



Paul hopes Rio success can help him floor the rest!

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Paul Drinkhall is hoping his recent victory at the Rio test event will help to give him an edge over the rest of the field if he qualifies for next year's Olympics.

The Loftus player was top seed for the Aquece Rio International Tournament and duly lived up to billing, defeating Thiago Monteiro of the host nation 4-0 (11-5, 12-10, 11-7, 11-7) in the final.

And he believes his experience of the host city and venue will stand him in good stead for the main event next year – particularly the distinctive green flooring that will be in use again in 2016.

"It was interesting," said the 25-year-old. "Things are going to change between now and next year – it wasn't in the hall where it will be in 2016 but it was identical and it was quite similar to the Excel (the London 2012 venue) in many ways, and it played pretty well.

"The green floor is going to be different. When I first walked in I thought 'Jeez, that's going to take some getting used to' but when I was actually out there it was all right.

"It was good to go out there and see the country and the area. If I get to Rio, hopefully it will give me a little edge over the others that I've experienced it."

Paul was also pleased to justify his top seeding, adding: "It's not the biggest tournament but it was good to win.

"I don't mind being the top seed. Some people do struggle with that sort of thing but I see it as a positive, that I'm the best player there and that if I get focused I'm in with a good chance of winning it."

Paul is playing in an invitation tournament in Spain this weekend and has three French league matches before Christmas. His next big assignment is likely to be the German Open in January.

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