

2009 Australian Gateball Championships Australian Young Teams Make Strong Showing



Young female players at Australian National Championships



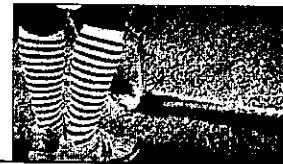
Left : 1st prize "Canberra"
Right : 2nd prize "Wombats"



Many Australian players stroke a ball in "Stepping over strike".



Concentrating his strike



taking a measur, 10 cm out-ball



Left : 3rd prize "KEW"
Right : Japan's team

Rockhampton City

The drama unfolded approximately 670 km north of Brisbane, Queensland, in a town with a population of about 60,000 about an hour's flight from Brisbane that is affectionately known as "Rocky." A town whose suburbs are filled with almost 3 million cattle and is famous for being the "home of Aussie beef." A town that has erected a monument 2 kilometers from its center right on the Tropic of Capricorn that is inscribed with the town's latitude (23° 26' 30").



That town is Rockhampton, a city on the eastern coast of Queensland and host of this year's Australian Gateball Championships, held from Friday, October 16th to Sunday, October 18th. One Japanese team and 14 Australian teams came together for this biennial competition. Although early summer in the Southern Hemisphere tends to be dry as opposed to humid, temperatures topped 30 degrees Celsius every day of the tournament. After open practice on the first day, players from each team were selected to participate in a demonstration game. Efforts to create diverse teams including children, older players, and Japanese players resulted in a relaxed game that fostered friendly exchange. This was followed by the Opening Ceremony and a Welcome Party, which featured a handbell performance by members of the local Croquet Association. Competition kicked off on the second day in a venue equipped with a well-trimmed field of natural grass and night lighting. A total of eight courts were set up on the field, and teams were divided into Block A (8 teams) and Block B (7 teams). Teams competed in league matches, with the top two advancing to the final tournament. Japanese teams were surprised to find that they had a whole hour between each league match, which is unusual in Japan. Teams took advantage of this time to enjoy tea and refreshments in a lovely Western-style clubhouse, which created a genteel, relaxed atmosphere. The Japanese team managed to advance to the final tournament round but was defeated in the semi-final match. The final match pitted two young Australian teams - the Wombats and Canberra - against each other, with Canberra emerging as the ultimate victor.

This tournament highlighted the significant progress made in Australian gateball when compared to the 2007 tournament. Despite the fact that Australian teams have few opportunities for international exchange, they have begun interacting more frequently with Japanese teams in recent years and have participated in three major international tournaments (the 7th, 8th and 9th World Gateball Championships). Canberra, the champions of this tournament, is made up of young players primarily in their 20s whose energetic plays made quite an impression. The second place team, the Wombats, is a highly experienced group that has played together since the team's formation. In terms of strategy, it is one of Australia's top teams.

All participating teams stayed for the Closing Ceremony, which was brimming with good sportsmanship as all attendees celebrated the winning team. After the Ceremony, attendees enjoyed refreshments and a drawing for a commemorative prize. Western-style sports clubs really seemed to be a part of people's lives in Rockhampton.



Topics 1



Three motivated players pass the test to become Australia's first International Referees!

In recent years, Australia, which has implemented its own refereeing system, has begun conducting refereeing workshops in various regions in an effort to promote the rules to gateball aficionados. A designated workshop and qualification test for International Referees was held in conjunction with the National Championships, resulting in the certification of three International Referees.

Topics 2

Disabled player challenges GB!

Ms. Pamela Pick has always been keen on sport, but unfortunately, as a child, she did not have opportunities to play because she is disabled having suffered cerebral palsy as an infant.

In 2006, Pam accepted an invitation to play Gateball at the local Broadbeach Club. Immediately, Pam enjoyed the game. The challenge of the spark, the team work and strategy, and the always difficult Gate 1 make the Gateball a fun sport. Now aged 65 years, Pam regularly plays Gateball at the Broadbeach Club. Often, Pam plays four times a week including one evening under lights. In addition, Pam is now the Club's Assistant Secretary and recently compiled the Club's history.

By attending the courses at the Gateball Academy, Pam's playing skills and Rules knowledge has improved greatly.

As a player in the Broadbeach team at 2009 Australian Gateball Championships, Pam played well and helped her team to a 4th position in the Block.

Pam's ambition is to improve her playing skills and to continue to enjoy the challenges that the game of Gateball presents.

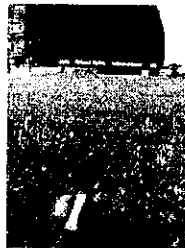
Pam wants to encourage other disabled people to try this great sport. Pam's achievements in Gateball show that Gateball is an ideal sport for the disabled.

Australian players take gateball to Switzerland! Gateball organizations spring up throughout Europe.

Although the spread of gateball has been slower in Europe than in other regions, the sport has suddenly begun growing in popularity over the past few years. Though this publication has featured news of gateball spreading to Germany, Poland, and southern Russia, we are pleased to report that Australian Alex Park presented a gateball demonstration at a local croquet club in Switzerland in September of this year. Park, member of the Canberra team, contributed to the spread of gateball to the UK last year.

The demonstration took place at the CERN Croquet Club on the grounds of the European Center for Nuclear Physics (CERN) in the suburbs of Geneva, Switzerland. Approximately 15 members of the Croquet Club participated. The group showed a keen interest in gateball, which prompted several follow-up demonstrations. Participants not only wished to obtain gateball equipment and begin playing but also expressed an interest in next year's 10th World Gateball Championship. Full-fledged

CERN is the very famous laboratory of Nuclear Physics.



Players are members of "Cern Croquet Club".

