



Pitchford exits Australian Open

Author: Paul Stimpson

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Liam Pitchford is out of the Australian Open after a 4-0 defeat to China's Wang Chuqin.

The first two games were close, with the England No 1 saving a handful of game points, but Chuqin proved to be in charge at the business end of each, taking them 11-8 and 11-9.

Pitchford, who turned 26 today, then struggled to get a foothold in the third, and was 10-0 down before he managed to get on the board. He lost the third 11-1, and was then knocked out in the fourth and final game after an 11-8 defeat.

Speaking after the match, Pitchford said:

I'm disappointed that I couldn't win today but I came up against a player on top of his game and I couldn't find a way through him unfortunately.

It's been a long season, full of ups and downs, so now I'm going to enjoy the rest of the tournament and then head home and take some weeks off to recharge for the new season coming up.

The full match will be available to watch later today on the ITTF's streaming service itTV (requires registration).

Chuqin, world No 71, was named as one to watch by the ITTF back in January after taking silver at the Hungarian Open and beating a host of big names on the way, including world No 8 Hugo Calderano (BRA) and world No 3 Fan Zhendong (CHN). In April the 19-year-old took gold in the Men's Doubles at the 2019 World Table Tennis Championships alongside current Olympic and World Champion Ma Long.

Pitchford, seeded 14th in the tournament, had earlier defeated South Korea's Cho Daeseong 4-2 (11-7, 9-11, 16-14, 11-8, 9-11) in his opening match of the tournament.

Results

Men's Singles

Round of 16

Wang Chuqin (CHN) bt Liam Pitchford 4-0 (11-8, 11-9, 11-1, 11-8)

Round of 32

Liam Pitchford bt Daeseong Cho (KOR) 4-2 (11-7, 9-11, 16-14, 11-8, 9-11, 11-8)

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