

Indians capture Orient title

Kelleher bags Player of the Tournament award; UK beat Pakistan for third place

Dubai

The final day of the Orient Irrigation Squash Tournament started with the last of the preliminary games. In Group A, Egypt squeaked past the Chairman's Select 8-7 only to be trounced 3-12 in their final match against United Kingdom.

Egypt's Husam Atwa was the only player to get any points as he took advantage of Mick McAllister's morning-after sluggishness. However UK secured the top spot in Group A with their win.

In group B, the Rest of the World were held to an 8-7 win by Pan-Global; Dale Fisk's 3-0 domination of ROW's Kevin Gale in the final game meant that ROW had to now hope that India would trounce England, leaving room for them to slip into second place.

With ROW nipping at their heels, England needed at least four points to retain second

SQUASH

place. With so much riding on it, the match proved to be a real nail biter. England's Paul Hawkins managed to steal a game off India's Mohd Babul. Michael Hyde also managed to take a game off Raj Shahani and just missed a second point when he lost the third game 14-15. By beating Naresh Bhatia 2-1, Gautam Duseja secured a spot in the semis for his team. The final tally gave India an 8-7 win, enough to hang on to first place.

The semifinals pitted the UK against England in the first match and India against Pakistan in the second match.

India wasted no time in winning their first three matches 2-0. The other semifinal produced all the excitement as the two British teams fought for the other place

in the finals.

With the matches tied at one each, England's Jo Kelleher took on the undefeated Lyn Hodgins. Squeezing past Lyn in the first match 5-14, she took rest in the second game losing 2-15. Fighting point for point the two players were tied 14-14 when Jo's concentration wavered, hitting the final ball into the tin to give Lyn the match.

The excitement was far from over however as the UK's John Clarke knew he needed to win to keep his team in the hunt. Gautam Duseja narrowly held to the first game 15-14, but John came back to even things up with a 15-10 win in the second. With his team's hopes riding on every shot, John stayed neck and neck with Gautam with neither player able to secure a point advantage until the very end when Gautam nicked a shot to end a great rally and match, moving England into

their first finals.

Unusual for the finals, both teams were from the same group. In their second match-up, India got off to a flying start with Babul beating Paul Hawkins 2-0. After her outstanding effort against Lyn Hodgins, Jo Kelleher somehow found the energy to fight Shefali Verma to a 14-14 tie in the third game only to repeat her mistake of the previous match and tin the shot, giving Shefali a 2-1 win and India two match lead. Gautam Duseja repeated the 2-1 score of his first contest with Naresh Bhatia to put England in the match 1-2, but India closed the door in the fourth match as Raj Shahani beat Michael Hyde 2-0 to give India their first Orient Irrigation title.

In the fight for 3rd place, the UK beat Pakistan 3-0.

The player of the tournament was Jo Kelleher.