

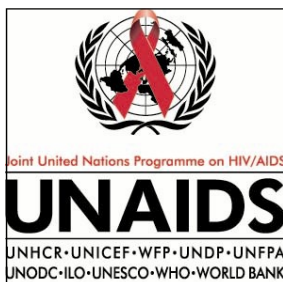


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DANES DEFEND INDOOR TITLE AT HOME

Seven countries travel to Herning in Jutland, Denmark for the 11th European Indoor Championship on 11-13 February. The hugely popular and successful tournament has been the curtain raiser for the ICC European Development Program every year. ICC European Development Manager, Richard Holdsworth commented "we are delighted to hold the tournament in Herning, Denmark for the second time after the Danes hosted such a successful tournament in 2003. With the tournament very much being used by some countries as a development tournament we are sure to see some exciting young players who will no doubt in the future represent their country at senior level."

In the eleventh year of the tournament the standards have increased dramatically over that time. It will hopefully provide young players with an opportunity to put into practice skills which they have learnt last season and over the winter. The

tournament has generally been played with a great spirit between players, umpires, officials and supporters, and with the MCC Spirit of Cricket being highlighted all the time, the standards on the pitch are becoming increasingly important. The ICC European Development Program has been well supported by MCC since its inception in 1997 and previous to that before the European Cricket Council was formed. This year's tournament will again welcome Roger Knight

(Secretary and Chief Executive, MCC) and his wife, Christine who will be supporting the event. John Holder (Test & First Class umpire) will also take part as Principle Umpire for the tournament keeping those standards high and helping educate other umpires.

The Danish Cricket Association and their Organising Committee have done a wonderful job in organising their second Indoor Championship, which as holders proves to be an exciting weekend.

Below: 2004 winning Danish team
 Right: Roger Knight presents the trophy



ACADEMY REACHES NEW STANDARDS

The 2005 European Cricket Academy is to take place from the 19th June – 8th July. The academy dates have changed from previous years due to the support of the England & Wales Cricket Board who has allowed the use of the National Cricket Academy at Loughborough University for the three week period.

The National Academy was constructed at a total cost of £4.5m and was officially opened in November 2003 by Her Majesty The Queen. The academy includes a main hall which incorporates six net lanes – with full run-ups and space for the wicketkeeper to stand back – in addition to the latest high-tech filming and analysis resources. Included in the facilities is a fitness and rehabilitation centre, a changing room with a main recovery area including hot and cold spa baths and a fully equipped medical room. The cricket centre overlooks Loughborough University's main cricket ground and has access to a bank of nets. Throughout the

three weeks the academy participants will be accommodated in a house situated close to the cricket centre.

The current ECB National Academy Manager is Nigel Laughton, known to many in Europe, who was the first European Development Manager back in 1997 and still has a passion for development of the game in Europe.

Over the past 3 months considerable work has taken place on preparing the final program for the European Academy. Three one-day matches against England U17's and one two-day fixture against Warwickshire U19's are now confirmed. The program will also include a session bowling at the England and Australian sides prior to the one-day international match to be played at Edgbaston Cricket Ground on June 28th.

By the end of February preliminary information will be sent out

to all member countries so that nominations can be made. The selection process will be very tight due to the standard of the opposition. Players nominated must all be seen by their national governing body to have the ability to represent their senior national side at the highest level over the next couple of years. As with all squads, selection will be made with a view to putting together a well balanced group of players with strengths in all departments of the game.

(More photos on page 4)

ECB National Academy



ITALY PREPARES FOR MALAYSIA

For Italians few exotic countries, if any at all, are culturally more fascinating than Malaysia. This is exclusively due to Emilio Salgari, a turinese writer of the turn of the XXth century who, without ever travelling to those shores, wrote dozens of books on the legendary Sandokan, "The Tiger of Mompracem", and on his perennial fight with the no less famous Sir James Brooke, the white rajah of Sarawak.

Partially true this may be, Brooke is a historical figure whilst Sandokan also existed but was definitely less illustrious than his English foe, but what is definite is that on February 16th Italy will put foot on the plane heading towards Kuala Lumpur and the dream (or nightmare) of a place in next July's ICC Trophy in Ireland.

Preparation for participation in this event, officially known as Division 2 of the World Cup Qualifying Series, started as soon as it was clear on July 22

that Italy had won the European Championship 2nd Division. 14 players to get in shape out of season with little to no resources: not an easy equation to solve. In essence approximately 30.000 Euros have been spent to insure that Italy defends Europe's honour as well as possible in the land of the future ICC Chairman.

FILA and the European Cricket Council have been instrumental in allowing Italy to prepare as well as possible. The clothing company sponsored two players, Kelum Perera and Francesco Scarponi, hosted in Melbourne by team mate Nicola Puccio, whilst ECC unfroze most of its 2004/05 ASP contribution to Italy in addition to its consolidated support to the Italian Academy. Players also have contributed from their own pockets with the two Sri Lankan residents, Hemantha Jayasena and Samantha Ketipe, returning to their homelands early, luckily to discover that they had not suffered any

damage from the Boxing Day Tsunami and, thus, being able to concentrate on their cricket. Likewise for fast bowler Alaud Din, who spent November and December playing league cricket in Lahore, whilst Valerio Zuppiroli and Edoardo Gallo were hosted respectively by Andrea Corbellari and Alessandro Bonora in Cape Town. Joe Scuderi himself put up wicket - keeper Gabriele Passaretti for a week in Nelson to check that the skills that made him player of the Tournament in Belgium last July were still in full alert.

So we are nearly there, in one month the tournament will be history and Italy, probably with more relief than despair, will look back on an experience the validity of which in terms of growth and development of game in the peninsula only time will tell.

For the match schedule and to follow Italy's progress in the tournament visit : www.ecc-cricket.com



Italy's Captain Joe Scuderi European Championship 2nd Division

CRICKET & FOOTBALL JOIN FORCES IN LEINSTER

Bohemians Football Club, situated at Dalymount Park, Phibsborough on Dublin's northside, is a soccer stronghold and not a venue one would normally associate with cricket. Having said that, if current negotiations between Brian O'Rourke and supporters club member Graham Hopkins continue to advance, a cricket match could be held there as early as next July.

The Bells Academy CC is currently being re-founded by a number of Bohemians fans who have an interest in the game. In the early days, the 'Gypsies' had a cricket as well as a soccer team and the cricket team took its name from the medical school that a number of them attended. The club has secured the use of Civil Service CC in the Phoenix Park for their home fixtures - a ground with great resonance for them as it is

within the Park that Bohs were founded back in 1890. They are the 2nd oldest soccer club in the Irish Republic and, following the split of the IFA and FAI in 1921, Dalymount Park became an international venue hosting a record crowd of 47,600 for Ireland's game against England in May 1957.

They hope to play Taverners level next season before possibly entering into the Leinster junior leagues in the years to come. The club are currently practising indoors and they hope to have Matt Gregg, the Bohs goalkeeper and a fine cricketer himself, give them some coaching but there are complications regarding his availability for other sports while he's under contract at Bohs.

Bells Academy CC plan to host

an invitational tournament as soon as the weather improves - the Oliver St John Gogarty Cup, named after the surgeon, wit, playwright, poet, senator and Bohemian footballer who himself was the leading cricketer in Clongowes in his day. Hopkins commented recently 'It's still very much at the planning stage now but we hope to invite 3 other teams to play off 2 semi finals and a final over a weekend'.

Consultation has already begun with the 'Dalyer' groundsman with a view to playing a game on a 'Flick' surface provided by the Leinster Cricket Union. While rumours are going around Phibsborough that Shamrock Rovers from Tallaght have been invited across for a game, it is more likely that the opposition will be from a Dublin cricket club with an already-established Taverners section.



Brian O'Rourke (right) at Bells Academy CC

STARS JOIN BELGIUM'S TSUNAMI FUND-RAISING DAY

Fifteen of Belgium's leading television and stage personalities are getting to grips with cricket as part of Cricket Belgium's Tsunami fund-raising day on 5th February. The 12-hour programme at Den Wille-

com sports centre in Edegem near Antwerp includes two Belgium versus France matches and a Celebrity Special Hour. The day starts and ends with inter-club matches, involves Under-11s, Under-13s

and Under-15s, and features several showcase games - complete with commentary and interviews on the run.

For more details visit www.cricket-belgium.com



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ECC CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Since the first Youth Coaching Camp was run at Charterhouse School in 1999 the level of playing standards has without doubt increased considerably each year. Several of the ECC staff coaches who have worked on previous camps commented that the standard of the participants present in 2004 was the highest so far. Much credit for this rise in standards must go to a large majority of our Member

Countries who have put in place well structured youth development programs.

To coincide with this increase in standards it has been agreed that the name of the camp should reflect the level of the players present and so from this year the camp will now be called the **ECC Centre of Excellence**. The Centre of Excellence will once again be held at

the wonderful facilities of Bradfield College between 29th March and 2nd April.

The deadline for nominations was Friday 4th February. Member countries will be informed whether their nominations have been successful or not by mid February at the latest.

KWIK CRICKET IN SWITZERLAND

During the winter period, the Royal Zurich Cricket Club are running Kwik cricket sessions for all interested boys and girls (6-10 years) in the Zurich area.

This is obviously the best age to fire children with enthusiasm for cricket and get them interested in the intricacies of the game. About 90% of the children are Swiss, so their parents cannot assist in explaining the game or answering questions. The first session began with just five children, but since then every practice has produced a new player and they are now up to 10 participants.

The aim of the course or

practice sessions is to introduce children to cricket skills and activities in a structured manner with an emphasis on fun. In addition it involves important social skills including teamwork, co-operation, communication, and learning how to approach winning and losing. First of all fielding abilities, retrieving balls combined with accurate throwing, to warm everyone up are exercised, followed by batting skills (the drive) and catching practice. About half the time is reserved for the long-awaited game - knowledge and understanding of cricket and strategies is growing fast.

Interestingly a number of parents have come forward and expressed their disenchantment with other sports, especially football, because they feel it has become so competitive that unsporting behaviour, such as fouling members of the opposing team, has become the order of the day. The tendency to associate the positive values of fair play, gentlemanly conduct and sportsmanship with cricket still exists. This is too good a chance to miss. Perhaps Switzerland with its traditions of hard work, perseverance, and neutrality will prove to be the perfect recruiting ground for future players of cricket. Watch out for us in ten years time!

NEW COACHES APPOINTED IN SPAIN

Six successful candidates have been awarded European Cricket Council ECB Level 1 Coaching Certificate following an intensive course of instruction under the expert guidance of David Young. David, himself a former professional cricketer and development officer in Gibraltar had been sent by the ICC European Development Program specifically to run the programme. The final examinations were held last weekend, and involved both theory papers and practical coaching demonstrations.

The new coaches will join the

AEC-approved coaching team, who are currently working hard to prepare the Spanish national teams for this year's European Championships; the Indoor Tournament will be held in February in Denmark, and the Under-15 and Senior Tournaments will be held in August in Italy and Belgium, respectively.

The start of the new cricket season is an exciting time for both senior and junior Members of the Asociacion Española De Cricket. The Under-25 squad hold their final training session at Javea this weekend, before leaving to represent Spain in

Denmark later this month.

Junior Members re-commence training and coaching sessions under the guidance of AEC Coaches, with a field day at the Columbus Oval, Albir on Saturday, 5th February. Work begins in earnest to select and train an Under-15 squad to represent Spain in the European Championships in Rome in August.

Anybody living in Spain and interested in playing cricket is invited to contact Claire Sunderland on 659522902 or Mary Morgan on 680269652.

SCOTLAND INITIATE FIRST INTRO COURSE

The first ICC Introduction to Cricket Course in Scotland was held in Elgin on 11th January 2005. The course was tutored by Clarence Parfitt, one of Cricket Scotland's regional development officers. Clarence was trained up as an ICC Intro-

duction to Cricket Instructor at the recent EDP Coaching and Development Conference held at Lord's.

Eleven candidates, all School Sports Co-ordinators from the Moray area, participated on the

course. The first course went down extremely well and all participants will now take cricket to their respective schools throughout the area.



The nets at Bradfield 2004



Warming up at the Kwik cricket session



Spain's new coaches



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ICC European Development Program

The Europe Office
Lord's Cricket Ground
London NW8 8QN

T: +44 (0)20 7616 8635
F: +44 (0)20 7616 8634

European Development Manager

Richard Holdsworth
richard.holdsworth@icc-cricket.com
+44 (0)20 7616 8637

European Development Officer

Philip Hudson
philip.hudson@icc-cricket.com
+44 (0)20 7616 8636

Project Officer

Louise Kent
louise.kent@icc-cricket.com
+44 (0)20 7616 8638

Accounts & Project Officer

Denise Farrell-O'Neill
denise.oneill@icc-cricket.com
+44 (0)20 7616 8639

Umpiring Consultant (P/T)

Graham Cooper
graham.cooper@icc-cricket.com
+44 (0)20 7616 8633

Keep checking the ECC Website for reports and results on the Indoor Championship in Denmark and Italy in Malaysia

www.ecc-cricket.com



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ACADEMY REACHES NEW STANDARDS CONT. FROM PAGE 1



Left: Gym



Right: Indoor nets



Left: Pool



Right: Athletics Hall



ECC 2005 Calendar

Download a copy at www.ecc-cricket.com or available from the Europe Office

BULGARIA HOLDS FIRST INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIP

For the first time in Bulgarian history, an Indoor Cricket Championship, following the ECC Indoor playing conditions, was held by the Bulgarian Cricket Federation on 18th and 19th December 2004.

The organisers were Ludmil Trenev and Kuzman Primdjanov and Head Umpire was Saif-ur-Rehman. Four clubs participated, National Sports Academy (NSA), Medical University Sofia (MUS), Technical University Varna (TUV) and Technical University Sofia (TUS).

The group games were closely contested with some good all round performances, resulting in a final between MUS and NSA and TUV and TUS competing for 3rd place.

In the game for 3rd place, TUV won the toss and decided to bat first and playing well they made 76 runs in 10 overs. The team included two female players. Marta unfortunately made no runs but Mariana contributed with 9. TUS then batted and made the target within 8 overs and won the 3rd place position by 2 wickets.

The Final then took place. NSA won the toss and batted, making 64 runs in 10 overs. Opener Arshad made 10 runs, ably supported by Hanif with 8, Inam 6, Ali 5, Saif 10 runs not out and Hatesh 6 runs. Gill took 2 wickets and Omar 1 wicket.

MUS had a target of 65 runs to win the match. MUS then began their innings but despite great efforts only made 60 runs at the end of their 10 overs with Arshad and Saif both taking 2 wickets.

NSA therefore won the final by 4 runs and became the first Champions of the Bulgarian Indoor Cricket National Championship.

Man of the match was Perjout Sing Gill.

Below: Action from the tournament

