



● Abbas v Ramesh.—KT photo

ABBAS PROVES HIS CLASS

By our sports reporter

ABBAS Khan and Ginny Rusher kept up their challenge for the top prize for couples at the Al Ghandi Electronics-Dubai Police Ramadan Squash Festival yesterday with a splendid semi-final victory.

The top seeded Abbas and Ginny edged past a fighting Ramesh Prabhakar and Kate Newns at the Chicago Beach Sports Centre and now face the O'Connors, Sylvia and Rory in the finals at the same venue on Tuesday.

Kate gave her partner a fighting chance with a 3-1 win over Ginny but Ramesh was not in the same league as Abbas, the Dubai Police squash coach, and went down despite a spirited attempt, 3-0.

Ramesh, surprisingly, seemed to get better as the match progressed but it was easy to differentiate the depth of experience between him and Abbas.

The squash fans at the centre, a very sporting bunch, were very much for the underdog and voiced their approval loud and clear everytime Ramesh won a point. But Abbas won in style 15-3, 15-5, 15-8.

Earlier, Ginny made sure that Abbas would not have to fight too hard to get them into the final by making Kate battle for every point. Kate however, seemed to have far more stamina and romped home 15-7, 14-15, 15-7, 15-12.

As this competition is played along the American scoring system, the team

with the highest number of points wins and Abbas and Ginny put the gauntlet down in no uncertain fashion that they are aiming for the first prize.

However, the O'Connors are planning to make sure that the top seeds do not have it all their own way by the tremendous display they put up last night to halt Nikki Harradine and Phil Deeb.

Sylvia had to use all the experience and skills under command for her 15-11, 10-15, 15-8, 15-11 victory while Rory kept up his bid for a double with a 15-6, 15-4, 15-6 demolition of Phil. This match, it was said at the centre last night, was the first time Rory and Phil had faced each other.

Rory also faces Mohammed Iqbal, the number one seed from Muscat in the Over-35 competition tomorrow night at 9pm. The third and fourth place playoff will take place at 8pm. In the semifinals, Iqbal got past a fighting Scot Smiles in a 45-minute encounter while O'Connor ended Masood Zia's challenge.

On Tuesday, Kate and Nikki take to the courts at 7.30pm for the third and fourth place ladies playoff in the couples competition followed by the Sylvia-Ginny ladies final at 8.15pm.

At 9pm, Ramesh battles Phil for the men's third and fourth place playoff which precedes the clash fans have been waiting for—Abbas Khan v Rory O'Connor—which eventually will decide the top couple of the tournament.