

Good win for Paul in the loss to Sweden

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It was always going to be tough going for the England Men playing in the Championship division against the best teams in Europe. The match today was against Sweden, with players ranked 34, 46, and 88 in the World they were clear favourites but they were made to fight for it.

First match was Par Gerell, the Swedish No 1 ranked 34 in the World against Danny Reed, in the first game the rating difference showed as Gerell romped to 11-1. It was however a real difference in the next three games, Danny lost the second to 9, won the third 11-8 and lost the fourth game on deuce.

Second game was Paul Drinkhall against world no 88 Robert Svensson, Paul played really well and took the first two games both by a 11-6 scoreline, Svensson came back in the third but Paul was not to be denied and he took the fourth game 11-9 for a truly excellent victory.

Match score 1-1 and the third game was a real battle too, Darius Knight against world no 46 Jens Lundqvist, Darius stood 2-1 ahead after the third game but the fourth game went to the Swede on Deuce and the fifth went that way too 11-8.

Match score Sweden 2 England 1 and Paul Drinkhall would have to pull off another superb result over world 34, Par Gerell. It was not to be unfortunately, the left handed Swede dominated all three games winning fairly comfortably

At the World Championships it was the Girls who were facing the best in the world but at these championships they are in the Challenge Division, aiming to win it and claim a place in the top flight at the next Championships.

Their first match was in the evening against Wales and it was most straightforward. To start, the battle of the two Nottingham flatmates, Kelly Sibley against Naomi Owen, Kelly was never headed and run out a 3 straight games winner.

Joanna Parker followed against up and coming youngster Angharad Phillips, two games went routinely to Joanna, then shock of shocks, Angarad won the first point of the third game and England were behind in a game for the first time, it made little difference the third went to deuce but Joanna came through at the first attempt.

So to Hannah Hicks against Chloe Thomas, again two comfortable games, then after the umpire had a word to Hannah about taking her hand up with the ball rather than throwing it up things went a little pear shaped, one service into the edge of the table, followed by a poorly positioned one and Hannah was 2-0 down, Chloe held the advantage for a good portion of the game after that but Hannah clawed it back at deuce and took the game 13-11, 3-0 for England in games in that individual match, 3-0 to England in the match score all three individual matches being 3-0. This could have been a tricky match but a good performance saved any problems – The England Women will face sterner challenges later this weekend.

Results

Mens Team

Sweden 3 England 1

398 GERELL, PÅr (SWE) beat 193 REED, Daniel (ENG) 11:1 11:9 8:11 14:12

399 SVENSSON, Robert (SWE) lost to 191 DRINKHALL, Paul (ENG) 6 :11 6:11 11:9 9:11

397 LUNDQVIST, Jens (SWE) beat 192 KNIGHT, Darius (ENG) 11:8 7:11 5:11 13:11 11:8

398 GERELL, PÅr (SWE) beat 191 DRINKHALL, Paul (ENG) 11:7 11:6 11:3

Womens team

England 3 Wales 0

188 SIBLEY, Kelly (ENG) beat 427 OWEN, Naomi (WAL) 11:9 11:5 11:6

187 PARKER, Joanna (ENG) beat 428 PHILLIPS, Angharad (WAL) 11:3 11:4 12:10

190 HICKS, Hannah (ENG) beat 429 THOMAS, Chloe (WAL) 11:4 11:4 13:11

Photo: Paul Drinkhall took a good win in the Sweden match – courtesy Henk Hommes

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