

All English final in BetVictor Scottish Open

Gary Wilson faces Joe O'Connor in the final of the BetVictor Scottish Open at Meadowbank in Edinburgh from 1pm today (Sunday) and it could be a defining day in their careers.

Wilson beat Thai star Thepchaiya Un-Nooh in his semi-final and O'Connor ousted 2010 world champion Neil Robertson 6-4 in his match and the tournament winner takes home a cheque for £80,000. The Stephen Hendry Trophy is also at stake.

The pair will battle over 17 frames and both have produced massive results this week, 27-year-old O'Connor over Robertson and before that Zhao Xintong, Ding Junhui, Mark Williams and Ricky Walden while Wilson, aged 37, defeated pre-tournament favourite, Ronnie O'Sullivan, plus Irishman Ken Doherty, world champion in 1997, in the earlier rounds.

It's the first time that the pair have met in a match on the World Snooker Tour and the pairing sees O'Connor, the world No 55, in against Wallsend-based Wilson, world ranked No 32, who has lost in two in two previous finals.

This is O'Connor's debut in a ranking title final and to get there he beat popular Aussie Robertson for the first time. Their only previous meeting was in the 2014 UK Championship when Robertson won 6-0, but O'Connor was in much better form on Saturday night and halted the man from Down Under who was

aiming to secure his second Scottish Open.

Robertson looked in the mood, starting with a stunning break of 137 to win the first frame but O'Connor claimed the next two before the Aussie levelled at 2-2 before the mid-session interval with a break of 127.

A 116 break followed from Robertson to take the third frame to lead 3-2 but O'Connor turned up the heat with a break of 137 to level at 3-3. Robertson actually led 60-14 in the next and looked set to take the seventh frame, but the Englishman stole the frame on the black and never looked back, winning the match with a break of 71.

However, the £17,500 Robertson pocketed did, however, slide him into the top 32 on the one-year list and he is now in position for a World Grand Prix spot.

As for jubilant O'Connor, he said: "I've prepared well for this tournament and hopefully my action can hold up." Tickets were still available at the time of writing.

PICTURE: The Meadowbank venue being prepared for the final by *Nigel Duncan*