



Walker goes out to Romanian

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Sam Walker went out in the last 32 as he became the first England player to taste international action this season at the Nigeria Open.

The 23-year-old from Workson was the fifth seed for the event in Lagos and went straight into the last 64, where he met Orok Etim of the host nation.

And it was a routine win for Walker as he progressed 4-0 (11-5, 11-5, 11-8, 11-5) to set up a meeting in the last 32 against Romania's Rares Sipos, a recent European Youth Championships semi-finalist.

Sipos had three times come from a game down to beat another Nigerian, Jamiu Ayanwale, 4-3 in his last-64 clash, and it again went to a decider against Walker.

The pattern this time was different as Sipos led 1-0, trailed 2-1 and led 3-2 before ultimately taking the decider 11-9 to leave Walker disappointed.

Scotland's Gavin Rumgay is into the last 16, however, defeating Nigeria's Nurudeen Hassan 4-3 (11-3, 9-11, 11-7, 11-4, 4-11, 8-11, 11-8) and then Mahmoud Helmy of Egypt 4-0 (11-7, 11-2, 11-5, 11-8) to set up a tie against another Nigerian, Azeez Olugbenga Jamiu on Saturday.

Walker was the only English player in the field in Nigeria, but others will soon be in international action. Liam Pitchford, Paul Drinkhall and David McBeath will be at the Bulgaria Open, which starts next Tuesday, while the same trio plus Walker, Tom Jarvis, Andrew Baggaley and Tin-Tin Ho will compete at the Czech Open from August 21.

Results

Men's Singles

Round of 64

Sam Walker bt Orok Etim (NGR) 4-0 (11-5, 11-5, 11-8, 11-5)

Round of 32

Rares Sipos (ROU) bt Walker 4-3 (11-6, 7-11, 4-11, 11-6, 12-10, 7-11, 11-9)

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