



Para players in medal hunt in Germany

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Nine British players including men's class 7 Paralympic champion Will Bayley are through to the quarter-finals in the singles events at the PTT Bayreuth Open in Germany.

Bayley is joined by Paul Davies (men's class 1), Paul Karabardak, Martin Perry and David Wetherill (men's class 6), Aaron McKibbin, Billy Shilton and Ross Wilson (men's class 8) and Ashley Facey Thompson (men's class 9).

Bayley was a comfortable 3-0 winner against Vladimir Anikanov from Russia and secured top spot in his group with a 3-0 defeat of Masachika Inoue from Japan. He plays Miroslav Jambor from Slovakia in the quarter-finals and is on course for a semi-final match against the Brazilian Israel Pereira Stroh in what would be a repeat of their Rio final.

Shilton was 2-1 up against Piotr Grudzien in his first match but the Rio bronze medallist from Poland came back to win 3-2. A 3-1 win against Aleksai Saunin from Russia left Shilton top of the group after Saunin defeated Grudzien which meant the placings were decided on countback. He took on the Belgian Mathieu Loicq in the last 16 and after losing the first set the 18-year-old fought back to beat the former world and Paralympic champion 3-1 to earn a quarter-final against another former world champion Richard Csejtey from Slovakia.

Wilson came through his group with three wins from three against Hiromi Sato from Japan 3-0, the Italian Samuel de Chiara 3-0 and the American Navin Kumar 3-0. He went on to beat the Russian Artem Iakovlev in the last 16 and will play Marcin Skrzynecki from Poland for a place in the semi-finals.

McKibbin was also in good form with 3-0 wins against Roy Van Der Burg from Netherlands, the Belgian Marc Ledoux and Patrik Vaughan from Ireland. He came through his last 16 match against Johannes Urban from Germany 3-1 and will face the world No 1 Viktor Didukh in the quarter-finals.

Facey Thompson got the British squad off to a perfect start with a 3-0 win against Hussein Hussein Hassan from Egypt. He lost a close match to Esa Miettinen from Finland 14-12 in the fourth but booked his place in the quarter-finals with a 3-0 win against Takuya Nakajima from Japan.

Karabardak won his first match against the American Ari Arratia 3-0 and then beat the higher ranked Frenchman Bastien Grundeler 3-0. He topped his group with a 3-1 win against Thomasz Kusiak from Germany and will play the talented young American Ian Seidenfeld in the quarter-finals.

Perry took a set off Peter Rosenmeier in his first match but the Paralympic champion from Denmark recorded a 3-1 win. However, Perry claimed second place in his group with a 3-1 win against Ibrahim Hamadtou from Egypt and a 3-2 win against the Russian Alexander Esaulov, showing all his battling qualities to come back from 2-0 down to win 11-9 in the fifth. The Scotsman plays Tim Laue from Germany in the quarter-finals.

Wetherill started with a 3-0 win against Valentin Kneuss from Switzerland but had to work harder to defeat Danny Bobrov from Israel 3-2. He also topped his group with a 3-1 win against Klaus Mewes from Germany and will play Grundeler in the quarter-finals.

In men's class 1 Rob Davies had a rare off day and could not find his form against Sylvio Keller from Switzerland, who came from 2-1 down against the Welshman to win 3-2, or the young Italian Federico Falco who inflicted a 3-1 defeat on the Paralympic champion.

Paul Davies enjoyed a walkover in his first match after the withdrawal of Walter Kilger from Germany and then beat the Russian Dmitry Lavrov 3-0. After losing a tight first set to Guillermo Bustamante Sierra 15-13 he levelled at 1-1 but the Argentinian went on to take the match 3-1 to top the group with Davies taking second place and going through to the quarter-finals where he will play the Korean Sung Joo Park.

Fellow Welshman and team partner Tom Matthews lost his first match in four close sets to Park and a 3-2 loss to Andrea Borgato from Italy put him out of the singles despite a 3-0 win against the Frenchman Alan Papirer in his final group match.

Fliss Pickard had a tough group in women's class 6 but bounced back from an opening 3-0 loss to the Russian World number three Raisa Chebanika with a 3-0 win against Oi Man Lam from Macau. She then produced a great performance to beat the world No 5 Antonina Khodzinskaya from Ukraine 3-1 but with three players level on two wins the group was decided on countback and Pickard was very unlucky to lose out with Chebanika and Khodzinskaya going through to the knockout stages.

Megan Shackleton, 18, narrowly lost the battle of the teenagers in women's class 4 when 17 year old Irem Oluk from Turkey took their match 3-2. A 3-0 loss to Paralympic bronze medallist and world No 5 Nada Matic from Serbia left Shackleton with too much to do and despite a 3-0 win against the Austrian Helke Koller she finished in third place in the group and did not progress to the knockout stages.

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