

Samir Patel wins the 2007 Belgian Indoor Open Tournament Report by Abdul Ahmad

Croquet is a game that involves accuracy, determination, co-ordination, dedication, willingness, commitment and most of all, a passion for the game. The last of these qualities was surely the determining factor in attracting 10 players from far flung places such as England, Holland and Austria to come and join their Belgian hosts and play in this year's tournament.

The Argentine Suite at the Chateau du Lac Hotel was the venue for the contest. Two undersized lawns were set on its psychedelic carpet illuminated with artificial light. The lawn speed was crudely measured at 14 on the Plummer scale. The hidden traps under the carpet, unforgiving hoops, unpredictable ball travels and a demanding two day schedule set a stern test for the competitors.

The tournament attracted a number of spectators from the Brussels Croquet Club and a large contingent came from Germany to watch the whole event.

Colin Hemmings and Alex Jardine won their respective blocks at the end of the first day's play. Samir Patel and Richard Dickson would join them on the second day to decide the title. The other players would be engaged in a one ball consolation event.

The ten players, their partners, the visitors from Germany and members of the Brussels Croquet Club enjoyed the great hospitality of the hotel at the Grand 12th Night Dinner on first night. The magnificent banquet, free flowing red and white wine, short speeches and the challenging dinner game soon soothed the stresses caused by the day's punishing play in testing conditions.

On the second day, Samir Patel retained his Belgian Indoor Open Title with an impressive display of accurate hitting and constructive play. He beat Alex Jardine +25 in the Semi-Finals.

Richard Dickson had played well to reach the final. He had narrowly failed to complete a straight triple at block stages; and, a standard triple in beating Colin Hemmings +18 the semi final.

The final was a closely contested affair. Samir had a flawless start and endured dogged pressure from Richard during the middle game impasse in which both players were tested by the extreme playing conditions and won by +16.

The whole two days was admirably managed by Alan Morris and together with the superb catering by Bob Appel's "4 Ladies" left the competitors looking forward to the next year's tournament.

Full Results:

Day One:

Blue Block (20-point advanced)

Colin Hemming beat Abdul Ahmad +5 Colin Hemming beat Kevin Garrad +18 Colin Hemming beat Samir Patel +1 Colin Hemming beat Gabor Weiner +16

Samir Patel beat Abdul Ahmad +5 Samir Patel beat Kevin Garrad +6 Samir Patel beat Gabor Weiner +20

Kevin Garrad beat Abdul Ahmad +11 Kevin Garrad beat Gabor Weiner +15

Abdul Ahmad beat Gabor Weiner +3

Winner: Colin Hemmings; Runner-up: Samir Patel

Red Block (20-point advanced)

Alex Jardine beat Richard Dickson +1 Alex Jardine beat Charles-Eric Vilain XIII +12 Alex Jardine beat Leopold Walderdorf +4

Richard Dickson beat Don Gaunt +5 Richard Dickson beat Charles-

Eric Vilain XIII +18 Richard Dickson beat Leopold Walderdorf +2

Leopold Walderdorf beat Don Gaunt +4 Leopold Walderdorf beat Charles-Eric Vilain XIII +11

Don Gaunt beat Alex Jardine +6 Don Gaunt beat Charles-Eric Vilain XIII +4

Winner: Alex Jardine; Runner-up: Richard Dickson

Day Two:

Semi-finals (26-point advanced)

Samir Patel beat Alex Jardine +25 Richard Dickson beat Colin Hemming +18

Final (26-point advanced)

Samir Patel beat Richard Dickson +16

One-ball Consolation Event:

This event was won by Don Gaunt. Leopold Walderdorf and Charles-Eric Vilain XIII displayed awesome long range hoop running in this event.

Don Gaunt beat Abdul Ahmad +4 Don Gaunt beat Kevin Garrad +3 Don Gaunt beat Charles-Eric Vilain XIII +3 Don Gaunt beat Leopold Walderdorf +6 Don Gaunt vs Gabor Weiner was a dead match

Kevin Garrad beat Abdul Ahmad +4 Kevin Garrad beat Charles-Eric Vilain XIII +5 Kevin Garrad beat Gabor Weiner +5

Charles-Eric Vilain XIII beat Abdul Ahmad +3 Charles-Eric Vilain XIII beat Leopold Walderdorf +4 Charles-Eric Vilain XIII beat Gabor Weiner +7

Leopold Walderdorf beat Abdul Ahmad +3 Leopold Walderdorf beat
Kevin Garrad +3 Leopold Walderdorf beat Gabor Weiner +7

Abdul Ahmad beat Gabor Weiner +3