



www.upc-pool.org.uk

PRESS RELEASE

Ulster take Irish Intervarsities Pool Championships from holders DIT

The 5th-6th February 2016 saw the UPC Irish Intervarsities Eight-ball Pool Championships relocate to the Abbey Court Hotel and Spa in Nenagh, County Tipperary. This year saw a very strong Ulster University side take the Team Championship having faced tough opposition from the then reigning champions Dublin Institute of Technology in the final.

Some commanding performances from David McQuillan of IT Blanchardstown took him to glory in the Individual Championship, with Francis McGuire of Ulster University the runner-up.

The team event used a format where the two highest placed teams in each group progressed to the Championship play-offs with the third placed team going forward to the Team Shield play-offs.

Team Group Stage

Group A contained the reigning champions Dublin IT A, who started off with an impressive 10-0 victory over IT Blanchardstown B. However, the holders didn't have it all their own way as they were beaten in their third match by NUI Maynooth A, who went on to top the group unbeaten. Dublin IT took the second Championship spot and it was Athlone IT C who booked their place in the Team Shield playoffs.

Second seeds NUI Galway A started their campaign strongly with a 9-1 win over IT Blanchardstown C in Group B. However, it was NUI Maynooth B who topped the group unbeaten with NUI Galway A having to settle for second place. Dublin IT showed excellent strength in depth as DIT C took third place in the group to make the Shield playoffs.

Group C was the first in which the seeded team went unbeaten as Queen's Belfast A sailed into the Championship knockouts. Joining them was Dublin IT B, who were run extremely close by IT Carlow B, who finished third with one fewer frame won on their tally and had to settle for a place in the Shield.

Group D saw Ulster A progress into the Championship unbeaten with some very strong performances, including a 10-0 and a 9-1 victory. The second championship place was taken by NUI Galway B who finished the group a point ahead of Athlone IT B who took the Shield spot following a very mixed set of results.

Three out of the four teams in Group E were A teams, which set the scene for some very hotly contested matches. The strength of the group showed in the final table as Athlone IT A and IT Carlow A progressed to the Championship with the seeded team DCU A progressing into the Shield.

Sixth seeds DCU B topped Group F unbeaten and it was impossible to separate IT Blanchardstown A and NCI A from the group matches. This situation required implementation of the high pressure penalty shootout to decide who took the Championship position, and it was IT Blanchardstown who held their nerve to progress into the top tier with a 1-0 victory.

Championship/Shield Playoffs

Shield

Progressing through the groups to the Shield playoffs by virtue of finishing third in their respective groups were two A teams, two B teams and two C teams. The demise of Athlone IT B and NCI A in the preliminary semi-finals pitted Athlone IT C against IT Carlow B in the first semi and Dublin IT C against DCU A in the other. A 6-3 win for IT Carlow B meant that they would contest the final against tournament fifth seeds DCU A, who won their semi-final 6-1.

A commanding performance from DCU A in the final saw them overcome IT Carlow B 6 frames to 1 to take the UPC Irish Intervarsities Team Shield.

Championship

With one seed ousted from the Championship at the group stage, it was tough to predict a winner from the eight A teams that had made it into the play-off stage. IT Blanchardstown A fell at the hands of Dublin IT B in the preliminary quarter-finals and were joined by Athlone IT A and Queen's Belfast A, who were defeated at the quarter final stage. The semi-finals were thus to be contested between NUI Maynooth A, Ulster A, IT Carlow A and holders Dublin IT A.

The first semi-final saw fourth seeds Ulster A whitewash NUI Maynooth A with a commanding performance, and thus throwing down the gauntlet to the winners of the other semi-final.

The second semi-final saw holders Dublin IT A keep their hopes of retaining their title alive as they brushed aside IT Carlow A with a 6-2 victory.

The dominant performances throughout the tournament of both sides who reached the final showed that it was going to be a very tough match to call. With some excellent single-frame pool played by both sides, it was Ulster A who emerged triumphant to take the UPC Irish Intervarsities Team Championship from the hands of the holders with a 6-2 win.

Individual Championship

The Individual Championship saw around 140 players fancying their chances of taking the title. Only the eight seeded players were guaranteed to be in the last 64 so everyone else in the field had to come flying out of the blocks in the race-to-three qualifying rounds.

As the tournament reached the quarter final stage only two of the seeded players remained; Number one seed Andrew Maguire of Queen's Belfast and number six seed Shane Russell of Dublin

IT. Both these players were tested in the quarters as they came through in deciding frames against Daragh O'Shea (DCU) and Martin Dunne (ITC) respectively.

In the first semi-final Andrew Maguire came up against the experienced David McQuillan of IT Blanchardstown. Some very solid play from McQuillan saw him book his place in the final with a 4-1 victory over the top seed.

The score line was the same in the second semi-final, where Ulster's Francis McGuire defeated the only remaining seed to ensure that he would be competing in the final.

The final was thus a contest between IT Blanchardstown's David McQuillan and Francis McGuire of Ulster. In the only singles match played in a race to five, McGuire never managed to get a foothold and McQuillan held his nerve to become UPC Irish Intervarsities Individual Champion with a 5-1 victory.

4 May 2016

For further information:

Iorwerth Griffiths

Email: iorwerth.griffiths@upc-pool.org.uk

Website: www.upc-pool.org.uk

Join our fan page on [Facebook](#)

Follow us on [Twitter](#)

Notes to editors:

The Universities Pool Council (UPC) is the governing body for pool at higher education level in the United Kingdom and Ireland. It is recognized by the British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS), Student Sport Ireland (SSI), Scottish University Sport (SUS), the English Pool Association (EPA) and the Irish Pool Association (IPA).

The UPC organizes national nine-ball, eight-ball and women's eight-ball championships for teams and individuals. The UPC also organizes the Student Home Internationals representative event.