



England trio out of Qatar Open

Author: Paul Stimpson

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Liam Pitchford, Sam Walker and Paul Drinkhall were all knocked out of the Qatar Open today when they suffered defeats in their second qualifying group matches.

Pitchford could not repeat [yesterday's heroics against Xue Fei](#) when he faced German's world No 21 Bastian Steger. All the games were close, not least the fourth, which the German took 19-17 to open up a 3-1 lead. He then closed out the match in the next game.

It meant a three-way countback in the group, Xue having defeated Steger 4-2 yesterday, and it was Steger who advanced on games difference, with the unfortunate Pitchford in third.

Walker had a titanic battle against South Korea's Jang Woojin, ranked at No 39. Three times, Walker levelled the match, including winning two deuce games, to take it to a decider, but his opponent prevailed at the end and went through to the knockout stages.

Drinkhall took a 2-0 lead over Abdel-Kader Salifou of France but saw his opponent battle back to win the next four and top the group, both players having already defeated David McBeath.

Today's results

Men's Singles

Qualifying Group 13

Bastian Steger (GER) bt Pitchford 4-1 (12-10, 7-11, 11-9, 19-17, 11-8)

Group 15

Abdel-Kader Salifou (FRA) bt Drinkhall 4-2 (6-11, 8-11, 11-8, 11-4, 11-8, 11-6)

Group 17

Jang Woojin (KOR) bt Walker 4-3 (12-10, 7-11, 11-5, 10-12, 11-5, 12-14, 11-6)

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