



English duo defeated in Swedish Open

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Liam Pitchford and Paul Drinkhall have been knocked out of the Swedish Open in the semi-finals.

The pair, the 17th seed here, took the first game 11-5 against No 4 seeds Liao Cheng-Ting & Lin Yun-Ju (TPE), but then saw their opponents reel off the next three to go through to the finals.

The Chinese Taipei pair narrowly won the second and third games 13-11 and 12-10, and then took the fourth 8-11, ending English involvement in the World Tour event.

In the quarter-final round earlier that day, Pitchford and Drinkhall had an incredible battle against Japan's Tomokazu Harimoto & Yuto Kizukuri.

Pitchford & Drinkhall lost the first game 13-11.

They then went down 10-6 in the second game, before saving four game points to even the score to 10-10. A point by point battle then commenced, with the English duo eventually taking the second game 16-14.

In game three, the score was once again levelled at 6-6, when Pitchford and Drinkhall then pulled away, winning the next 5 points to make it 11-6 and lead with 2 games to 1.

Harimoto & Kizukuri then fought back to take the fourth game 11-9, leaving all to play for in the deciding game.

After taking an early 3-0 lead, Pitchford and Drinkhall then found themselves 9-10 down, but with a place in the semi-finals at stake, the English pair pulled through to win the next two points to and lead 11-10.

The final point came with a finish to remember – Paul Drinkhall was left almost sitting on the floor after executing a forehand top spin that left Liam Pitchford looking on in disbelief.



The finish to remember- Paul Drinkhall after that forehand top spin

The pair, along with Andrew Baggaley, Tin-Tin Ho and Maria Tsaptsinos, will be playing again next week as the ITTF World Tour Austrian Open starts. The qualifying group action begins in Linz on November 6.

The world's top 14 male players will all be present, with the top 16 seeds completed by two high-ranked Austrian players (Daniel Habesohn and Robert Gardos) in their home country. On the women's side, the seeds comprise the world's top 15 and the 33rd-ranked Austrian Liu Jia.

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