

# Last English hopes extinguished in German Open

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Liam Pitchford lost a dramatic under-21s match in Bremen as the last of the English hopes was extinguished at the GAC Group 2012 ITTF World Tour German Open.

Pitchford, playing with a finger injury, was facing the host nation's Frederick Jost in the last 32. Jost began well taking the opening game 11-9 before Pitchford replied with another tight 11-8 game.

That pattern repeated itself in games three and four as Pitchford replied 11-7 to Jost's 11-9 third game as the match headed to a decider. Unfortunately, for the Englishman he was defeated 13-11 in a tense finale.

Earlier both Andrew Baggaley and Paul Drinkhall had been beaten in the last 64 of the men's' singles.

The 29-year-old Baggaley from Northampton managed to lead his opponent, world number 46 Alexey Smirnov, 2-1 after overturning a first game deficit. However, soon after that the Englishman found himself on the end of defeat as the European star waltzed through the last three games, conceding just eight points on the way.

Baggaley's team-mate Drinkhall found the going just as tough on Friday as he also fell in the last 64, this time to young Japanese star Koki Niwa.

Niwa, famous for beating Ma Long in the Asian Olympic Qualification Tournament, just had the upper-edge on Drinkhall throughout their encounter as three successive 11-8 games gave him a commanding lead.

With the Englishman's will broken, Niwa stormed through the fourth game 11-5 to reach the last 32 in Bremen.

## **Men's Singles last 64**

Koki Niwa (JPN) bt Paul Drinkhall 4-0 (11-8, 11-8, 11-8, 11-5)

Alexey Smirnov (BEL) bt Andrew Baggaley 4-2 (11-9, 9-11, 8-11, 11-2, 11-4, 11-2)

## **Boy's Singles last 32**

Frederick Jost (GER) bt Liam Pitchford 3-2 (11-9, 8-11, 11-9, 7-11, 13-11)

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