

Vienna Touch Tournament April 25th 2009

On a perfect sunny day surrounded by the Wienerwald in full Spring, 137 touch rugby players representing 20 different Nationalities got busy at the 2nd Vienna Touch Rugby Tournament on 25th April 2009 at Speichberg Arena, Purkersdorf.

Everything turned out great, including the party at Flanagans, and there were no disasters. Only one injury, a twisted ankle from Andreas of Munich. The atmosphere was friendly and the games were competitive enough to be interesting. All our guests from the other countries gave great feedback and many of them are looking forward to coming next year.

Teams & Results were:

Winner: **Glasgow Spiders** (5 wins)

2nd : **Zurich Geezers** (won 3, drew 1 lost 1)

3rd Equal: **Brussels Celtic** (Won 3, Drew 1, lost 1)

3rd Equal: **Vienna Bonobos** (won 3, Drew 1, lost 1).

5th: **IrishFurters** (Frankfurt plus Marley Park Tipsters from Dublin) (won 3, Drew 1, lost 1).

6th: **Munich** (Winner of Most Girls in a Team Prize) (Won 2, Lost 3).

7th: **Barbarians** (Grenoble plus Austria Cricket Club ACC Touch) (Won 1, lost 3, -6 touchdowns)

8th: **Italians** (Won 1, lost 3, -8 touchdowns)

9th: **Budapest Congebes** (Lost 4, -13 touchdowns)

10th: **Vienna A-Team**. Winner of the Team spirit Award (lost 4, -16 touchdowns).

Prize Giving:

We were lucky to have the NZ Ambassador Jennifer MacMillan as well as the Vice Mayor of Purkersdorf present the prizes, with the cool voice of Marty Fowke guiding proceedings. Lots of folks went home with many different prizes (including Poker Sets from Poulet (Partick Handel) and Touch Vienna shirts from Marek). A special prize from Mal North the Aussie of the International Leaders Alliance went to Maritini. Maritini won a free Coach the Coach course and an ILA medal as recognition for his leadership by example of the way in which he plays touch. The A-Team was voted by all the people who refereed for the day as the "Team with the Best Touch Spirit" – two years in a row! Awesome.

Thanks

Dan and Kathi Spiegl put a lot of effort into organizing the Tournament and big thanks goes out to all the Vienna folks that helped ensure a high standard of Touch, lots of food and fun – Marty Fowke, Shani, Nicole G, Joshi, Roman Duffner, George, Johanna, Esther, Hans, Lisa (Hans Metzlers girlfriend), Eva V., USI Michi, Krista, Sylvie, Alisa (Owens girlfriend), Philipp, Kati, Tom W. Special mention goes to Maurin and to Tracy for doing great photo and video work ☺

Thanks also to all the friends who sponsored us (e.g. Agi from NÖM, USI Michi and STRÖCK). Left over food from our cooked lunch and bananas was given to the homeless shelter (die Gruft).

The FC Purkersdorf Manager Kurt Sabatnig and Platzwart Fazli were extremely helpful to us (e.g. with field markings and getting us an article in the local newspaper NÖN).

ANZAC Day

The NZ Ambassador's presence, the Kiwi/Aussie music being played all day and the fun North versus South Hemisphere game was for the many New Zealanders and Australians playing Touch who were so far away from home on ANZAC Day April 25th.

Barbarians

Austrian Cricket Club players (ACC Touch Club) Judith, Brett, Surath, Owen and Benji were joined by Jon Hepburn of Vienna and 3 players from Grenoble (Vincent, George and Natalie) to form the mighty Barbarians. Considering they only met each other on the morning of the tournament, they came a very respectable 7th place, scoring many tries in the process.

Hans, George and Esther all contributed their reports below:

Party and Ref Report from Hans:

Party:

The afterparty, held at Flanagans Irish pub again this year, was legendary. Started by a bus drive with 80 players directy from the fields to the pub, and the whole bus singing (one Zurich player suggested we should ask the driver for a discount), the mood was extraordinary at the party. We only saw happy (partly sunburnt) faces there, chatting about the day, Touch in general and the many tournaments to follow this year. The party peaked when the legendary live band Tha Family with Karl Kained played and rocked the house – turned into a mini-concert. Two of our own Touch players Wolfgang and Dan jammed some songs with the band. The party then chilled out with us watching some cool fotos being shown at the Flanagans screens (thanks to Tracy and Maurin) and drinking some more beers.

Refs:

We had 2 fulltime refs, both with a lot of experience from the European Championships 2008 in Paris. Most of the teams provided at least 2, some 3 playing referees. So the standard of refereeing was very good. Special mentions to Matt from Frankfurt who did his evaluation for Level 1 at this tournament and was awarded the level 1 badge by the our own Ref Hans at the prizegiving after having passed his evaluation with flying colors. Also specials mentions to Eva and Andreas, who ran the sidelines at games and had the opportunity to spend some time as main refs on the field as well. Maritini reffed an entire game as main Ref.

Long story short, everyone had a very very good time playing some serious yet very friendly Touch at a close to perfect venue and at a legendary after party.

The A-Team Report by George

We were the underdogs of the tournament because our most experienced players play touch for about one and a half years and our new players played their first tournament with an experience of about 3-6 months. As a captain i didn't expect much and wanted the players just to have fun and become familiar with a tournament situation, but the way my team represented itself i was totally stunned. Everybody played in a way i would have never expected, i saw talent, enthusiasm, amazing team spirit (yes, we won the team spirit award ;-)) and the most

important thing: everyone enjoyed playing this awesome game. According to the way my team played i am really looking forward to a great future of austrian touch rugby.

Our first game was against the barbarians. Though we lost the game 1:3 i was very proud of my team because it was the first ever touch game for more than the half of our crew and we played a good match and made the barbarians attack become desperate because of our „defensive wall“

With a very good mood we went into the game against the bravehearts of glasgow. It was a very exciting game and no one knew who would win this game. Unfortunately we lost the game because of the evil referee dan travers (i'm just kidding) with 0:10.

After such a stunning defeat every team would have been devastated, but not the A team.

The third match was against munich and we got two big reinforcements in marty fawke and michi frauendorfer. We did great defensive work and kept the 0:0 for a very long time. Unfortunately the munich attack got through our defense three times and won with 3:0.

This has been our best game so far.

Our last game was against the 2008 champions brussels and we got one more reinforcement in a short appearance of our mate stewie. We showed no respect and scored the 1:0 after a couple of minutes. Yes, a team, which has almost no tournament experience, can beat the reigning champion. Though we lost the game 1:2 we did an awesome job and we sometimes even had the chance to win. The brussels game was the best ending of the tournament, we could imagine.

As a captain i am very very proud of my team and it was a real honour to me leading such an amazingly nice, cool and enthusiastic group.

A short tournament report of every player:

-Hemma: She did an awesome job on the wings, letting no attacker getting through her. Hemma also brought structure in the game being part of many successful three man drives.

-Evelyn: It was so great playing with her because she has an amazing attitude and great speed. Three man driving with her is a guarantee for making the defending team become desperate.

-Shani: Shani played a way i've never seen her before, awesome. She almost caught every uncatchable pass and did great work on the defensive wing. I also have to thank shani for helping me keeping the team spirit on a great level.

-Amelie: When i watched her at the game i would have never imagined, that she joined our club this winter. She played with an amazing self confidence and created some awesome gaps for our fast guys.

-Silvie: She did an awesome job on Saturday, it was her first tournament and she played very well. Great defensive work, fast three man drives, creating gaps on the

wing, self confidence players like silvie are making my job as a captain very easy, awesome.

-Usimichi: He did a great job, getting some fancy players like myself back to the simple three man drives, he made a big pressure on the defense with his fast three man drives, he was very active at the defense, brought structure in the game and was our best defense coordinator.

-Marty: He joined our team against munich and brussels and he brought so much calmness in our game with his awesome attitude. Having marty in the team made our whole team become more secure and structured.

-Michi: He also joined our team against munich and brussels and brought awesome speed and ball handling in our game, he was an absolute enrichment for our team and i am looking forward to see him at our training sessions.

-Roman: He did the greatest job for our team structure. His amazingly fast three man drives, his awesome game sense and his calm personality even in the most stressful situations were a decisive factor of our success.

-Martin: On his first tournament he played like a very experienced player, did a great job in offensive, an awesome job in the defense, very selfconfident and a great sub partner. Martin also had our moment of the tournament diving a belgian player in defense and saved us from a secure try World class

-Joshi: With his pace, his ball handling, his fitness and game sense joshi was a real enrichment for our team. He is a very enthusiastic player who always wants to win, every team needs a player like him, he never gave up, fought for every ball and built up a big pressure on the opponent's defense.

-Phil: Phil was our try scoring machine, did great job on defense shooting, brought a lot of self confidence in our team and was a really awesome team player.

-Guildo: after a long winter break he joined our team fort he tournament and i was lucky having a player like him in my team. He brought good structure in our game, never did any fancy stuff and was an awesome team player. Well done

-Bernie: He is a born fighter, who never gives up. Even against the awesome attack of glasgow he did a great job letting no one get through him. He also did very well on offense joining several amazingly effective three man drives. Awesome

-Tom the Cow: Tom returned form germany just a couple days before the tournament and did a great job. He was involved in our great three man drives did a great job on the defense, brought structure in the game and was a very good team player. He also helped the team a lot with his team spirit, simply a great guy.

Vienna Bonobos Report by Esther.

What a lovely tournament. It was perfect Touch weather and the organisation and stuff was going all smooth!

The Bonobos had a great team mixed up with experienced to very new players, who had their first ever tournament. Again we learned many things at this tournament, what we do very well and what we still need to work on.

Our strong points were our defence. We just had very few tries scored against us. The Wingers (Jonathan, Neal, Hans H, Johanna and Eva) reacted quickly and made the defence solid as concrete! They talked a lot, relied on each other, and prevented many touchdowns. Our attack was also improving from game to game. A weak point was our drives that were slow and sometimes didn't make much impact. Anyway, a striking on our "plus" side was that we hardly dropped any balls, or lost them at penalties, dummy runs or panic passes. We played with very nice and fair spirit!!!!!!

Special mention goes to Hans Metzler and Andreas, both quite new players (Hans's first tournament ever!!) and who did an awesome job both defending and attacking. Hans was very fast, talked a lot, and didn't let anyone score at his spot. Andreas always kept the overview and worked very well together with Tom P in the 4 men drive and other moves. Both scored a couple of really cool tries!!!

Michi P and Hans H showed great commitment. Dan and Hans both played and reffed and Michi P. played for the Barbarians (and A-Team!), and still had enough energy left for intensive games with the Bonobos. Dan and Marty Fowke helped out in both teams, and a special thankx to Marty Fowke for backing me up at the warm up and drills in between the games. Everyone was giving his best, Maritini and Neal were fast and fancy as we usually know them and scored a few tries each. Maritini reffed an entire game, whilst Andreas and Eva V. also helped out with reffing.

And once again I must mention that we have the best girls of all teams!! Kati W, and Kathi S were fantastic middles and the Wingers Eva and Johanna were at the right place at the right time. Johanna a.k.a. the "wing-king" also won the player's player. She did a great job defending and she was totally reliable at her spot on the wing, were she could score 3 tries for the Bonobos!

Here is a little summary of the Bonobos games:

Bonobos vs. IrishFurters (6:4???):

Despite all efforts to get people awake with a tough warm up and drills in the morning, we had our usual bumpy start. The IrishFurters were a Barbarian team consisting of five 50+ Irish guys and 5 Frankfurt players, that we mildly underestimated. They outplayed our defence with switches, we got nervous and they scored several tries right away. But then Rafa got determined to win this game and thanks him and our other very fast players like Doug and Michi P we could break through their Defence and catch up.

After the game Doug has helped us with a little demonstration about how to defend these switches, it clicked and we did much better the following games.

Bonobos vs. Zurich (1:4)

This was our best game. We played on the nice stadium field. We put a lot of pressure on Zurich with fast drives (e.g. four men drive) and always got to their line. At the line we were a bit insecure, so we didn't score. But we defended very well and even though they made switches and other cool moves we mostly had control and did a really good job. One big mistake happened when Esther passed the ball in our own 5 meters into the thin air, because she heard a phantom voice call for it. To keep a good image she made up for it by putting all the blame on her team mates. Anyway the highlight of this game was Rafa's interception and sprint towards the score line with a Zurich guy at his heels. Rafa stumbled but disguised it as a dive, so

the Zurich player gave up the chase, but infact Rafa had "dived" before the line, so he quickly got up with the ball and dived again behind the line. I wasn't sure if it was actually a planned trick or a lucky coincident, but we got the try and that's all that matters ;-)

Bonobos vs. Budapest (5:1??)

Budapest had a team with many new players, determined and tough girls and some very skilled and experienced expats. They played a bit chaotic and we were quickly dragged into the same mode of playing. Still we kept overhand and made a couple of very nice moves. Neal scored a great try in the corner. He totally outsmarted the defence with his quick dump and split.

Bonobos vs. Italians (6:2??):

We played very well against the Italians. We kept them in their own half most of the time, getting many chances to attack the line. Hans M score a really cool Sepp try and Eva caught some rocket shots from Rafa, and turned them into tries. All went smooth, even though Max (the Italian Max) intercepted about three times, but he was chased every time successfully by our very fit boys.

Finals: Bonobos vs. Brussels (1:1)

Our last game, the finals for third place was against Brussels. We lost to them last year in Vienna ending up 2nd, so we were quite exited about this game.

At that time the Bonobos had played 4 intensive games and some players also reffed or played in other teams, so we were pretty tired. We scored a fast try and then we did a lot of defending. Because of our exhaustion their fast shooting defence was very hard to attack. We lost a couple of balls in dummy runs, oversteps and panic passes when we tried to get through. But still we defended their fast and skilled players very well. Just a couple of minutes before the end, they were awarded one try.

When the game was over, the tired captains decided to keep the draw and reclaimed to play a drop off. All players were tired and some nerves were already pretty blank. We can keep a good memory of an exiting match.

The trophy was handed to both captains, but at Flanagans we decided to fill it up with Schnapps and give it to the Brussels team as a souvenir. After sharing this and some more Schnapps with the Brussels captain, we made exiting future planes (including various drunk thoughts on girls development and how can we earn money for playing touch) and they promised to come back next year, so we can finally beat them!!!