

## Four more Indians bow out of the ATP Challenger

It was another dismal day for the Indian tennis players in the \$50,000 ATP Challengers Tuesday as four more of them fell by the wayside on the second day at the DLTA complex here.

The only surviving Indians are from the first day -- Ashutosh Singh and Vishnu Vardhan -- who made it to the second round Monday. While Ashutosh meets fourth-seeded Japanese Davis Cupper Go Soeda, Vardhan plays fifth-seeded Pakistani Aisam-ul-Haq Quereshi Wednesday.

Rain interfered with play for the second day running and in between the showers, third-seeded Dane Kirsten Pless made Indian Davis Cupper and a wildcard here Harsh Mankad look out of place, beating him 6-4,6-2.

Pless proved too strong for Mankad, making him run around the court with his solid ground strokes. The Dane served well too and backed it up with power-packed shots. Under the circumstances, Mankad did well to hold his serve till the tenth game before conceding the first set.

While Mankad continued to make errors, Pless upped his game to break the Indian twice in the second set.

Purav Raja was a victim of unforced errors against the US-based Indian Rajiv Ram, falling easily 1-6, 3-6. Raja could not cash in on his strong forehand because of his poor approach shots. Added to that, his courtcraft was clumsy and he could do little to stop Ram from moving up.

In the other matches involving Indians, Japan's Soeda outplayed qualifier Tushar Liberhan 6-1,6-0 while second-seeded Giles Muller of Luxembourg was stretched to a tie-break in the first set by another qualifier Rohan Gide before winning 7-6 (2), 6-2.

In the doubles, Yuki Bhambri and Kamala Kannan beat Sriram Balaji and Sunil Kumar Sipaeya 6-4,7-6(3) to move into the pre-quarterfinals.

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