



Tin-Tin leads three-way assault on World Juniors

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Tin-Tin Ho is back from injury and ready to compete for England on the world stage once more.

The Paddington 17-year-old has recovered from an ankle problem which has kept her out of the game since her successful European Youth Championships appearance in the summer, when she reached the last 16 and helped the team to seventh place.

And her recovery could not be better timed, with the World Junior Championships due to get under way in France on Sunday, and the Commonwealth Championships to follow next month.

It will be Tin-Tin's second World Juniors appearance and she will be joined in Vendee by Helshan Weerasinghe and Maria Tsaptsinos, who have both been called up from the reserve list.

Having missed events including the Europe Youth Top 10 and the senior European Championships, it is no surprise that Tin-Tin is raring to go again.

"I'm really excited because it will be my first tournament of the season and I'm looking to get back and continue from the European Youth Championships, where I played well," she said.

"It's been quite hard being injured – I really wanted to do well at the Europe Youth Top 10 – but I've been focusing on trying to get back rather than on the tournaments I've missed.

"In a way it's been positive because I've also had a chance to have some rehab on my hips and calves."

At last year's event in Shanghai, Tin-Tin reached the last 64 of the singles, where she was beaten by Korea's Eunchoe Ji, and also reached the last 32 of the mixed doubles alongside Russia's Sadi Ismailov.

She said: "I think I did okay last year but lost my focus a bit in the (singles) match I lost, so I'm hoping I have learned from that.

"I think I can get some good wins over people that are ranked higher than me."

For Helshan, who will partner Tin-Tin in the mixed doubles as well as featuring in the singles, it is a first appearance at the World Juniors, and he said: "It's a great opportunity for me, I'm excited for it. I'm not too sure what I can achieve, I'm just looking to do the best I can and to focus on my own game and see how far that can

take me.”

The 18-year-old from Kent has been living and training full-time in Eslov in Sweden since August and is playing for the Amager club in the Danish League.

He said: “It’s been a good experience so far. Training is good and I’ve settled in – I’m not nervy living here.

“The matches are good quality, there’s good coaching and sparring partners and the facilities are good. The training hall and the gym are nearby and it’s only a 40-minute train journey to Copenhagen if I need to go to England.”

Recent events in Paris have of course put security at sporting events under the microscope, but Helshan added: “I’m not too concerned about that, it’s not preying on my mind. I’m just looking forward to the tournament itself.”

It is also a first appearance at the event for Maria and, as well as the singles, she will play doubles with Tin-Tin in Vendee, as she did at the European Youths, although her involvement there was cut short by a shoulder injury.

Maria said: “I’m really looking forward to it. It was a bit of a surprise to get invited and it will be a challenge when I am out there but it will definitely be a good experience and a tournament not to miss!

“Even if things don’t go 100% out there I’m hoping it will set me up for India and the Commonwealth Championships.

“I’m really looking forward to being able to play with Tin-Tin in the doubles and hopefully get some good results – especially as we were prepared to do some damage in the European Youths and then my injury took over, so this tournament we will be able to show everyone what we are capable of.

“I think the whole experience of the tournament will be a brilliant one and I can’t wait to get out there and put all the practice I’ve been doing to the test.”

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