

England's men suffered a painful defeat to Ukraine, despite leading 2-0 at an early stage in the match.

Although both countries campaigns for promotion from the Challenge Division had already been cut short, there were still positions to play for as the two sides met. England began well with Daniel Reed securing a comfortable straight games win over Ivan Katkov while Andrew Baggaley picked up a big win against Oleksandr Didukh after recovering from 2-1 and 8-4 down to steal in at the end 14-12 - saving two match points in the process.

Unfortunately for England that was as good as it got as both Sam Walker, in his debut appearance at the European Championships, and then Baggaley afterwards both lost close 3-2 matches as Ukraine fought back to level.

It was left to Reed, the hero against Turkey, to try and secure the win but Didukh wouldn't be denied this time as the Ukrainian completed the comeback for Ukraine with a 3-1 win. England will now face Serbia for 19-20th.

### **Men's Challenge Division:**

#### **Ukraine 3-2 England**

Daniel Reed (228) bt Ivan Katkov (242) 3-0 (11-5, 11-7, 11-5)

Andrew Baggaley (153) bt Oleksandr Didukh (150) 3-2 (11-7, 2-11, 5-11, 11-7, 14-12)

Yevhen Pryshchepa (292) bt Sam Walker (430) 3-2 (11-9, 6-11, 11-8, 8-11, 11-6)

Ivan Katkov (242) bt Andrew Baggaley (153) 3-2 (7-11, 11-9, 11-2, 9-11, 11-5)

Oleksandr Didukh (150) bt Daniel Reed (228) 3-1 (11-8, 11-7, 8-11, 11-2)

England's campaign for promotion back into the Championship Division came to an end in a plucky defeat against Sweden after a couple of narrow losses for Joanna Drinkhall and Kelly Sibley.

Sweden were by far the favourites with both Matilda Ekholm (world rank 42) and Li Fen (88) much-higher rated than their English opponents. However, firstly Drinkhall and then Sibley, pushed the Swedes close in tense matches.

Drinkhall held a 2-1 lead against Ekholm before the experienced Swede fought back to win with consecutive 11-8 games while Sibley also led 2-1 at one stage before Li Fen recovered to put Sweden 2-0 up.

The result was sealed by Caroline Wersall, who beat Tin-Tin Ho, which leaves England in the Challenge Division with a final match to come against Croatia.

### **Women's Challenge Division:**

#### **Sweden 3-0 England**

Matilda Ekholm (42) bt Joanna Drinkhall (164) 3-2 (11-8, 3-11, 9-11, 11-8, 11-8)

Li Fen (88) bt Kelly Sibley (213) 3-2 (11-7, 7-11, 9-11, 11-5, 11-4)

Caroline Wersall (u/r) bt Tin-Tin Ho (410) 3-1 (11-5, 11-5, 9-11, 11-9)

Written by Russell Moore (October 6, 2013)