



Trio head to Russia for first Under-21 Euros

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Tin-Tin Ho, Helshan Weerasinghe and Tom Jarvis carry English hopes into the inaugural European Under-21 Championships, which start on Thursday.

The top 56 men and top 56 women in the European rankings have been invited to compete in singles and doubles competitions in the host city of Sochi in Russia.

Ho is ranked No 16 in the women's singles, with Weerasinghe 42nd and Jarvis 48th in the men's. Jarvis and Weerasinghe will play together in the men's doubles, while Ho will partner Charlotte Carey of Wales in the women's doubles.

The event was introduced by the European Table Tennis Union to help players making the transition from Junior to Senior status. Singles and doubles competitions will be held in alternate years, with team events in between.

Ho said:

"I think it's a really good idea because there's quite a big jump from Juniors to Seniors, even though they have Under-21s on the World Tour.

"To have this as another stepping stone is really good and keeps my motivation and focus."

She has not set particular targets, adding:

"It's more about how I play and to play the way I know I can and see where that takes me."

The English trio will play in groups of four in the first stage, with the top two from each group going through to

join the top eight seeds in another round of groups of four. The qualifiers from that stage go into a last 16 knockout.

The doubles are played on a straight knockout basis and the event finishes on Sunday.

The top seeds in the women's event are Nina Mittelham of Germany and Adina Diaconu of Romania, while the leading male players are Sweden's Anton Kallberg and Tomislav Pucar of Croatia.

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