

Bronze finish for Tin-Tin at EYC

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Tin-Tin Ho's run at the European Youth Championships came to an end with a semi-final defeat to Germany's Alena Lemmer.

While Tin-Tin will return from Austria with a bronze medal it will seem scant consolation after her sights were set on the big prize.

Like her quarter-final victory over Daria Chernova yesterday, she suffered from a slow start and once again fell 2-0 behind. She had never beaten the German before and by falling 7-1 behind in the first it looked set to continue.

She eventually lost the first game 11-8 and had a poorly timed wobble in the second game to move from 7-7 to 9-7 down to again lose it 11-8.

However, in the third game she took control of the crucial point at 8-8 when she forced Lemmer to net and this produced a small fist-pump from the English girl. She went on to win the game 11-9 when Lemmer netted again before chopping long on game point.

The fourth game was neck-and-neck until Tin-Tin took a 10-8 lead only to see herself pegged back when three consecutive serves from the German clipped the net and upset her rhythm. However, a powerful cross-table backhand saw Tin-Tin open up a third game point, which she duly took to level the scores at 2-2.

Lemmer was being forced to slow down the game at every opportunity, including at one point adjusting her hair-clip, as anything short was being punished by the English star. From 7-6 up in the fifth game it appeared that Tin-Tin was in control but another poorly timed run meant the German took a 10-7 lead and 11-8 game.

At this point it was all-or-nothing and when Tin-Tin led 6-4 in the sixth game she gave a big fist-pump acknowledging the importance of the point. From there she cruised to 8-4 up but was dragged back to 9-9.

She expertly opened up a game point when she provided a quick backhand defence to a huge Lemmer forehand, following which the German could only net. However, that was the last point she won as Lemmer forced her into three mistakes which cost the game.

Although it's disappointing not to reach the final there'll be plenty more opportunities for Tin-Tin who continues to impress on the international stage.

Result:

Cadet girls singles (semi-final):

Alena Lemmer (GER) bt Tin-Tin Ho 4-2 (11-8, 11-8, 9-11, 10-12, 11-8, 12-10)

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