

Drinkhall edged out at first stage in Bangkok

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Paul Drinkhall in action against Peng Tang (ITTF photo)

Paul Drinkhall today lost a close match in the first round of the ITTF Grand Finals in Bangkok.

The English No 1 was beaten by Peng Tang of Hong Kong despite twice leading.

The 24-year-old Teesider took the first 11-8 but saw his opponent level by taking the second 11-5.

Drinkhall went back in front but Tang won a pivotal fourth game, in which Drinkhall led 10-6, and went on to secure a 4-2 win (8-11, 11-5, 9-11, 13-11, 11-8, 11-8).

Drinkhall, the first English player to qualify for the finals since Carl Prean in the inaugural series in 1996, wins \$8,000 for his efforts in reaching the year-ending tournament, which has a field of only 16 players.

He tweeted after his loss: "Tough loss this morning losing 4-2 from a winning position at 2-1 and 10-6 up. Disappointed in today but it has been a great year for me!!"

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– Paul Drinkhall (@pdrinkhall) [December 12, 2014](#)

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