



Relentless Ovtcharov sinks Drinkhall

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Posted On: June 01, 2017

Dimitrij Ovtcharov showed why he is the No 1 player in Europe as he defeated Paul Drinkhall 4-1 in the last 64 of the World Championships today.

Drinkhall had beaten the world No 5 before and would have approached the match with confidence, but in front of his home crowd in Dusseldorf, the German was not in the mood to give much away.

The first three sets saw a pattern of one player building up a big lead early on. It was the German in the first, leading 7-1 and taking it 11-3, but that was reversed as Drinkhall led 8-1 on his way to taking the second 11-5, getting into the rallies early and taking control.

Then Ovtcharov reversed the momentum, winning five of the first six points in game three and going on to seal it 11-4.

The first half of the fourth game was tighter, Drinkhall's timeout at 3-6 down seeing him close to 5-6 and prompting the world No 5 to take his own timeout.

This time, the run of points was at the end of the game, the German taking five on the bounce to clinch it 11-5 and move to within a game of the last 32.

A decent contingent of English supporters in amongst the home fans did their best to lift Drinkhall but again it was Ovtcharov who took charge in the fifth, leading 4-1 and 8-2 with some relentless shot-making.

Drinkhall took a couple of points but a missed forehand brought up six match points for Ovtcharov. And although Drinkhall saved the first, Ovtcharov was not to be denied and sealed a worthy 4-1 (11-3, 5-11, 11-4, 11-5, 11-5) triumph.



Drinkhall was the last English player left in the event after earlier [singles exits for Liam Pitchford and Sam Walker](#) in the last 128 and for David McBeath at the qualifying stage, while Drinkhall and Pitchford had [gone out of the doubles](#) in the last 64.

Also today, Sam Walker & David McBeath put up a great fight in the last 16 of the World Championships but were beaten 4-2 by the 12th seeds.

The English pair were up against Chien-An Chen & Cheng-Ting Liao of Taipei and had a difficult beginning against the left-hand/right-hand combination, losing the first three games all 11-5.

Those games were often scrappy – as evidenced by every player producing at least one service error – but the seeds were always in control.

But the English pair suddenly found their range and belief and blitzed the fourth game 11-3, forcing numerous errors out of their opponents with a front-foot display.

That continued into the fifth as the English pair led through most of the game. They missed a game point at 10-9, then saved a match point at 10-11 and went on to take their own fourth game point – presented to them by yet another service error – at 15-13.

The sixth game was close all the way to 6-6, but a four-point run by the seeds, who are ranked No 31 and No 100 in the world, broke the back of the game. They went on to seal a 4-2 (11-5, 11-5, 11-5, 3-11, 13-15, 11-7) triumph to move into the quarter-finals.

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