

Austrian Mens Team in Heidelberg - 2009

Note from Captain Michi P.

We have reached the biggest success of the Austrian mens touch team in history and can be proud of ourselves.

Thanks to our team effort and Rafa we were worthy opponents to the best touch teams of Europe and scored tries against all of them, with two esp. good halves against Wales (second half: 1-2) and Holland (first half: 2-4).

Two merit awards to John Clements who integrated very well in our team and made beautiful tries against France, and Joshi who played well with Rafa and became our scoring machine.

The victory against Germany will live on forever (like Cordoba in Austrian soccer).



Full Report from Hans H.

On July 25th and 26th, the biggest ever Touch Rugby Mainland Cup was held in Heidelberg, Germany. National Touch teams from Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Guernsey, Wales, Scotland, France, Spain, Holland and Belgium, with players from literally all around the globe, were competing in a very high standard 2 day Touch tournament. Guess what, not only the Aussies and Kiwis from each participation country were on the field. Moreover, most countries had the majority of their players being locals.

Austria was able to field a Mixed and a Mens team.

On it's first ever appearance, the Austrian Mens National Touch team did extremely well.

Austria – Wales: 2:9 or “Early morning wake-up call”

Pumped up by the movie “300” which we watched on the bus on our way to Heidelberg, we were ready to take our chances with the Welsh team early morning on Saturday. The Welsh drove

hard on us, confused us with a bunch of set moves and scored a couple of times against us. We were struggling, because we had our basics wrong, our drives were innocent like a baby bum, the communication was only happening off the field, more complaining than constructive. Nevertheless, we saw that the Welsh were not that far away as we thought. Who scored? Needless to say, Rafa scored the two touchdowns more or less on his own. Greatest thing about this game: The fan support from the mixed team and the non playing fans Shani, Anne and Gabi. Thanks heaps, it makes such a difference!

Austria – France 7:2 or “Let the Austrians score too”

Between the Wales game and this one we cheered up the mixed team and had a good talk. Our team play was much better this time, the small bits and pieces were coming together. The French sent a pretty harmless team with a bunch of older rugby players. John Clements and Rafa scored first, keeping an actual Austrian from being the first Mens open touchdown scorers for quite some time. Finally Hans Metzler reached the hall of fame. We all improved as a team in this game very much.

Austria – Germany 6:6 or “What happens when you open Maurin’s chains”

Matches Germany – Austria are always a matter of pride in any sports – especially for the Austrians. The game was very intense and on an even level most of the time. Germany had a very young team with only 3 experienced players. However, Austria was down by 2:5 at some point, but managed to end the game with a draw in an epic battle with everyone playing at their personal best.

“Funny” story: We have been told before the game that Germany’s key player is Shäggy and that we have to take special care of him. Austria won the tap off, and on the first drive Maurin tackled Shäggy so hard that the poor little German almost had to stop playing. Afterwards we were joking around that we need chains to restrain Maurin...

Austria – Switzerland over 30s 2:5 or “Old boys??”

Last game of the first day: We were in for another win, but the Zurich “old” boys were just better. Extremely fast, good switching and set moves. Our team spirit was still great and we gave our best. Our defence was not concentrated enough any more. Also we were not able to move the games to the wings. They were pretty left alone in attack. Great day anyway, let’s go party in Heidelberg!

Austria – Switzerland 3:15 or “Oidaaaa!”

We did not really know what hit us. Touchdown at almost every Swiss Attack in the first half. Switch, wrap, set play, awesome steps and dives. No idea how to counteract. USI Michi expressed his frustration with a shout deep from his heart – “Oidaaaa!!!!”

Second half was better, we could adjust a little and held against bravely. All in all not too bad, considering Switzerland won the Mainland Cup later on.

Austria – Holland 2:8 or “The crazy Dutchmen”

Although still exhausted from the Swiss playing cats and mouse with us, we played considerably well against the Dutch. They had almost only experienced Aussies and Kiwis in their team, so we achieved pretty much and managed to keep the number of touchdowns against us low.

Austria – Germany 5:3 or Biblical battle for 5th place

The French lost pretty much every game, so we ended up 5th in the pool of the Mens teams. We then had the obligation or privilege to play Germany again for 5th place.

This time, compared to the game on the day before, we were stronger all along. We had become a very good team with everyone playing at a level they have barely ever played before. We almost operated as a single impenetrable unit...

The game was a great end to a fabulous tournament.

As Rafa said, this was the very first step for the Austrian Mens National Touch team, and a very huge one. Our man of the tournament was without any doubt or dry humping champion Raphael Yavala. He led the team extraordinarily, worked like a supernatural being and had everyone look up to him. Drive 3 times, dump for Rafa, let him do something magic and score. Our tactic was as simple as that and worked perfectly. Thanks a million times for leading us up to that level. Cheers to many more great event like this!

