



Denmark - European Indoor Champions for the second year running

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

P2:

Ireland & Scotland defeated in U19 World Cup plate semis

Malaga youngsters turn out for selectors

Richard Cox in Scotland

P3:

Introductory Umpiring Course in Paris

Indoor cricket in Bavaria

Sun to snow in Italy

P4:

Coaching & Umpiring Diary

Cyprus Cricket Takes Shape

Progress in Poland

Denmark retain European Indoor title

European indoor champions Denmark retained their title for a second year following an exciting final against Hellas at the ECC Indoor Championships in Schiedam, Netherlands, on Sunday 15 February. A number of familiar faces who have now passed the maximum age limit (U19 for leading Associates Denmark and the Netherlands, U21 for newer Associates France and Germany, and U25 for Affiliates Belgium, Hellas, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland) were absent from this year's tournament, leaving the competition wide open, but the Danes quickly established themselves as the form team, unbeaten at the end of the first day's play, and one victory ahead of the Dutch, who they had defeated by 16 runs in their second match of the day.

The hosts' hopes of a championship victory on home soil were dealt a further blow early on the second day when they were beaten by a pumped up German side in the quarter finals, thus ending up in the plate competition along with France, Switzerland and Spain. Having seen off

the French in the plate semi-finals, the Dutch duly despatched last year's plate winners Spain to win themselves some consolation silverware.

Meanwhile, in the main competition, the Germans had succumbed to the ever-threatening Greeks, and subsequently lost to three-time winners Portugal in the play-off for 3rd/4th place, leaving 2002 winners Hellas to take on 2003 winners Denmark in the final. The Greeks, batting first, posted a defendable total of 102/3, with solid innings from George Stogianos (27), their charismatic captain and ultimate winner of the tournament's Spirit of Cricket award, Spiros Nikokavouros (30) and Alexis Souvlakis (27). The Danes, in reply, started badly, losing captain Michael Pedersen, caught and bowled by Zois Ntensias, with only 12 runs on the board. The situation was quickly retrieved by Zishan Shah (25), who was duly named Player of the Tournament as the leading run scorer (170 in 7 innings, without being out) and wicket-taker (6, with

an average of 15.16), and Omar Hayat (22). The Danes looked an impressive and cohesive unit, and duly reached the Greek total with 3 wickets to spare.

Congratulations to the Danes, therefore, on another deserved victory, but also to the players from the other eight participating countries, who put in some impressive performances and played their cricket in excellent spirit throughout. And our thanks to the umpires and scorers who worked tirelessly over the course of the two days, and to the KNCB's tournament organisers, Jos Heggelman and Hans Dronkers and their organising committee and helpers, for a smoothly run and highly enjoyable event.



Denmark's Omar Hayat batting in the final

Emerging Nations Vie for Place in ICC Champions Trophy 2004

The ICC Six Nations Challenge kicked off on 29 February in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), with Canada, Holland, and Namibia, who took part in the ICC Cricket World Cup 2003, taking on Scotland, the UAE and the USA for the right to play Australia and New Zealand in the first round of the ICC Champions Trophy in September this year.

The two European squads went head to head on day 1, with the Netherlands setting a total of 198, and Scotland eventually falling 35 runs short. The Netherlands maintained their winning form the following day, with victory over Canada, while the Scots got off the mark with a win over Namibia. The tournament was then thrown wide open, however, when the Netherlands, lying at the time in second place, failed to repeat their 2001 ICC Trophy final win over Namibia, falling 71 runs short of the total set by the Africans, while Scot-

land inflicted the first defeat on hosts and tournament leaders UAE, winning by 48 runs, and moving ahead of both UAE and the Netherlands on run rate. The USA, meanwhile, jumped from the bottom half of the table to become the new tournament leaders, winning their match against Canada with 6 wickets and 26 overs to spare. Scotland's next fixture sees them hoping to avenge their defeat to Canada in the play-off final of the 2001 ICC Trophy, a memory which captain Craig Wright is keen to erase: "We missed out on the World Cup last year which was really disappointing so this would be a great chance to get Scotland back on the international stage." The Netherlands, in the meantime, will be taking on tournament leaders USA. With the top 4 teams neck and neck on 4 points apiece, the last two rounds of matches will be crucial.

The Six Nations Challenge is part of the ICC's High Performance programme for the leading Associate countries, which aims to narrow the gap between developing and test playing nations. According to ICC High Performance Manager Bob Woolmer: "We are seeing a high standard of cricket being played in a number of countries outside the elite level. The performances of the Associate level countries at the World Cup were highly encouraging and this tournament provides another platform on which they can show their progress as well as giving them the essential international competition needed to allow them to continue to improve."

For a tournament schedule and a full interview with Scotland captain Craig Wright, visit the Tours & Tournaments page of www.icc.cricket.org.

Ireland & Scotland defeated in U19 World Cup plate semis

Over 30,000 fans turned up at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in Dhaka to watch the 16 teams (including Ireland and Scotland) taking part in the ICC U19 Cricket World Cup parade on the outfield in the presence of the Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at the tournament's spectacular Opening Ceremony. ICC President Ehsan Mani addressed the crowd and thanked the people of Bangladesh for supporting the tournament: "It is with immense pleasure that the ICC brings the tournament to this cricket-loving country for the first time. The passion for cricket here is a joy to behold and I have no doubt that this

nation will host a memorable event."

The Irish team made a winning start to the tournament, with a 70 run victory over Papua New Guinea, before suffering an 8-wicket defeat to Pakistan and then rallying to lose out by a mere 6 runs to the West Indies in the group stage of the tournament. The Scots, on the other hand, had a wretched time in their group matches, going down to New Zealand, Bangladesh and India by 240 runs, 9 wickets and 270 runs respectively.

After a similarly shaky start – a 10 wicket defeat to Australia – in the plate competition, the

Scots defeated both Nepal and PNG to make it through to the semi-finals, where they met and lost by 91 runs to Bangladesh. Ireland also secured a plate semi-final berth, having defeated both Uganda and Canada before also losing to Bangladesh. They went head to head against the Australians in the semi-final, eventually falling short of the total by 49 runs.

At the time of writing, Australia are due to take on Bangladesh in the plate final – both holders and hosts hoping to salvage some lost pride - while the West Indies prepare to square up to Pakistan in the championship final on Friday.



The West Indies celebrate the dismissal of England batsman Tim Bresnan in the championship semi-finals
Photo © Getty Images

Malaga Youngsters turn out for selectors

Sunday 8 February was a cold day in Cartama, but for the first time in 16 years, children under the age of 14 put on pads, gloves and helmets and, armed with bats, stepped out onto the "Grasseuropa" cricket field to show off their skills against some good bowling. They played in front of a crowd of around 40, including the selectors looking for talented cricketers to represent Spain at the ECC U13-2nd Division Championships, to be held in Gibraltar in August 2004. 26 youngsters from schools along the coast from Malaga to Sotogrande

were involved, and will be in action again during March and April, as well as taking part in the Malaga Soft Ball Championships on Sunday 21 March.

The revival of junior cricket is now in its second year thanks to Greg Gomez, Director of the Malaga Youth Development Programme and the Combined Colleges Cricket Club, and it is hoped that it will again reach the heights it did in the 1980s. Indeed the potential for progress is now even greater, as Spain is an ICC Affiliate member and member of the European Cricket Council.

Greg is delighted with the progress being made: "It is great to see these young people playing their hearts out and the enjoyment they derive from the sport. The standard was impressive and our overall aim is to encourage all the schools, through cricket, to develop closer links, so that regular Inter-School competitions can be organised for all sports. We all know the value of recreational sport for the physical and psychological development of children, and with organised competitive sport, our children will learn good healthy values".



Youngsters from the Malaga area show their skills for the Spanish selectors

Richard Cox in Scotland

Cricket Scotland recently hosted a 4-day Level II Coaching course at its National Cricket Academy in Edinburgh. After two years without a Level II course, 15 candidates from far and wide embarked on the intensive training programme geared to working with the better players at Club and District level around Scotland.

Course organiser Peter Drinnen (Technical Director for Cricket Scotland) managed the course, whilst enlisting lead tutor Richard Cox to head up the programme. Cricket Scotland also took the opportunity to "blood" two Staff Coaches (Steve Smith and Clarence Parfitt) as Course Assistants, backed up by ICC European Development Officer Phil Hudson (assessor).

The fifteen candidates reviewed their progress since taking their Level I Coaching Award with refreshers, as well as picking up new skills in batting, bowling, fielding and wicketkeeping

– all of this in an effort to improve their demonstrations when coaching back at clubs or schools, or, indeed, on behalf of Cricket Scotland. The second element of the course was to introduce video analysis in batting and bowling in a variety of methods and practices based on group work/discussion and understanding the process of how to analyse as well as what to analyse. Video analysis is a structured method of review and vital to the advancement of the best young players in Scotland.

The candidates then moved on to working in the nets on the Friday and Saturday of the programme by practicing and honing their methods of working with a batsman and designated bowler to enhance performance. Finally a written paper on aspects of Sports Science, Methods of Communication, Techniques of the game and ECB Directives was completed as further evidence of

each coach's knowledge. All of this will now be backed up by Child Protection, First Aid and Criminal Record Bureau checks in order to gain the full Level II Certificate.

Cricket Scotland were also well blessed by some very talented U13s and 15s who joined us from the East Regional District Squads for the net assessment and showed immense talent and promise for the future – 18 youngsters were rotated throughout the session in order to adhere to the ECB Fast Bowling Directives and to allow maximum performance for the course candidate coaches who were under examination conditions.

The assessments will now be forwarded to ECB for final marking and it is hoped that in the not too distant future Scottish Cricket will have a new conveyor belt of coaches to further support the Development Programme countrywide.

'Video analysis is a structured method of review and vital to the advancement of the best young players in Scotland.'



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Graham Cooper in Paris

The Centre Départemental de Formation et d'Animation Sportives was the venue for the first ECC Introductory Umpire Course of 2004 led by Graham Cooper, ably assisted by Tom Keeble and David Rhodes, on 27-29 February. Seven intrepid umpires braved the cold and snow to attend the whole weekend, where even the presence of handball players and an International Indoor Athletics event could not prise the umpires away from the classroom where they listened intently to the Three Musketeers.

It was extremely pleasing to

see Tom flexing his instructional muscles again as he dealt with the laws on No Ball Foot Faults and Dead Ball. It was something of a landmark in Tom's training career because it was the first time that he had ever used PowerPoint as a presentation tool and I hope he was impressed by how easy and versatile it is. Local umpire David Rhodes acted as a translator - an extremely important role since several of the umpires attending did not have English as their first language, and without his assistance the information would not have been put across anywhere near

so effectively. As things turned out the whole weekend was very successful and the umpires went away fully briefed on how to go about their arduous, but rewarding role in the game.

I sincerely hope that Peter Christie, David Edwards, Pi-yushkumar Patel, Hussain Ziafat, Shahzad Asim, Sharkey Jayawardene, and Joseph Atukorale continue to umpire in the French League and will one day will have the necessary experience to be nominated to stand in ECC tournaments. Thank you, one and all, for making it an enjoyable, and worthwhile, weekend.

'Even the presence of handball players and an International Indoor Athletics event could not prise the umpires away from the classroom...'

Bavarian Ski resort hosts Indoor Championships

Four teams travelled through the snowy mountains of Bavaria, Germany in the last weekend of February to the Tegernsee Indoor Tournament. The tournament has been running for many years, but only more recently as a youth tournament. Teams from Hamburg and across the border from Austria travelled to the beautifully picturesque town to take on the hosts. The Indoor Centre kindly provided by Tegernsee School saw young players, several of whom were very new to the game, participate in a league competition. The final was a well-fought battle between Tegernsee and Austria. The Austrians posted a very high score of 120, while the Tegernsee fielding was excep-

tional. It looked as though it was far too much for the Tegernsee boys, but despite needing over 30 in the last two overs, they eventually fell only 6 runs short, Moritz Karpf hitting 12 in the last over batting with skill and power.

The tournament was run by Peter Stiff, who has been working very hard trying to encourage more players locally to the game. The presentations also involved Maximilian Höck receiving a cricket bat from DCB President Brian Fell for his exceptional innings at the European U15-2nd Division Championships in France last summer, the first time a century has been scored by an U15 in any German cricket.

European Development Manager Richard Holdsworth was there to see the tournament, and followed this by a meeting with Brian Fell, DCB Treasurer Siegfried Franz and Youth Coaching Director Keith Thompson to try and help establish Junior Leagues in the country, which will this season take place in four regions. This was followed the next day by a visit to the Deutscher Sport Bund in Frankfurt, trying to encourage the National Sports Organisation to support German cricket, which is currently not recognised. The meeting was very positive and the Sport Bund will recognise the DCB as a National Sports Body.

The German committee entertained the EDM very generously and it was a very positive visit.



The Austrian teams at the Tegernsee Indoor Championships

Sun to Snow in Italy

On his second visit of the year to Italy, EDP coach Richard O'Sullivan visited the distinctly different areas of sunny Cagliari and snowy Ispra.

In Cagliari, on the beautiful island of Sardinia, he found a dedicated group of locals who have the passion and dedication to promote and develop the game. One of the key individuals is Sergio Melis, who teaches at a local superiore school and who, along with the President of Karalis CC Vincenzo Sau, created a team to enter the FCrl U15 tournament in 2003.

Richard's visit was primarily to help Sergio and Karalis CC expand this to other schools and create a sustainable programme that can lead to local competition. Over two days local teachers attended a

cricket introduction and Karalis CC and Richard explained their important role in helping local Club/School Link officers from Karalis CC introduce the game to their schools. The intention is to follow this with an annual schools competition. Obviously then interested children could join in the club training.

The evenings presented the opportunity for Richard to train the local adults and last year's U15s jointly. The adults, who will be linked to schools to introduce the game, covered an appropriate lesson that will hopefully interest the children and, following this, the evenings were dedicated to skills and exciting pairs matches on the floodlit synthetic football pitches that acted as the training facility. With the weather mild and temperatures in the mid-teens Celsius this was

more than possible outside.

However, when Richard transferred to Euratom CC in Ispra (north-west of Milan) he was greeted by a completely different climate, with snow and ice all around. Luckily Euratom CC has one of the best training facilities in the country. Richard has visited Euratom CC previously and was pleased to be able to use their newly renovated 'indoor bubble' to train not only their talented juniors but to demonstrate to the cricket playing adults a number of games and methods of training their own players, both adult and junior. With sessions on scoring and various coaching videos all shown in the fantastic technological wonderland of the Euratom Auditorium the week was a non-stop series of exciting cricket events and initiatives.

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Coaching & Umpiring Dates

- 13-14 March: ECC Introductory Umpires Course, Corfu - Dennis Stones
19-21 March: ECC Introductory Umpires Course, Slovenia - Graham Cooper
26-28 March: ECB Level I Coaching Course, Belgium - Richard Skyrme
27-28 March: ECC Introductory Coaching Course, Hellas - tbc
13-17 April: ECC Youth Coaching Camp, Bradfield College

Other Dates for the Diary

- 11 March: ECC Tournament Rules Sub Committee meeting, 1pm, Writing Room, Lord's pavilion (lunch from midday)
12 March: ECC Executive Committee meeting, 1pm, Committee Room, Lord's pavilion (lunch from midday)
19-21 March: ICC European Development Program Administration, Governance & Management Forum, Lord Hotel, Helsinki
1-2 May: European MCC Spirit of Cricket Weekend (see next issue for further details)
22 May: European Presidents' Day, Lord's Cricket Ground

Cyprus Cricket Takes Shape

The Cyprus Cricket Association has recently set its stall out to develop into one of the leading Affiliate nations in Europe thanks to the energy and vision of its new Chairman (Steve Carr) and his newly elected steering committee, which involves 10 people from different backgrounds all of whom have the best interests of Cyprus Cricket at heart. They are tasked with forming a Cyprus Cricket Board involving interested parties, and formulating short-, medium-, and long-term Development Plans that sit alongside a simple constitution & committee structure, as well as a business plan to

incorporate financial needs to grow the game and a personnel plan to support the need for administrators, players and coaches. They will also progressively activate and revisit the areas of military facilities v civilian facilities, adult cricket and touring teams, Cypriot-based youth development, media relations and core training needs. The first steps have already been taken and further information can be found on the Cyprus Cricket website at www.cypruscricket.com. The last CCA AGM also agreed a number of initiatives including the running of an Introductory Coaching Course, investigations into the feasibility of playing cricket at the Elias Beach Hotel and Country Club Grounds, the formation of a weekend Cricket

League with possible sponsor and, the hosting of a major European cricket event in the near future. With this in mind the European Development Program agreed for Richard Cox to revisit the country to help in these aspirations and support a programme of activity which will cover the next 12 months as the first stage of the Development Plan.

For details of the recent Introductory Coaching Course run by Richard Cox, and the other initiatives mentioned in this article, visit the Special Features page of www.ecc-cricket.com.

Progress in Poland

Despite losing their first two 'international' indoor cricket matches against Berlin CC on Saturday 14 February, Polonia CC's fledgling players and their many supporters enjoyed themselves immensely and are already looking forward to their other forthcoming international fixtures with clubs from the Netherlands, the Czech Republic and Slovenia. The matches against Berlin were attended by 3 Polish newspapers, and Polish national television has subsequently shown a 2 ½ minute report about cricket in Poland during the sports section of the news – groundbreaking stuff, as Simon Haines, founding member of Polonia CC says: "I've been here four years and I have never even seen cricket mentioned in sports programming, let alone on the news."

Playing numbers, meanwhile, continue to increase. A local English language school has set up a childrens' Kwik Cricket club using a set provided by the European Development Program. They recently had their first fun game, with around ten children between 8 and 12 playing, and are hoping for more young cricketers when the weather starts to get better. And as if this weren't enough, as a result of an introductory coaching course recently run by ICC European Development Officer Philip Hudson (and a certain amount of gentle persuasion by Simon!), PWSZ, a college with 4000 students, will be setting up its own cricket club for the teachers and students there in the next week or so, and another new club, Lubuskie CC, made up mostly of professional soldiers, has already played its first match.

All the clubs will become members of a new Polish Cricket Association, which Simon, Magda Pospieszna (a fellow founder member of Polonia CC), and two other cricket enthusiasts, Donata Krzyszczyk and Marcin Pospieszny have set up. Their website www.cricket.pl is already up and running, with information about all three clubs and cricket in general to stimulate further interest in cricket and encourage new clubs to form. The new association will also select players for tournaments like the ECC Representative Championships.

For further details of the Introductory Coaching Course run by Philip Hudson, visit the Coaching page of www.ecc-cricket.com.