-final against Kanova and women's class 3 world No 1 Anna-Carin Ahlquist from Sweden and although their combined experience understandably proved too much for the GB/Serbia combination Bouron picked up a second bronze medal.

"I think I played pretty well," said Bouron, from Bracknell. "I was starting to play more to my style and play my game a bit more. It is such an honour to play Anna-Carin – she is such a great player. I've played her four times now and I improved so much when I played her in the team competition here. I'm really happy to win my first international medals."

In men's class 4-5 team 17-year-old Daniel Bullen and 19-year-old Nicko Anderson recovered from a 3-0 loss to Romania to beat the second team from Chinese Taipei 3-2 and reach the quarter-finals. A 3-0 win over Chile took them through to a semi-final against Poland but they had to settle for bronze after a 3-0 loss.

"I didn't play so well in the singles," said Bullen, "so I was pleased to bounce back in the team event and play well. It is great to have another medal."

Earlier in the tournament Anderson, from Northolt, had taken silver in the round-robin format men's class 5 singles with wins over Bullen and the American Eric Pattinson.

"I'm very pleased with my performance," he said. "I wasn't expecting to do as well as I did and it was all the preparation I put in that helped me to play to a high level. Daniel is a good team partner and helped me a lot."

Swansea pair Lawrence John, 16, and Josh Morgan, 25, finished second in their group in men's class 9-10 after wins against Romania and Chile/Serbia. They found the American/Israeli combination of Tahl Leibovitz and Aviv Gordon too strong in the semi-final but took the bronze medal.

"I think I played well," said John, "particularly in the team event and it was nice to win a medal with Josh."

The men's class 7 team event was also played in a round-robin format and 22-year-old international debutant Lee Wilkinson, from Evesham, and his Israeli partner Boaz Tabib took the bronze after wins over Norway/Montenegro and the second Romanian team.

Francesca Bullock
June 29, 2015

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