



Liam falls at first hurdle as Shibaev doubles up

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Alexander Shibaev ended Liam Pitchford's hopes of emulating last year's run to the semi-finals of the Czech Open as he defeated the English No 1 in the last 32 today.

Pitchford had beaten the great German Dimitrij Ovtcharov on his way to the last four this time last year, but on this occasion he struggled for consistency as he exited at the first hurdle at the hands of the Russian world No 65.

Pitchford particularly seemed to struggle on his own serve, winning 21 points but losing 33 as Shibaev completed a double victory over English opponents, having knocked out Paul Drinkhall in the qualifying rounds.

Shibaev led 2-1 after the first three games and the fourth had the look of a pivotal game as Pitchford took it 13-11 on his third game point.

But it did not turn out that way as Shibaev retook the lead with an 11-3 game. And despite Pitchford leading the sixth 4-0, his opponent came back to win it on his second match point.

[Click here to watch Pitchford v Shibaev](#) (registration required).

[Walker goes out despite big win.](#)

Result

Men's Singles

Round of 32

Alexander Shibaev (RUS) bt Liam Pitchford 4-2 (11-5, 6-11, 11-6, 11-13, 11-3, 11-8)

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