

Drinkhall & Baggaley remain in Germany

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Posted On: November 01, 2012



Paul Drinkhall remained untroubled as he reached the first round of the men's singles after a second successive 4-1 victory at the GAC Group 2012 ITTF World Tour German Open in Bremen.

On Wednesday, the English number 1 beat the host nation's Frederick Jost 4-1 before exacting similar punishment to Poland's Piotr Chodorski to reach the first round. There he will face world number 22 Koki Niwa from Japan – a match live on itTV from 12 noon.

Also in the first round is Andrew Baggaley who had a much more interesting route after losing his second group game to Nima Alamian (IRI) 4-2. The result, in the end, was still enough for the 29-year-old to make the final qualifying play-off.

In the play-off, Baggaley was dominant once again, beating Russia's Ivan Katkov by a comfortable 4-1 margin. He will now face Alexey Smirnov in the first round at 14:15 – Smirnov now representing Belgium.

Where Baggaley succeeded in the play-off, youngster Liam Pitchford failed as he fell to a dramatic seven-game defeat to Poland's Jakub Kosowski (157).

The 19-year-old had marched through his group with successive 4-0 wins but defeat to Kosowski will leave him with just the under-21s' tournament to fight for. The crucial point in the play-off match came in the fifth where Pitchford sacrificed a 10-7 lead to lose it 14-12 en route to defeat.

Meanwhile, Darius Knight was unable to beat the top seed in his group, Pavel Platonov, in order to progress. Needing to win at least 4-2 to take the group to countback, the Englishman leveled at 2-2 but was unable to push on from there as he lost an ultimately decisive fifth game 11-9 to the Bulgarian.

In the doubles only Pitchford and Drinkhall were able to advance through the first qualifying round after they were given a walkover and both Baggaley/Knight and Gavin Evans/David McBeath were beaten 3-2 in their respective encounters.

However, they were then beaten in the second qualifying round by the Swedish pair of Fabian Akerstrom and Mattias Oversjo 3-0.

GAC Group 2012 ITTF World Tour German Open Fixtures

Men's Singles First Round

Paul Drinkhall vs Koki Niwa (JPN) 12:00 – *table 1*

Andrew Baggaley vs Alexey Smirnov (BEL) 14:15

Boy's Under-21s First Round

Liam Pitchford vs Frederick Jost (GER) 17:00

GAC Group 2012 ITTF World Tour German Open Results

Men's Singles Qualifying

Group 3:

Paul Drinkhall bt Piotr Chodorski (POL) 4-1 (11-4, 11-6, 8-11, 16-14, 11-4)

Group 21:

Nima Alamian (IRI) bt Andrew Baggaley 4-2 (12-10, 11-7, 6-11, 11-5, 6-11, 11-9)

Group 29:

Pavel Platonov (BUL) bt Darius Knight 4-2 (8-11, 11-4, 11-5, 9-11, 11-9, 11-5)

Group 30:

Liam Pitchford bt Stanislav Golovanov (BUL) 4-0 (11-5, 11-8, 11-9, 11-4)

Men's Singles Pre-Round

Jakub Kosowski (POL) bt Liam Pitchford 4-3 (7-11, 8-11, 11-8, 11-8, 14-12, 8-11, 11-6)

Andrew Baggaley bt Ivan Katkov (RUS) 4-1 (9-11, 11-9, 11-8, 11-5, 14-12)

Men's Doubles:

Omar Assar (EGY)/Borna Kovac (NED) bt Gavin Evans/David McBeath 3-2 (11-7, 7-11, 11-4, 6-11, 11-8)

Ewout Oostwouder/Casper Ter Luun (NED) bt Andrew Baggaley/Darius Knight 3-2 (5-11, 11-3, 6-11, 11-8, 11-7)

Paul Drinkhall/Liam Pitchford bt Petko Gabrovski/Gordan Grozdanov (BUL) walkover

Fabian Akerstrom/Mattias Oversjo (SWE) bt Paul Drinkhall/Liam Pitchford 3-0 (11-8, 11-5, 11-4)

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