



Good opening day for British Para team

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The British team made a good start to the PTT World Team Championships in Slovakia with wins in women's class 4-5, men's class 1, men's class 6 and men's class 8.

With double Paralympic medallist Ross Wilson unable to play due to a back problem, Aaron McKibbin was partnered in men's class 8 by 18-year-old Billy Shilton and they made the perfect start with a 2-0 win against Australia. The pair combined to win the doubles 3-1 and McKibbin secured the tie with a 3-0 win against Nathan Pellissier.

In their second match they faced Sweden and although McKibbin and Shilton started well by taking the first set in the doubles the Paralympic silver medallists Linus Karlsson and Emil Andersson came back to take the next three and establish a 1-0 lead. Shilton played well against Andersson – saving three match points before clinching a tense third set 16-14 – but the former World No 1 used all his experience to take the match 3-1 and win the tie for Sweden 2-0.

The British team can still progress to the knockout stages if they beat Chinese Taipei in their final group match.

Sue Gilroy and Megan Shackleton started their challenge in the round-robin women's class 4-5 with a match against Slovakia and they won the doubles 3-0 before Gilroy recovered from 10-8 down to win the third set 12-10 and complete a 3-0 win over Katarina Dobrovodska. Gilroy and Shackleton play their next match against Chinese Taipei tomorrow.

Paul Karabardak, Martin Perry and David Wetherill also began with a tie against the host nation and were involved in a tough battle. Alexander Nagy and Gabriel Csemy took the doubles 11-9 in the fifth after Karabardak and Wetherill had levelled at 2-2. That left Britain needing to win both of the singles matches and when Karabardak recorded a comfortable 3-0 victory over Nagy it was down to Wetherill to win the deciding match. The 27-year-old looked to be in trouble at 2-0 down but fought back tenaciously to beat Csemy 12-10 in the fifth and secure a 2-1 win for his team.

The next group match for the British team will be against European champions Denmark this afternoon.

It was Britain against Slovakia again in men's class 1 which is also being played in a round-robin format. Paul Davies and Tom Matthews played together for the first time in Slovenia last week and they lost the doubles today 3-1. Davies kept them in the tie with a 3-0 win against Martin Barbierik and Matthews then won the deciding singles against Marian Kamien 3-1 to give Britain a 2-1 win.

Davies and Matthews play their next match against Italy today.

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