



English trio head for exit in Germany

Author: Paul Stimpson

Posted On: January 28, 2016

The three remaining English players at the German Open were today eliminated by higher-ranked opponents.

Liam Pitchford, Paul Drinkhall and Sam Walker all needed to win two more matches to join the top 16 seeds in the main draw of the event, which has the strongest field ever assembled for an ITTF World Tour event.

Pitchford, ranked 61, was up against Li Ping of Qatar who is 30 places above him on the world list. The Chesterfield man got off to a great start as he took the first, and he had his chances to extend the lead before going down 19-17 in the second. The next two games were shared before Ping made his decisive move in the fifth, blitzing it 11-1. And although Pitchford fought hard, he could not get back in the match.



Paul Drinkhall's 4-0 defeat flattered his opponent in a tight match. Picture: ITTF/Rémy Gros

The story of Drinkhall's match against world No 53 Weixing Chen of Austria is hidden by the 4-0 scoreline. The first was a marathon game which the Austrian took 22-20, and two of the other three went to deuce as Drinkhall, ranked 70, battled hard to get himself on the board.

Walker, fresh from his sensational defeat of Kim Donghyun in the previous round, could not find a repeat against Kirill Skachkov of Russia, ranked 66, as he went down in four straight.

Walker was also defeated in the Under-21 Men's Singles, beaten 3-1 in the last 32 by Tamas Lakatos of Hungary.

Results

Men's Singles

Preliminary Rounds

Round of 64

Li Ping (QAT) bt Liam Pitchford 4-2 (9-11, 19-17, 11-8, 8-11, 11-1, 11-7)

Weixing Chen (AUT) bt Paul Drinkhall 4-0 (22-20, 12-10, 11-4, 12-10)

Kirill Skachkov (RUS) bt Sam Walker 4-0 (11-9, 11-5, 11-9, 11-7)

Under-21 Men's Singles

Round of 32

Tamas Lakatos (HUN) bt Walker 3-1 (11-9, 11-6, 7-11, 11-8)

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