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2006

**CHAMPIONNAT de *SQUASH PRO-AM* de la BANQUE  
NATIONALE du CANADA**

*April 6-9, 2006*

**A "Professional Squash Association" World Tour Satellite Event.**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**April 9th, 2006**

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Had local hope and non-ranked Dane Sharp from Toronto hit one more dead nick on late in the evening in Thursday's Qualifying round, this year's Pro-Am would have turned out entirely different. But it wasn't the case.

Similarly to the 2005 event when we witnessed Colombia's Miguel Angel Rodriguez coming through from Qualifying to his first PSA final, this year everyone got to know another new comer very well, Jorge Baltazar Ferreira, by winning his first title, in only his second PSA event. For it was Dane Sharp who in 2nd round Qualifying was up 2-0 in games and held match point in the third against Jorge, only to see the match slip away to Jorge's relentless retrieving and safety game plan.

From that point, the "**2006 Championnat de Squash Pro-Am de la Banque Nationale du Canada**" was Jorge's to win. He rolled through Main Draw dropping just 1 set to Egypt's Ahmed Hamza and 1 other set in the Final to another Mexican star, Jose Becceril.

Elsewhere in the Main Draw were some outstanding contests. The fact that all 4 Qualifiers advanced past the first round, and just 4 of the top 8 seeds survived the first round is a testament to the danger that the Qualifying presents. 3 matches of note were firstly a 1<sup>nd</sup> round clash between Josh McDonald and Lafika Ragonste. Josh who is making a comeback to softball from a successful stint on the Doubles tour, took the game way from smooth mover Ragonste only after being down 1-2. Michal Reid fell prey to another Mexican Qualifier Fernando Lopez, in 5 tight sets, and Pat Bedore came back from 0-2 against Yasunori Ishiwata from Japan, only to lose in the fifth. He deserved more from an emotional effort and great retrieving. One rally stood out where Pat's racquet was knocked into the back corner by Yasu who was standing on the T hitting a drop. Pat somehow managed to leap to the back, pick up his racquet, and then dive to the front to scrape up the fading drop. It was a spectacular sequence only to end later on in a let.

Australian and top seed, Luke Margan, knew he had a tough sector of the draw. In the ¼'s he faced Ricky Davies from Wales who had spent just 36 minutes on court in 2 matches to get there, and was playing sharp. This match perhaps was the best entertainment of the event. The scores delicately swung in each players favour regularly. There was contact, there were arguments, there were full body dives, there were nicks pulled out of the air at crucial moments, and finally there was a 5<sup>th</sup> set tie breaker. Both players fought for their advantage with spectacular squash, then gave away the lead with nervous mistakes. After 75 minutes, Luke slotted the final nick to move to the Semi.

In Jorge's Semi, Ahmed Hamza was surprised with the package he got in the slight Mexican unknown. Down 2-0, Ahmed found his rhythm, but some would say Jorge simply offered up the 3<sup>rd</sup> game after the lead stretched too far away. The 4<sup>th</sup> was a huge game, as Ahmed expected the push this match to 5. He couldn't find the same attack that won him the 3<sup>rd</sup> as Jorge always kept the slim lead to nudge him to matchpoint, and into then Final.

By now it was clear that this Jorge had the patience, fitness, and talent to be a real contender for the title. His only test left was against Jose Becceril who also ground out a 4 set win over the Luke Margan. It was always going to be tough for Luke after a demanding win in the morning. It showed too as Jose's persistency worked Luke all over the front of the court. They slugged out a 4<sup>th</sup> set to extra points, with superb attack and counter attack, but Luke couldn't reign in Jose this time.

So the Final between 2 Mexicans was set. Jose, was personally surprised to be there. He had had major mouth surgery just a week earlier which had kept him off the court in his lead up. Jorge on the other hand had plenty of confidence building after his Qualifying hiccup. At 1 set all, again Jorge was managing to hold the slim lead all the time on Jose. Rallies were being counted in the 80 hit-range. Jorge's clinical retrieving just didn't let Jose play his attacking game with the same level of risk we saw earlier in the tournament. At 2-1, Jose was against the wall, and Jorge put the foot on the throat. In perhaps the cleanest match of the tournament, Jorge calmly won every important point he could. He required just one match point to push Jose all over the place, and finally tuck away a neat volley to claim his first PSA victory.

Additionally to the Pro Event, were Men's and Women's amateur events, providing a festival of squash action for all levels.

**Local sponsorship has been instrumental in forming the event.**

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**Internet Coverage:**

<http://www.squashsite.co.uk/>



For further details about the "**2006 La Championnat de Squash Pro-Am de la Banque Nationale du Canada**", please contact any of the undersigned below, at any time.

On behalf of the management at the Sporthèque Club, thank you.

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