

PRESS RELEASE

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Sinclair launches GB Deaflympics challenge in style

Anthony Sinclair got Great Britain's bid for tennis medals off to a fine start on Sunday at the 21st Summer Deaflympics in Taipei.

The silver medallist in the men's singles at the last Deaflympics in Melbourne in 2005, three-time National champion and third seed Sinclair beat Austria's Jurgen Scheutz 6-1, 6-2 to book his place in the second round against Japan's Reiki Kajishita.

Sinclair was one of two Britons scheduled to be in action on Sunday, with Daniel Tunstall also progressing to a second round contest against Hungarian top seed Gabor Mathe after his first round opponent, Aliyu Umar of Nigeria, failed to show.

Britain's other two men's singles players, Lewis Fletcher and Darren O'Donnell, begin their challenges on Monday. Fletcher faces a difficult task on his Deaflympics debut as he takes on Austrian second seed Daniel Elrbacher, while O'Donnell faces Italy's Gianpaolo Damiani.

Monday's third day of the Games and second day of tennis action also sees six-time National champion Catherine Graham begin her women's singles challenge against Japan's Mizue Tsujioka. Graham, a women's singles quarter-finalist in Melbourne four years ago, is the No 3 seed in Taipei.

Graham and Sinclair are also second seeds in the mixed doubles, an event in which they were semi-finalists in Melbourne in 2005, and are scheduled to get underway on Tuesday after a first round bye.

The men's doubles starts on Monday, with Tunstall partnering Deaflympic Games debutant Jamie King in a first round match against Australians Jamie Zafir and John Lui. Meanwhile, Fletcher and O'Donnell are the No 4 seeds for the men's doubles and have a first round bye before again starting their doubles challenge on Tuesday.

Four of Britain's six tennis medallists from the 2005 Melbourne Deaflympics are among the squad of six players selected to represent Great Britain in Taipei.

Tennis is one of 17 sports being contested at the 21st Deaflympics in Taipei and one of eight sports in which Great Britain is represented.

More than 4200 athletes and officials from 85 countries will participate in the 21st Deaflympics Summer Games.

The Games run from 5 – 15 September, with the tennis competition taking place over eight days, until Sunday, 13 September at the Rainbow Riverside Sports Park in Taipei .

The Summer and Winter Deaflympic Games are the pinnacle in international competition for elite deaf athletes. Under International Deaflympic Committee criteria, to be eligible to compete athletes must have a proven hearing loss of 55dB in the best year.

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