

Helshan cannot prevent Bahrain defeats

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Posted On: February 03, 2015



Helshan Weerasinghe

Helshan Weerasinghe won five out of six matches but could not prevent he and his team-mates from being eliminated from the Bahrain Junior & Cadet Open team competition.

Playing alongside India's Mudit Dani and Ahmed Meshref of Egypt, Weerasinghe showed good form in the three group matches.

The 17-year-old Sussex player started by winning both his matches against Kuwait but was unable to stop his team losing 3-2 overall.

He comfortably beat Ali Altabtabie 3-0 (11-4, 11-3, 11-5) to make it 1-1 and then saw off Marzooq Alrashidi 3-1 (11-5, 11-8, 10-12, 11-6) to make the match score 2-2.

Against Saudi Arabia, Weerasinghe again made it 1-1 with a 3-0 victory over Abdulaziz Bu Shulaybi (11-7, 11-8, 11-5) but then lost 3-1 to Ali Alkhadrawi (2-11, 9-11, 11-5, 4-11) as the overall score again ended 3-2 to their opponents.

He and his team-mates tasted victory in their final match against a combined Bahrain/UAE team. Weerasinghe was first on court and beat Abdulla Almohaiseni 3-0 (11-4, 11-2, 11-7) to set his team on the way.

He then completed a 3-1 overall victory by beating Sayed Ali Mahfoodh 3-0 (5, 2, 7).

But the earlier defeats meant the consolation competition awaited, rather than the main draw, with the team going straight into the final against Bahrain.

And Weerasinghe was again in good form beating Husain Alajni 3-0 (11-8, 11-7, 11-6) in his only match – though this could not prevent a 3-1 defeat.

He will also be playing in the singles and doubles events, which get under way on Thursday.

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