



Medal delight for Harry and Jenny

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Harry Fairchild and Jenny Turner returned from the Trisome Games – the Down's Syndrome Olympics – with bronze medals.

The duo both represented Great Britain in singles and doubles at the event in Florence, Italy, where more than 1,000 athletes with Down's Syndrome competed in seven events, including table tennis.

Harry, of Brighton TTC, won his medal in the men's doubles alongside Joao Goncalves of Portugal, beating an Italian pair 3-0 (11-7, 12-10, 11-6) in the quarter-finals.

A thrilling semi-final went to a deciding fifth set, with the pair defeated by top seeds and eventual champions Ludovic Morainville & Cedric Courrillaud of France 3-2 (8-11, 9-11, 11-9, 11-8, 11-4).

In the singles, Harry finished second in his group, beating Ari Taygun of Turkey 3-0 (11-2, 11-4, 11-9) and South Africa's Rapholo Selaelo 3-0 (11-3, 11-5, 11-6) but being defeated by third seed Matteo Giomo of the host nation 3-2 (11-9, 11-2, 8-11, 12-14, 11-9) despite a stirring comeback from 2-0 down.

He then beat Francesco Asaro of Italy 3-0 (11-3, 11-9, 11-1) in the last 16, before losing out in the quarter-finals to his doubles partner and top seed Goncalves, the score 3-1 (11-4, 11-9, 8-11, 11-9).



Harry Fairchild shows off his medal in Florence

"I tried my best in Florence and played really well," said Harry, who is the UK Down Syndrome table tennis champion. "My coaches stayed with me in Italy and helped me a lot. I have been training every day at my club. BTTC is the best table tennis club in the world. Everybody loves to train with me, and I am a Boss."

"Florence was an excellent experience for Harry," said his mum Linsey. "It was so interesting for his dad and me to see Harry compete in a completely new environment. He quickly made friends with people from all over the world. He found that his ready smile and a huge hug broke the language barrier pretty quickly."

"Harry plans to restart training at his club straight away. He simply loves being part of BTTC. It is his favourite place to be. He has trained hard and he has benefitted from many hours of excellent coaching from the dedicated staff team. All of this has culminated in the opening up of a whole new world for Harry, both at home and abroad. It is a world in which he is thoroughly happy to be living in."

Jenny won all three of her group matches in the women's singles, beating Celine Delalande of France 3-2 (11-6, 15-17, 13-11, 7-11, 11-5), Fouad Ahmed of Egypt 3-0 (11-1, 11-2, 11-4) and South Africa's Mahlodi Nkadimeng 3-0 (12-10, 11-2, 11-1).

The quarter-final stage saw her notch a victory against another Egyptian player, Atef Nourhanne Mohammed, by a scoreline of 3-1 (8-11, 14-12, 11-4, 11-3).

But French player Lucile Poquet, the eventual champion, was too strong in the semi-finals, winning 3-1 (11-8, 5-11, 11-5, 11-8) to ensure Jenny had to settle for a bronze.

In the mixed doubles, Harry & Jenny beat Merve Peker & Erman Cetiner of Turkey 3-1 (10-12, 11-5, 11-6, 11-5) in the last 16 and were defeated 3-1 (5-11, 13-11, 11-6, 12-10) by Jean Bachevillier & Carole Hennion of France in the quarter-finals.

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