

2010 New Zealand International Open

30 & 31 January 2010 Auckland NZ

'the boys': Raja Jamaladdine, Ken Maski & Sukrit Vaswani

A brief report from the coach Tim Whelan...

I can't tell you exactly where 'the boys' finished in the Tournament, but I'm happy to give you an insight into how they went.

The first game they were drawn to play was against the New Zealand team with Christian Fouquet (Kiwi captain of the 2007 Melbourne Trans Tasman Team). We played very solid pétanque and came through with a comfortable win. During that game, I had more than a dozen people come up to me to talk about our team. The NSW contingent were very impressed and suggested that we were putting South Australia on the International pétanque map. Unfortunately, that was our best game. We were very unlucky with the draw as every other team we played was from either New Caledonia or Tahiti and they were all good - two teams were exceptional.

Despite our best efforts, having fought hard, of the games played, a 2 win/4 loss result meant we didn't qualify for the finals on Sunday.

At the end of day one, we were feeling fairly flat but there were a lot of very positive comments and genuine all-round surprise that we hadn't qualified.

The New Caledonians introduced us to their (pétanque) President, who invited us to come to a tournament in New Caledonia, at their expense (minus travel).

And a player report from Sukrit Vaswani

New Zealand was an amazing experience, however tournament wise, we did not fare so well....

It was quite clear that the islander guys were seriously in a league of their own!!! and unfortunately on day one we drew four very strong Tahitian teams out of our six games, so pretty unlucky considering one local team mentioned to us that they didn't draw any of them.

The first game we beat one of the top NZ teams in an epic 2 hour battle, we then lost to the current Tahitian world championship team, and then bounced back by thrashing some other local guys.

The fourth game we got pumped by the Tahitian team that we considered as the heaviest shooting side in the tournament (the first end they 'carrued' four of our 'bad' balls whilst holding closest, all just to bring in the sixth point, after a measure they took five points) four ends later it was all over.

Knowing that we now required two wins to qualify, our fifth game (against Tahiti3) was played with A LOT OF INTENSITY, (this game attracted quite a large crowd) and after a tight battle we came up just short. The final game was against another very talented team, I think it may have been New Caledonia's best team, and although we gave it all we had, we were beaten...

Overall, although we were slightly disappointed with our result, given the circumstances we felt it was an admirable performance....

And having said that, the opportunity to play in a tournament with such talented players was indeed an honour and we treated it as such.

After the tournament on the second day, we were lucky enough to play a few hours of social games with the islanders, AWESOME EXPERIENCE!!!! - really opened our eyes to the standard of play they are capable of... particularly when there are some beers on the line...

Finally, we were pleased to hear that Tim was complimented on our teams "professionalism" in and around the game! (Clearly an area we had been working on.)

ALL IN ALL, A GREAT EXPERIENCE, & DESPITE NOT WINNING MUCH, WE CERTAINLY PUT ON A SHOW FOR THE CROWDS! AUSSIE STYLE!



photos courtesy Tim Whelan

Forty-one Triples teams competed in the NZ Open at Auckland

Final:

Francis Ching/Nauta Yann (Tahiti)/Georgio Vakauta (NZ)

defeated Martial Tetvanui/Rainu Tuaiva/Vickson Tuaiva (Tahiti) Score: 13-12.