



Drinkhall shock, but Ho and Walker are through

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Sam Walker and Tin-Tin Ho are through to the main draw of the European Championships as group winners, but Paul Drinkhall and Maria Tsaptsinos' singles campaigns are over.

There were mixed fortunes in the doubles events, with Walker joining Pitchford & Drinkhall in the main draw of the men's but English involvement ending in the women's. In the mixed, Pitchford & Ho are into the last 16 but Drinkhall and Tsaptsinos, partnering Welsh players Charlotte Carey and Callum Evans respectively, are out.

First on court in the women's singles, Ho recovered from 2-0 down to Nadezhda Bogdanova of Belarus in her final women's singles group match to win in six, shading the third 14-12 before keeping her opponent at arm's length in the next three.

Tsaptsinos, meanwhile, earned her place in the preliminary round with a 4-1 win over Azerbaijan's Maryam Imanova, recovering from losing the first 14-12. However, the Englishwoman was beaten 4-0 in the preliminary round by Linda Bergstrom of Sweden.

In the men's singles, Drinkhall and Walker had contrasting fortunes against two of the continent's up-and-coming youngsters. Walker beat Youth Top 10 champion Cristian Pletea of Romania 4-0 – though the first three were all close – but Drinkhall was on the wrong end of a 4-1 scoreline against Sweden's Truls Moregard, runner-up in the European Youth Championships.

It meant Walker went straight into the main draw to join 10th seed Pitchford, while Drinkhall was left to sweat on being drawn as one of 18 lucky losers to go into the preliminary round – unfortunately for him, he was one of the five to miss out.



Sam Walker (ITTF picture, Remy Gros)

There was delight for Callum Evans of Wales who made it through in second place in his group, today beating Scotland's Colin Dalgleish 4-0 (11-9, 11-5, 11-9, 11-6) to set up a preliminary round tie against Marko Jevtovic of Serbia – which he won 13-11 in the deciding seventh to go into the main draw.

Also in the men's singles, Jersey's Jordan Wykes ended with a win over Patryk Ztowka of Poland, prevailing 4-2 (11-7, 11-5, 11-9, 8-11, 8-11, 11-8). Scotland's Yaser Razouk was beaten 4-0 by Andrei Putuntica of Macedonia and Ireland's Alex Gillen lost 4-0 to Gleb Shamruk of Belarus.

In the women's singles, Charlotte Carey was eliminated after a 4-2 (7-11, 11-9, 11-7, 7-11, 11-9, 11-8) defeat by Lisa Lung of Belgium. Lucy Elliott was defeated 4-1 by Egle Stuckyte of Lithuania to finish fourth in Group 4 while Rebecca Plaistow lost 4-0 to Sara Ramirez to finish fourth in Carey's group.

In the men's doubles, Walker and partner Tobias Rasmussen of Denmark won their preliminary round match to move into the main draw, where they will face Slovenian pair Bojan Tokic & Darko Jorgic tomorrow. Pitchford & Drinkhall, seeded into the last 32, play Bulgaria's Teodor Alexandrov & Denislav Kodjabashev.

Also in the men's doubles, Razouk & Dalgleish were eliminated 3-2 by Vladimir Sidorenko & Vildan Gadiev of Russia in the first preliminary round. Evans, partnering Wykes, went straight into the second preliminary round against Hunor Szocs of Romania and Tamas Lakatos of Hungary, where they were defeated in three straight.

In the women's doubles, English involvement is over as Ho & Carey and Tsaptsinos & Betul Nur Kahraman of Turkey went out.

For Tsaptsinos, it was a close-run thing against Ganna Gaponova & Tetyana Bilenko of Ukraine, involving a marathon first game which their opponents edged 22-20 and a deciding fifth game which was won 14-12 by the Ukrainians. Ho & Carey lost in three to Serbia's Izabela Lupulesku & Sabina Surjan.



Maria Tsaptsinos in mixed doubles action with Callum Evans of Wales (ITTF picture, Remy Gros)

Also in the women's doubles, Scotland's Lucy Elliott & Rebecca Plaistow went out 3-0 to Slovenian pair Aleksandra Vovk & Katarina Strazar at the first stage.

The mixed doubles saw Evans & Tsaptsinos eliminated in the second preliminary round by Pavel Sirucek & Hana Matelova (CZE) but Drinkhall & Carey made it through to the last 32 by defeating Slovenian duo Peter Hribar & Aleksandra Vovk.

Results

Men's Singles

Group 2

Truls Moregard (SWE) bt Paul Drinkhall 4-1 (11-8, 11-7, 11-9, 6-11, 11-9)

Group 11

Sam Walker bt Cristian Pletea (ROU) 4-0 (11-9, 12-10, 12-10, 11-3)

Women's Singles

Group 6

Tin-Tin Ho bt Nadezhda Bogdanova (BLR) 4-2 (3-11, 8-11, 14-12, 11-7, 11-3, 11-6)

Group 14

Maria Tsaptsinos bt Maryam Imanova (AZE) 4-1 (12-14, 11-5, 11-7, 11-6, 11-3)

Preliminary round

Linda Bergstrom (SWE) bt Tsaptsinos 4-0 (11-8, 11-3, 11-8, 11-9)

Men's Doubles

Second preliminary round

Sam Walker & Tobias Rasmussen (DEN) bt Vladimir Sidorenko & Vildan Gadiev (RUS) 3-0 (12-10, 11-8, 11-4)

Women's Doubles**Second preliminary round**

Ganna Gaponova & Tetyana Bilenko (UKR) bt Maria Tsaptsinos & Betul Nur Kahraman (TUR) 3-2 (22-20, 5-11, 11-9, 5-11, 14-12)

Izabela Lupulesku & Sabina Surjan (SRB) bt Tin-Tin Ho & Charlotte Carey 3-0 (11-7, 11-8, 11-9)

Mixed Doubles**Second preliminary round**

Pavel Sirucek & Hana Matelova (CZE) bt Callum Evans (WAL) & Maria Tsaptsinos 3-1 (11-8, 11-7, 9-11, 11-9)

Paul Drinkhall & Charlotte Carey (WAL) bt Peter Hribar & Aleksandra Vovk (SLO) 3-1 (8-11, 11-4, 11-4, 13-11)

Round of 32

Liam Pitchford & Tin-Tin Ho bt Yaroslav Zhmudenko & Solomiya Brateyko (UKR) 3-0 (11-8, 11-8, 11-6)

Stefan Fegerl & Sofia Polcanova (AUT) bt Paul Drinkhall & Charlotte Carey (WAL) 3-0 (11-9, 11-8, 11-7)

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