

Helshan & Co face China Challenge at Stockton

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Top seed Helshan Weerasinghe

With three players who have travelled from the Shenzhen Nanshan Sports Academy in China, plus the majority of the top British Juniors competing, the Tees Active Stockton on Tees 4 Star Junior Table Tennis Championships this weekend promises to be one of the highest-standard junior events in Britain this season.

The top seed in the Boys' Singles is Helshan Weerasinghe from Sussex, who is ranked No 1 in England. He is already the English Junior Masters champion, a former Sainsbury's School Games champion and has won major tournaments in Europe.

The second seed is Tom Jarvis from Lincolnshire, who was Britain's top Cadet player last year and was this year's Sainsbury's School Games champion.

The third and fourth seeds are Zehong Huang and Bin Xiaoyong, both from China. They are in England as part of a visit to the Ormesby Club organised through the Club's Talent Development Programme and are reported to be similar in standard to both Weerasinghe and Jarvis.

In the Junior Girls' singles, Britain's two top players, Tin-Tin Ho from Middlesex and Maria Tsaptsinos from Berkshire, are the first and second seeds. Ho won the Sainsbury's School Games in Manchester last month and won the silver medal in the Commonwealth Games Mixed Doubles in Glasgow with Liam Pitchford, whilst Tsaptsinos won both the English Junior and the English Under-21 titles last year.

In the Under-15 Cadet Boys' singles the top two seeds are both from the China team, Zehong Huang and Bin Xiaoyong. The third and fourth seeds are Harry Dai from Yorkshire and Alex Ramsden from Northamptonshire.

In the Cadet Girls' singles, Denise Payet from Middlesex is the top seed with Kate Cheer from Sussex second. Top Cleveland hope is third seed Sophie Barlow, who is drawn to meet Cheer in the semi-finals.

In the Boys' Under-13 singles, the top seed is China's Cai Zmifa, while the best English hope is the current Under-12 champion Ethan Walsh from Hertfordshire.

In the Girls' Under-13 singles, the top seed is Charlotte Bardsley from Staffordshire with Amelia Chan from Middlesex in second place. Yorkshire's Jasmin Wong is third.

The Championships begin at Thornaby Pavilion on Saturday at 9am, with the finals of the team events taking place from 1pm. The Under-15 finals commence at 7pm. On Sunday, the Junior Boys' team final will take place from 9am, with the Junior Boys' and Girls' singles semi-final sessions, when most of the top seeds will be on show, commencing around 3pm.

[To view the event programme, please click here](#)

Alan Ransome

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