

Naomi loses seven game thriller

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Welsh no. one Naomi Owen (World ranked no. 318) came close to pulling off what would have been a sensational win in the second stage of the Ladies Singles Qualifying Competition group matches at the ETTA Pro Tour. Playing the World no. 92, the former World no. 2 and master of the high tossed serve – Tamora Boros (Croatia) the Welsh girl produced some stunning play, matching her illustrious opponent all the way to 6-6 in the seventh game. A shock result seemed a real possibility. However, Boros, aged 33, the 2003 Paris World Championships Singles Bronze medallist is one of the most experienced players on the tour and she was able to call on that experience. And more. A very relieved Boros eventually won 8-11, 11-5, 8-11, 11-7, 3-11, 11-8, 11-8.

Another Welsh girl. Charlotte Carey (ranked no. 848 globally) had the honour of playing Chinese ace defender Fan Ying, the Winner of the Ladies Singles at the Polish Pro Tour in 2009. It would be hard to imagine a more difficult draw (bearing in mind that her opponent is currently not ranked at World level). Charlotte had to dig deep to lose 1-11, 4-11, 3-11, 4-11. Ireland's top player Liu Na (the World no. 212) is also in this group. Having already lost to Fan Ying, she needed a "big" performance against Dana Hadacova (World no. 143) to have any hope of progressing. She played well, but to no avail. Dana ran out a 11-5, 11-5, 4-11, 11-8, 11-9 winner.

England no. one Cadet Tin-Tin Ho, at 13, the youngest ever player to play in the ITTF Pro Tour also became the youngest player to notch up a victory. She scored a fine 11-9, 12-10, 11-7, 11-9 victory over World no. 1078 Megan Phillips (Wales).

Natalie Slater, the England no. 13 Senior / no. seven Junior was another player to come up against formidable Oriental opposition, this time in the shape of Han Ying (Germany). She will have enjoyed the experience despite losing 4-0.

Yolanda King, the England no. six Junior was also a loser. Ranked no. 1074 globally she missed out in five close games against Angharad Phillips (Wales and ranked no. 1000 internationally) 12-14 12-10, 9-11, 5-11, 9-11.

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