



Doran and Rushton celebrate hardbat success

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Chris Doran was a double winner at the hardbat Hilversum Open tournament in the Netherlands, retaining his individual title and also winning the team event alongside Andrew Rushton.

The Northamptonshire player, the top seed, came through five group matches and three knockout rounds without dropping a set to take his place in the final, where he faced fellow Englishman Rushton.

And in an hour-long final, it was Doran who prevailed in five games against his former house-mate – 11-7, 8-11, 11-9, 11-13, 11-1.

Rushton's path to the final had not been as straightforward as he dropped one game in the group stage and was then taken to four in the first round by Ian de Graaf.

The quarter-final was even closer as he beat Arnoud Meijer 3-2 (13-15, 11-8, 11-13, 11-8, 11-9) and he also needed four games in the semi-final against Kazeem Adeleke.

In the team event, Doran and Rushton were emphatic winners, dropping only one game in the whole event, culminating in beating Germany's Michael-Stefan Keller and Reginald Kraaijenbrink of the host nation in the final.



Chris Doran and Andrew Rushton with the team trophy

Doran said: "We won the team event pretty comfortably, to be honest. In the singles, the No 3 seed lost in his group and the other seeds were in the other half of the draw, so it opened up.

"But it was a really tough final. It probably makes it a little bit harder playing a friend, but you don't really think about it when you're on the table.

"I've been a little bit injury prone in the last three years and I'm probably a little bit slower now with the sponge bats. The sandpaper bats give me a little more time and the footwork is probably not so important, so it suits me well."

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