

FASSP/Sportsplex Squash 2009 European Junior Tour

This year marked the first year in which Kumail Mehmood/FASSP Squash-Sportsplex team brought with them juniors to the Pioneer Open, in Cologne, Germany, and Dutch Open, in Amsterdam, Holland, from June 30th – July 13th. There were sixteen juniors altogether that went with the FASSP/Sportsplex Squash team, and alongside them coaching was former World Champion Thierry Lincou and Lamont Preston, coach at Sportsplex. All who participated played well and showed great improvement game by game.

At the Pioneer Junior Open, in Germany, there were 512 players from all over the world. There were juniors from England, Holland, Egypt, France, Denmark, Colombia, Sweden, Australia, Belgium, Germany, USA, and many more. The two venues consisted of 33 courts which were very hot as the clubs had no air conditioning. This made it difficult for the players as they were not used to playing in such hot conditions. A noticeable achievement from the team was Maria Elena Ubiña who came in third position in the GU-15, Catalina Pelaez, an international student of Kumail's from Colombia, coming in at second position GU-19, and Olivia Fiechter coming in at eighth position in the GU-15. Also the other team members produced some great results, where some came in the top 16 and some in the top 24 of their respective age group. The team gained lots of experience, performed very well and made good accounts of themselves for the next tournament.

The team had a day off in Germany which some kids chose to go to the chocolate factory and some decided to do some laundry. This was a great day for the kids to refresh and get prepared for the next tournament. The following day the team took the bus from Cologne to Amsterdam. Once there, the team settled and then straight to the club to acclimatize themselves to the courts. At the Dutch Open the results for our team was once again great with Catalina coming in at second position in the GU-19, Olivia Fiechter coming in at sixth position in the GU-15, Meredith Schmidt-Fellner in the top eight for the GU-17 and the other kids, including Maria Elena, Tara Harrington Coco Siebert, Lydie McKenzie, Senen Ubiña, Sam Conant, Nina Scott, Lindsay Scott, Ashley Richards, Annie Duff, Katie Scannell, Annabelle Galef came in high position in their age group.

We are proud of all of the kids that participated at these two prestigious events. There were a lot of talented players and future stars at these two events and it was a challenge for our kids, but they stepped up to the challenge and performed very well. We are looking forward to doing this European Tour again and will be working hard towards future tournaments.