

The Open Championship and its Role in Developing and Popularizing Table Tennis in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Amr Khalid Hafez,
Saudi Research and Publishing Co., Riyadh, P.O.Box 478, Riyadh 11411, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Purpose

Open Championship and its role in events of Saudi players standard.

Chapter 1

1. Championships held in the Kingdom under the supervision of the Saudi Table Tennis Federation. Saudi Table Tennis Federation organizes an annual championships for 153 clubs covering in 13 regions of the Kingdom for 3,500 Saudi table tennis players. The category of the competition include:

- a) Premier Division (Total of 8 clubs)
- b) First Division (Total of 8 clubs)
- c) Second Division (Total of 137 clubs)
- d) Singles and Doubles Championship throughout the Kingdom, as follows:
 1. Men
 2. Youth (Over 14 years)
 3. Juniors (Under 14 years)

Chapter 2: Open Championships

A - Arab News and Arriyadiah, 1st and 2nd Open Championships

B - University Championships

It is team-held annually. All the universities of the Kingdom participates in this Championship. The Universities taking part are: King Saud Univ., Al-Imam Mohamad Bin Saud Islamic Univ. of Riyadh, King Abdul Aziz Univ. of Jeddah, King Fahd Univ. of Pertpleu and Minerals of Dharan, King Faisal Univ. of Dammam, Um Al Qura Univ. of Makkah, and the Islamic Univ. of Medna As-Munawarah.

C - Maintenance and Operation of National Guard Championships (SANG)

The Championships, popularly known as "SANG" is held annually and includes teams and singles events. The tournament has been held successfully for the past six years and is supported by the Kingdoms popular sponsors.

D - Championships of Companies and Establishments

This Championships is organized under the supervision of the General Presidency of Youth which bears the motto, "Sports for All". It is a tournament which includes 10 - 14 teams.

E - Equestrian Club Championships

This is open to men and juniors. It is divided into two parts. First, the Preliminary

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round takes place and then the qualifying players play the final round. The members of the club and their sons are eligible to take part in this Championships. The Winner receives cup and medals at the awarding ceremony which is presided by Crown Prince ABDULLAH BIN ABDULAZIZ.

Chapter 3: First and Second Arab News and Arriyadiah Championship.

The first tournament was held from 22 - 29, December, 1988. The Organizing Committee consists of a Technical Committee of approximately 60 persons. Included are arbiters, championships committees, public relations, coordinators media committees, announcers, photographers and designers. The prizes for winners, in addition to lucky prizes on daily games for the spectator, is now set at US Dollars 75,000.00 and also includes a brand new car, tickets, T.V. Sets, videos, and so forth.

The First Arab News and Arriyadiah Championship was divided as follows:

- a) TEAM EVENT
- b) OPEN SINGLES

A total 12 teams representing various companies and establishments from all over the Kingdom took part.

The Open Singles attracted 135 players of various nationalities as follows: Saudi Arabia 55, Philippines 32, Egypt 17, India 10, and Pakistan & Others (USA, England, Syria, Sri Lanka) 13 players. A record number of 1,053 games were played over 9 days.

The Second Arab News and Arriyadiah Championships was held over, 10-day duration, from 7 - 16 February, 1990. The number of members of the organizing committee increased to 75 and included the same committees as mentioned in the first Championships. The number of donor companies and establishments increased to 25. The event consisted of:

- a) TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP
- b) OPEN DOUBLES
- c) OPEN SINGLES

16 teams representing companies, establishments and clubs participated in this tournament. The doubles competition was added for more attraction. A total of 32 pairs from different nationalities entered.

In the second Championships, players from different nationalities the following were entered, namely: Saudi Arabia 65, Philippines 36, Egypt 18, India 15, Pakistan 10, and other nationalities 21 players. Prizes in the Second tournament reached the value of US Dollars 95,000. A total of 1265 matches were played.

Chapter 4: Questionnaire for Players and Trainers

The questionnaire consisted of 16 questions, and was distributed to 250 players. 100 answers were received from the players and 30 trainers with 10 answers returned questionnaires. In the first questionnaire, every player was asked to fill in his name, nationality, and age. The number of players according to their nationality were: Saudi Arabia 34, Philippines 20, India 16, Pakistan 13, Egypt 9, Sudan 4, Yemen 2, Taiwan 1 and Jordan 1 player. The 10 trainers from different nationalities - Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Japan, Sudan, Sri Lanka, Jordan, and India.

Second Question: What is your opinion about first and second Arab News and Arriyadiah Championships? (Tr.:Trainers)

a) Below standard 6% (Tr. 0%) b) Average 25 (0) c) Excellent 67 (100) d) Abstain or no opinion 2 (0).

Third Question: What is the main reason for your participation in the Championship? Answers: a) Because of fabulous prizes 2% (0%), b) To improve my standard 21 (0), c) To watch games and enjoy 7 (10), d) Love for table tennis game 11 (70), e) All of

the above 53 (0), f) Abstain or no opinion 6 (20).

Fourth Question: Does the participation of foreign players affect the success of the Championship? Answers: a) Yes 97% (100%), b) No 0 (0), c) Abstain 3 (0).

Fifth Question: If the answer for question No. 4 (above) was Yes, how did the presence of foreign players affect the Championships? Four answers were given to select from: a) Because of his long experience 17% (20%) b) To get benefit and learn when playing with them 9 (10), c) To get benefit from different schools 11 (0), d) All the above mentioned answers 57 (70), e) Abstain or no opinion 6 (0).

Sixth Question: Do you support participation of a big number of players in the Championship? Answers were made as follows: a) Yes 96% (100%), b) No 1 (0), c) Abstain 3 (0).

Seventh Question: If the answer on Question No. 6 is Yes, why? They had three answers to select from: a) To play as many games as possible 21% (40%), b) To watch different standards 69 (60), c) Both a) & b) above 16 (0), d) Abstain or no opinion 4 (0).

Eighth Question: Is there any difference between local Open Championships? I gave them three choices to choose from: a) Yes 96% (100%), b) No 3 (0), c) Abstain 1 (0).

Ninth Question: If the answer for question number 8 is yes, what is your opinion? The following answers were given: a) More than one time in a year 47% (50%), b) One time in a year 51 (50), c) Abstain or no opinion 2 (0).

Tenth Question: What is your opinion about the system of playing? Answers to be chosen from are: a) Suitable 85% (100%), b) Unsuitable 5 (0), c) Abstain 10 (0).

Eleventh Question: What is your opinion about the site and date of the Championships? a) Suitable 95% (100%), b) Unsuitable 4 (0), c) Abstain 1 (0).

Twelfth Question: How many times have you participated in the Championships? Three answers were put as follows: a) Participated in the 1st Championships 21% (0%), b) Participated in the 2nd Championships 29 (10), c) Participated in both of the above 50 (50), d) Participated as Trainers and not as players 0 (40).

Thirteenth Question: Have you noticed any development in the 2nd Arab News and Arriyadiah Championship than the 1st? Three answers were put to select from: a) Yes 92% (80%), b) No 6 (0), c) Abstain 2 (20).

Fourteenth Question: If your answer for question No. 13 is Yes, what is your opinion in? 1. Organization a) Excellent 45% (40%), b) Average 42 (30), c) Below Std. 7 (0), d) Abstain 6 (30) (As they did not watch the matches in the Championships regularly). 2. Prizes a) Excellent 71% (70%), b) Average 18 (10), c) Below Std. 3 (0), d) Abstain 8 (20). 3. Arbitration a) Excellent 45% (20%), b) Average 38 (50), c) Below Std. 4 (0), d) Abstain 13 (30).

Fifteenth Question: What is your opinion with respect to the number of spectators in these open championships as compared to the local? a) Excellent 64% (70%), b) Average 28 (20), c) Below Std. 1 (0), d) Abstain 7 (10).

Sixteenth Question: What is your opinion about the daily prizes for the spectators? a) Reason for the big number of spectators 18% (30%), b) Reason for success of Championships 37 (10), c) Reason for enthusiasm and competition 11 (0), d) All the above answers 32 (60), e) Abstain 2 (0).

Suggestions

From the questionnaire forms which were presented to players and coaches-trainers, the following are some suggestions:

- a) To invite more international players to participate in the Championships to improve the standard of Saudi players.
- b) To organize Championships for playres in the under 14 junior events.
- c) To arrange to distribute booklets about table tennis to spectators.
- d) To organize championships during the vacation period of the students.