

Carrom Canada's *Kya baat hai*

Chandrababu Strolls To Sixth National Title

When the 17th US Carrom National championship got underway at the TV Asia Auditorium on the 14th of September 2012, there was no doubt who would be the champion. Predicting his opponent in the final was a tough call.

Saravanan Chandrababu played way above the competition, was very composed, friendly and didn't take his opponents lightly. He scooped his 6th National title, the D.D. Mehta trophy without losing a game in all the matches he played. As a matter of fact a few of his opponents managed double digits against him. Sekhar his worthy challenger in the finals, seemed content to reach the finals and failed to display his aggressive game and paid the price and succumbed to Chandrababu 25-0, 25-2. Although, the score line appears totally one sided, it would not have read that way if Sekhar had not to miss last coin sitters in as many as 5 boards. Why don't we add an adage to our beloved game "*missed sitters does matter in winning and losing.*"

Chandrababu won the first board by 10 points and repeated the same in the second. That definitely can drain any player mentally and Sekhar was no exception. 20 points down in 2 boards had Sekhar's mind completely botched up and with 8 boards limitation, it was a humongous task to make a comeback. The former 2 time champion went into a defensive mode which did not help either. All

Chandrababu had to do was to go offensive and tighten the bolts to record a very comfortable victory.

Former National Champion Madhu Rao was the surprise of the tournament. Madhu made amends to his inconsistency with some brilliant tactical plays. He defeated a formidable player Neil Khatu by 2 games to 1 to pick up the third place.



Pre-Quarter Finals Results

Jayadev Suryadevara Lost to Neil Khatu 18-23, 25-5 & 6-24
Atul Kharecha Beat Wajahat Mohammed 22-15 & 24-10
Francis D'Costa Lost to Shivaram Gowdagere 2-25 & 16-20
Sridhar Galipelli Lost to Sekhar Challa 7-23 & 5-25
Madhu Rao Beat Hari Venkatesan 25-8 & 25-9
Saravanan Chandrababu Beat Prakash Kagal 25-0 & 25-0
Nilesh Mehta Beat Appa Paranjape 24-12 & 22-8
Shibu Jose Lost to Vishal Karangutkar 6-24 & 12-22

Quarter Finals Results

Saravanan Chandrababu beat Vishal Karangutkar 26-9 & 19-11
Sekhar Challa beat Shivaram Gowdagere 20-10 & 25-9
Neil Khatu beat Atul Kharecha 23-19 & 18-16
Madhu Rao beat Nilesh Mehta 17-16 & 21-5

Semi-Finals

Sekhar Challa beat Madhu Rao 25-17 & 17-12
Saravanan Chandrababu beat Neil Khatu 25-6 & 23-16

B Group [Placings 9th-16th]

3rd Place: Prakash Kagal lost to Appa Paranjape 21-8, 11-18
Finals: Jayadev Suryadevara beat Sridhar Galipelli 25-8

C Group [Placings 17th-32nd]

3rd Place: Avinash Deshpande lost to Parag Pandit 20-16, 17-25 & 17-18
Finals: Balaji Parthasarathy beat Devang Shah 22-3 & 23-7

[For the entire tournament results,
please visit www.carromcanada.com]



Murli Balasubramanyam
the Best New Player of the
tournament



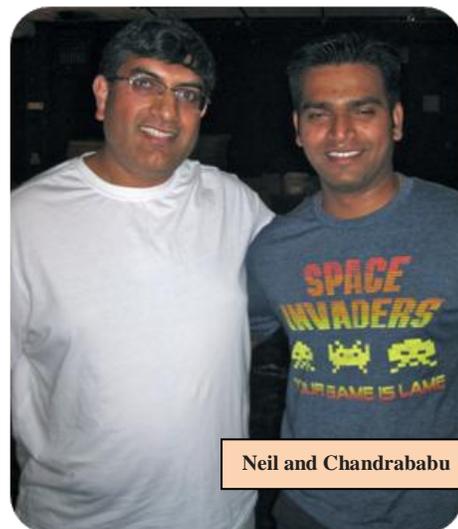
Chandrababu and Neil Doubles Champions

Neil Khatu and Saravanan Chandrababu won the doubles title defeating the current title holders Vishal Karangutkar and Sekhar Challa. In the doubles competition, it was not smooth sailing for Chandrababu, who partnered Neil. They faltered in one of their league matches losing to Shivaram Gowdagere and Subramanian Laxminarayanapuram. 10-25 and dropped a game to Atul Kharecha and Appa Paranjape in their quarter final clash. Vishal Karangutkar and Sekhar Challa also had a tough ride to the finals losing 2 of their league matches.

The third place went to Shibu Jose and Prakash Kagal who beat Shivaram and Subramanian. Shibu who came back into the carrom scene after 5 years absence had a fantastic tournament. He single handedly walked his team into the semis with a comeback from behind victory over the Canadians Francis D'Costa and Manuel Coelho. His 7th board brilliant finish in the 2nd game completely turned tables on the Canadian pair who were coasting to the semis.



Sekhar & Vishal



Neil and Chandrababu

Quarter Finals Results

Shibu Jose/Prakash Kagal beat Francis D'Costa/Manuel Coelho

15-17, 11-10 & 25-0

Vishal Karangutkar/Sekhar Challa beat Balaji Parthasarathy/Srikanth Bangalore

25-5, 5-25 & 23-23

Neil Khatu/Saravanan Chandrababu beat Atul Kharecha/Appa Paranjape

25-0, 17-18 & 25-9

Shivaram Gowdagere/Subramanian L. beat Vamshi Boinpalli/Mani K

18-4 & 15-9

Semi-Finals

Neil Khatu/Saravanan Chandrababu beat Shibu Jose/Prakash Kagal

19-15 & 13-8

Vishal Karangutkar/Sekhar Challa beat Shivaram Gowdagere/Subramanian L.

[For the entire tournament results, please visit www.carromcanada.com]

Smile! You're On Facebook



Dr. Nilesh Mehta & Francis

As it is cumbersome to upload all the pictures in this newsletter, you can visit Carrom Canada Facebook page and view the pictures there.

It would be nice of you to express your like for Carrom Canada page, as it will give us extra analysis. And, your comments will also go a long way in promoting Carrom in North America.



Suggestions

USCA is always looking forward to constructive criticisms and suggestions. Please write and help USCA to serve you better. Together we can promote carrom to new heights.

US all set for the World Cup



Atul, Vishal, Neil, Sekhar, Jayadev and Prakash

US Carrom Association has officially announced their world cup team. The top four ranked players **Vishal Karangutkar, Jayadev Suryadevara, Neil Khatu and Sekhar Challa** will be playing in the world cup which will be held in Colombo, Sr Lanka from the 30th of October to the 4th of November 2012. The team will be accompanied by **Prakash Kagal** as the team manager. USCA Secretary **Atul Bhawe** will also travel with the team. US will also have another representation in the tournament committee. **Shreenivas Malliseti** who has been recently appointed as the USCA Representative to the ICF, will be also attending the world cup.

The surprise omission of six times national champion Chandrababu in the team, will certainly raise eyebrows and will have a huge impact on the US team's performance. What a shame Chandrababu did not make it into the top four ranking due to his non participation in other ranking tournaments.

CANADIANS INVITED TOO

The International Carrom Federation has also invited the Canadian team, but the chances of their participation is in balance. Two of the top five players Derrick Silveira and Manuel Coelho are doubtful starters due to work commitment. Wajahat Mohammed, Moaz Shaikh and Francis D'Costa have expressed their availability, but a sturdy fourth player is absolutely necessary to send the team. The last day to confirm is 30th September.



Wajahat, Manuel, Francis & Derrick

The True Champions

What did Geeta Pandit, Karthik Challa and Mashish Kuhafa have in common? They all knew they had absolutely no chance against the talented opponents, but they had the hearts of true sporting champions.

In Geeta, we saw a class of a true carrom lover. She was the only woman who participated in the competition and was there from morn to dusk on all the 3 days, though her involvement to play required her attendance on one particular day. Apparently she got this determination from her father who was a champion player during his playing career. She won a match showing even at 68, age does not matter over mind and determination. Her son Parag despite his tremendous input into the organization played extremely well and finished 4-3.

And speaking of age we had another individual in Appa Paranje at age 82 showed skills which outclassed talented players who could be fit to be his grandsons. Appa Paranjape, a former National Champion, finished 2nd in the round robin only behind Chandrababu with 6 wins and 1 loss. He lost in the pre-quarter finals



Karthik the upcoming star

to Nilesh Mehta. Now keeping to the age factor we had on the other extreme end, a young lad in Karthik Challa aged 10, who showed his class and sent a warning to the US carrom fraternity of his arrival into the competitive scene. His handling of the striker and selection of the coins was amazing to watch. My prediction is that if he continues at this pace, in the next 4 to 5 years he should be vying for the title.

Mashish comes all the way from Maryland. He displayed true spirit- *that participation is more important than winning*. Mashish participation should tell USCA that one open division is not enough to increase the passion for carrom in US. There could be tens of Mashish's who stay away from such events, avoiding the cost and one sided defeats. It would be an excellent idea to have two divisions one for the elite and the other for the not so. This way there will more players taking part and promoting this game. Mashish deserves a lot of credit for his participation in this highly competitive tournament.



Geeta watching Parag play



Clockwise: Participants, Maryland Group, Appa interviewed by TV Asia, Canadians with Chandrababu and the Tournament Committee

CLOSE, BUT NO CIGAR

This time the Canadian contingent had nothing to declare at the customs, but certainly performed extremely well. **Francis D'Costa** and **Wajahat Mohammed** finished the round robin with 5 victories and 2 defeats, thus qualifying for the pre-quarter finals knock-out stages. On the other hand, **Derrick Silveira** and **Manuel Coelho** were 4 and 3, narrowly missing qualification. In the pre-quarters, Wajahat lost to Atul Kharechah and Francis was beaten by Shivaram. **Taher Ali** who was a last minute addition to the trip finished 2 and 5.

Manuel beat US number two Jayadev in the league round and Wajahat took a game from Jayadev in the knock-out stages. Derrick is one of the few players who got double digit figures (11) against the mighty Chandrababu, the six time

national champion and Francis defeated their current number one Vishal and against the US number three Neil, he gave his game away after narrowly missing a sitter in the 7th board. Francis also missed a white slam, his 10th coin missing the

pocket by a whisker. No slams were recorded and Francis' miss was the nearest any player could come to in accomplishing a start to finish feat.

In the doubles competition Francis and Manuel finished 3-2 and qualified for the quarter finals and Wajahat and Derrick ended with 2 wins and 3 losses. Francis and Manuel lost their quarter finals narrowly to Prakash and Shibu after winning the first game.



Kudos to the Tournament Committee

Every successful event has dedicated individuals who put their heart and soul. It was not different here at the 17th US National in New Jersey, which was conducted in partnership with the New Jersey Carrom Club and TV Asia. The brain and brawn behind this was the US Secretary Atul Bhave. Atul's involvement has to be commended, as he sacrificed his personal game performance to the tournament's success. He was ably supported by yet another extremely skillful player Neil Khatu who was a key figure in the organization, and like Atul, could not put dedicated effort in his game. Atul Kharecha, the tournament director, ensured that the schedule, rules and regulations of the game were followed flawlessly. Parag Pandit, Sridhar Galipelli, Naveen Chandran, Nitin Parwadhan, just to name a few, were the live wires for the tournament's success. The tournament committee listed in the brochure deserves kudos for a job well done.



Hasmukh Patel, USCA President was a gracious host, especially to the Canadian contingent extending his wholehearted support.

Dr. Nilesh Mehta's write up on *Hi India* a Chicago based newspaper will also go a long way in promoting this game. Dr. Mehta who is one of the top 10 player's in US and Vice President of USCA, is also covering the T20 world cup in Colombo, Sri Lanka. In Mr. Shah the owner of TV Asia and Mr. Lal his right hand, we have individuals who love the game and the community. Their sporting gesture goes a long way to assist USCA to conduct a tournament of this magnitude and not worry about the venue. TV Asia also gave adequate coverage during the tournament



Clockwise: Canadian Team, tournament committee, Has Mukh Patel, Parag Pandit and meeting in progress





Mr. Shah & Mr. Lal with the Canadian Jersey.

Pre World Cup Warm Up

Atul Kharecha a strong supporter of USCA has offered to stage before the world cup a prep tournament for the US players and extended the invitation to the Canadian team too.

He will host a singles and doubles tournament to the world cup bounds teams and provide accommodation, food and trophies to the players for the weekend. Thus creating a competitive environment and get prepared for the tough competition ahead.

The provisional dates are 12th and 13th of October. Neil and Vishal have accepted the invitation.



Shibu and Prakash with their trophies.



Shivram and Subramaniam with Atul Bhawe.



Thanks USCA, New Jersey Carrom Club and TV Asia for being such a marvelous host.