

Sibley tells of team's disappointment

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Kelly Sibley and Tin-Tin Ho during their doubles clash. Picture by Paul Devlin (ITTF)

England's No 2 Kelly Sibley says the team always knew their quarter-final against Malaysia would be tough – but that does not lessen the disappointment of defeat.

Sibley and her team-mates Joanna Drinkhall and Tin-Tin Ho went down 3-2 to the Asian team in Glasgow, meaning their hopes of going at least one better than their fourth-place finish in Delhi were dashed – by the same team which beat them in the bronze medal match four years ago.

Leamington ace Sibley said: "We all wanted a medal, so we're really disappointed. Singapore are one of the top teams and they are really up there, but after that any of the next six or seven seeds can medal.

"When we got drawn against Malaysia we knew it would be tough and unfortunately they came out on top."

After Drinkhall had put England 1-0 ahead by beating Beh Lee Wei in three straight, Sibley was defeated in three close sets by Ng Sock Khim and she said: "I knew it was going to be difficult because we played them in the bronze medal match in Delhi four years ago, and the girl I lost to is very quick.

"I tried my best, but on the day she was very quick and I struggled with that. I tried to stick to my tactics because I thought it was the right thing to do and I was winning points that way, but she's a really good player and it showed on the day."

Sibley and Ho lost a thrilling doubles clash in five to Wei and Ho Ying, before Dinkhall's 3-0 triumph over Ying made it all square.

It meant that Ho's singles clash with Khim was effectively a shootout for a semi-final place, and things looked good for England as the 15-year-old Ho went into a 2-0 lead. But Khim dug deep to mount a comeback and take her side into the last four.

Ho said: "I think being up made me worry a little bit, but I still felt quite confident and I thought I could do it.

"I've never played in front of a home crowd before this so it was a great experience. I will just have to learn from the experience and move forward."

By Paul Stimpson (July 27th, 2014)

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