



Captain Pitchford leads Falcons to opening win

Author: Paul Stimpson

Posted On: June 15, 2018

Liam Pitchford got off to a winning start in his second season in the Ultimate Table Tennis competition in India as his Falcons team got their title defence off to a good start.

The English No 1, the Falcons captain, beat India's Amalraj Anthony 2-1 (5-11, 11-8, 11-9) in the second match of the clash against Maharashtra United in Pune.

Pitchford, named the series' Most Valuable Player last season, turned it on from 7-1 down in the final game to power to a victory which brought Falcons back in the tie after a 3-0 defeat for Sutirtha Mukherjee in the opening match.

Falcons won the next three matches 2-1 but a 3-0 defeat for Sanil Shetty to Kristian Karlsson meant Falcons needed a 3-0 win in the final match to take the match victory. Matilda Ekholm duly obliged, beating Madhurika Patkar 3-0 to seal an 11-10 scoreline in favour of Falcons.

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