

Helshan denied in Youth Olympics bid

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England's no. 1 Junior Boy, Helshan Weerasinghe was dealt a blow in his Youth Olympic Games Qualification campaign in the Czech Republic.

The tournament system involved three stages, two of which provided chances for players to confirm their place in Nanjing, China for the Second Youth Olympic Games (August 17-28, 2014).

Only four places were available in Hodonin, Czech Republic with two progressing from stage 2 and two from stage 3, unfortunately for the young Englishman, he was unable to secure either passage.

He opened his account with a difficult-looking group including Carl J-Ahlander (SWE) and Aliaksandr Khanin (BLR) who were both able to get the better of the reigning National Junior Champion. He was particularly unfortunate in his defeat to the Swede Ahlander, after fighting back from 2-0 down to level the match, he fell 11-8 in the deciding game.

However, Helshan was able to progress into the second stage, courtesy of his victory over Louis Van Wambeke (LUX) in stage 1, which put him in draw B.

Two players from this draw progress to the final stage and have a second shot at qualification but once again the Englishman was denied, this time at the final hurdle.

After beating Samuel Kaluzny (SVK) 4-1 he faced Andreas Levenko (AUT) in the semi-final – the winner of which would progress to stage 3. However, Helshan's 4-1 defeat meant that the door to qualification closed in Hodonin for a final time.

The Kent-based junior will remain in the Czech Republic while he takes part in the Czech Junior and Cadet Open (Hodonin, February 12-16th) alongside Sam Mabey and Jared Patel – hoping to bounce back from the disappointment earlier in the week.

2014 Youth Olympic Games Continental Qualification – Europe

Hodonin (CZE, February 9-11, 2014)

Results:

Junior Boys' Singles:

Stage 1 Group 4:

Carl J-Ahlander (SWE) bt Helshan Weerasinghe 3-2 (14-12, 12-10, 9-11, 6-11, 11-8)

Helshan Weerasinghe bt Louis Van Wambeke (LUX) 3-0 (11-9, 11-2, 11-3)

Aliaksandr Khanin (BLR) bt Helshan Weerasinghe 3-1 (11-7, 11-7, 12-14, 11-6)

Stage 2 Boys' Draw B:

Quarter-Final:

Helshan Weerasinghe bt Samuel Kaluzny (SVK) 4-1 (11-9, 8-11, 11-4, 11-6, 11-8)

Semi-Final:

Andreas Levenko (AUT) bt Helshan Weerasinghe 4-1 (11-6, 11-9, 11-6, 8-11, 11-8)

Russell Moore (February 12, 2014)

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