

All over for Britain at the ETTC

Author: Paul Stimpson

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After the high of Thursday it was always likely that Friday would be a bit of a come down. In fact, by lunchtime it was all over when Gavin Rumgay was the last man to fall following his defeat to Jorgen Persson (SWE) (36).

The big match of the day was, of course, all-conquering Liam Pitchford's last 32 match with Spaniard world number 62, Wen He Zhi.

It began badly with He Zhi racing into a 2-0 lead after crushing the 18 year old 11-3 in the second game. But, like so often in this tournament, just when everyone was writing him off, Pitchford fought back.

He took the next two games 11-8 to level immediately and suddenly bring belief back to the English fans. Although He Zhi then went ahead again, Pitchford levelled to take the score to 3-3 and the match into a deciding game.

Unfortunately, He Zhi led throughout and eventually closed out a tight match 11-8. That won't take away the memories of a brilliant tournament for the youngster though. Who knows how far he can go in the World Junior Championships in Bahrain in mid-November?

The last remaining women's player Kelly Sibley also lost both her games to drop out. Firstly, she and partner Joanna Parker lost to Svetlana Ganina and Viktoria Pavlovich in the doubles before she lost to Li Jiao in the singles. She wasn't expected to win either game against tough opposition.

This left just Darius Knight and Gavin Rumgay left in the main competition (Craig Howieson reached the last 16 of the consolation event before his defeat). Knight started his game well with Croatian Ivan Juzbasic by taking the first set but he quickly lost the next three. He fought back in the fifth to give himself a glimmer of hope but his fate was sealed when Juzbasic won the sixth game 11-9.

Rumgay, thus, was the last Brit left in the tournament and he took a surprise lead against Swedish legend Jorgen Persson. Persson levelled in the second game but, just as dramatically, Rumgay went ahead 2-1 in the third. It was not to be in the end as Persson showed his experience to win 4-2 but Rumgay showed great fight in a match he was never likely to win.

Great credit goes out to all the guys who competed at the event and although today was slightly disappointing, that will never mar the sheer drama and excitement from yesterday.

Results:

Pavlovich/Ganina bt Parker/Sibley 3-0 (11-6, 11-5, 11-4)

Li bt Sibley 4-0 (11-6, 11-5, 11-8, 11-7)

Howieson bt Berner 3-1 (11-13, 12-10, 11-6, 12-10)

He Zhi bt Pitchford 4-3 (11-6, 11-3, 8-11, 8-11, 11-6, 9-11, 11-8)

Persson bt Rumgay 4-2 (10-12, 11-5, 9-11, 11-6, 11-7 11-6)

Juzbasic bt Knight 4-2 (8-11, 11-5, 11-7, 11-7, 12-14, 11-9)

Yiangou bt Howieson 3-1 (11-3, 3-11, 11-5, 12-10)

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