

Rahul wins final event as junior; Aimee tops

Soliman recovers in time to claim victory in competitive event

Dubai

The sixth annual Juniors Squash Tournament was held recently at the Dubai Country Club, sponsored for the first time by Meshrah Recycling. With players grouped into age-inclusive categories, they proceeded to play the preliminary rounds in a round-robin box format. With the emphasis on fun and good sportsmanship, none of the players were ranked or seeded in the tournament, with the favoured players having to fight their way to the top the same as everyone else.

In the Boy's Under 9 category Michael Cottier and Natashu Harradine (who advanced when the high scoring player in her group forfeited the tournament) advanced into the semi-finals and met up with Lawrence Harradine and Luke Smith. The first semi-final match pitted brother against sister. Although younger and smaller, Lawrence Harradine showed great determination, beating Natasha Harradine 2-0. Luke Smith also triumphed against the odds as he beat Micheal Cottier 2-0. Luke and Lawrence then showed everyone the promise of two great squash players as they battled for the top spot. Lawrence took the first game easily 15-2 but Micheal fought back to take the 2nd 15-8. Both players stayed neck and neck until Lawrence

SQUASH

finally managed to gain the edge and win 15-11.

The Boy's Under 12 category proved to be the most heavily subscribed with 16 boys participating. Zahir Jeewarkhan's Andre Agazzi look stood him in good stead as he advanced to meet up with Waleed Sami Al Ali in the first semi-final. Suliman Abu Harb and Andrew Mahmoud also had little difficulty on their way to the second semi-final match, with Soliman and Zahir advancing to the finals. Zahir fought hard to take the first game 15-13 but gradually lost steam as Soliman recovered his form to win the next three games 15-12, 15-8, 15-5 for a 3-1 victory.

The Girl's 13 & Over saw Aimee Hart go undefeated to advance into the finals as Zahra Soar held on by 2 pts to advance over Lisa Warburton. Aimee's concentration did not wavered under the pressure of the finals as she won 3-0 over Zahra.

With all four of the Boy's under 15's semi-finalists already playing in the Nike Men's League, it is little wonder they all advanced with maximum points in their boxes. Ritesh Tilani played and beat Umair Hameed, while Hayan Merchant lost to Samir Aikal in

the second semi-final. In the finals, Ritesh could find no reply for Samir's shots, losing 5-15; 7-15; 8-15 as Samir swept to the win 3-0.

The final group of Under 18's produced as expected a high caliber of squash. Rahul Roy remained undefeated in the box while Manish Jethwani came second having lost only to Rahul in their preliminary match-up. History repeated itself however, as Rahul defeated Manish 7-15; 15-8; 15-2; 15-8 to win his final tournament as a junior.

In addition to presenting the winners and runners-up trophies, R.J.W. Knaap, of Meshrakh Recycling presented 2 Player of the Tournament awards for outstanding effort and sportsmanship. The first was given to Islam Nadoury from Abu Dhabi who narrowly missed the semi-finals in both the Under 12's and Under 15's groups; Umair Hameed was awarded the second trophy for his efforts in advancing to the semi-finals of the Under 15's.

As Meshrakh's sponsorship commitment extends to two tournaments a year, all the players will have the next few months to practice before the second tournament rolls around in October, when they can try their luck again.



Winners and runners up of the Mashreq Junior Squash tournament with organiser Niki Harradine