

England youngsters face play-offs

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Adam Harrison, who enjoyed a fine win in the match against Ukraine

England's Junior and Cadet boys' teams both face a tough task to remain in the top division of the European Youth Championships.

The junior boys' team consisting of Helshan Weerasinghe, Adam Harrison, Danny Lawrence and Sam Mabey finished bottom of their group at the event in Italy, having lost to Denmark, Portugal and France.

The then went into a play-off against Ukraine but lost 3-2 in a thriller. Weerasinghe and Lawrence lost their first matches but Harrison then won 11-9 in the fifth against Vladyslav Totkalo and Weerasinghe levelled the tie at 2-2, beating Kyrylo Samokysk in five. However, Lawrence was then beat in four in the decider against Vladyslav Ratushniak.

That put the juniors through to the play-offs for positions 17 to 28 – with only a 17th-place finish enough to guarantee a place in the top division for next season.

They started well with a 3-1 victory over Israel and are due to face Belgium later on Monday.

In the Cadets' event, Tom Jarvis and Luke Savill won their group thanks to victories over Jersey, Luxembourg and Scotland, with the highlight being Savill's 3-2 defeat of Chris Wheeler, taking the decider 11-8 after being pegged back from 2-0 ahead.

But the pair were then beaten 3-0 by Slovenia in their first play-off, meaning they too are playing for positions 17 to 28. They started with a 3-1 win over Ukraine, and face Greece later on Monday.

By Paul Stimpson (July 14th, 2014)

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