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PRESS RELEASE

TITLE: Warwick domination at UPC Nine-ball Championship/Trophy

Riley's Solihull was treated to a feast of pool in the recent UPC Nine-ball Championship, as Warwick University completed an unprecedented clean sweep by taking all three titles. With over 170 students participating, this annual event now boasts the title of the biggest annual nine-ball event in the UK.

Warwick 1st got the better of University of Essex 1st in a one-sided Team Championship final, whilst Warwick 2nd demonstrated the strength in depth at their university by overcoming University of York 2nd in the Trophy. Matthew Bradley ensured all the titles were Warwick-bound after emphatically beating Mike Potter (Essex) in the Individual Championship final.

The team event used a format where the two highest 1st-placed teams in each of the four groups progressed to the Championship play-offs with the best placed team not qualifying for the Championship going forward to the Trophy play-offs. Retaining the existing double-elimination formula in the groups, there was all to play for!

Last year's Champions Cardiff 1st, who had the task of competing with an all changed line-up from their triumphant team, could only make the Trophy play-off as they came unstuck in Group A against the London School of Economics in the final group game. Essex 1st topped the group as they progressed without dropping a set.

Cardiff's opponents last year, Bristol 1st, brought a lot of new blood to the tournament hoping to go one better this year and they posted an assured group performance to qualify as winners of Group B. York 2nd looked a strong prospect for the Trophy as they comfortably competed with the Championship teams in their group whilst Manchester Met 1st, led by GB9 tour player Chun Hao Man, also progressed to the Championship play-off.

Much-hyped Warwick 1st, with the addition of Individual Championship winner Matthew Bradley to the line-up of seasoned university cueists James Hill and Jay Murphy, made light work of their group to progress alongside York 1st in Group C.

Nottingham 1st, with an established pedigree in this tournament, proved there was life after the graduation of Adam Shaw as they progressed to the Championship play-offs alongside Group D winners University of Kent 1st.

Warwick 2nd, more than held than own with the Championship outfits as they topped Group E to progress to the Trophy, with University of Edge Hill 1st and Aston University 1st going forward to the Championship play-offs.

Group F, dubbed the group of the 'Dark Horses', due to the unknown quantities in the shape of two-time BUSA-UPC Eight-ball Championship winners University of Ulster entering this event for the first time, and a new look University of Leeds side, with the addition of charismatic Glen Spalling (part of the successful Ulster team) and Martin Pratt. Neither disappointed as they both qualified to complete the Championship line-up.

Following their assured group performance, it was no surprise to see that Warwick 2nd and York 2nd were the two teams contesting the Trophy final. Greg Taylor (York) struck the first blow by taking the opening set and when Tom Wilson has a shot on the nine-ball to win the Trophy, a York victory looked on the cards. However, he wasn't able to convert the opportunity and a resilient Andrew Hulme turned the screw to take the match to the final set. Kar Chan held his nerve to complete the comeback and win the Trophy for Warwick.

As we reached the business end of the Championship play-offs, it was still hard to predict a winner. York, Nottingham and Leeds progressed as expected with Ulster starting to dream of being the first team to be in possession of the eight-ball and nine-ball titles at the same time as they also reached the quarter final.

Warwick, in no mood to be upset, ended the challenge of first Leeds and then Nottingham to reach the final, as Essex despatched York before edging Ulster in the deciding rack in a titanic semi-final battle.

Warwick started the Championship final by taking the initiative as James Hill, Jay Murphy and Matthew Bradley sailed into comfortable leads against their Essex opponents. By the time Matthew completed his set to put Warwick one set from victory, Mike Potter and Peter Albin (Essex) had gained a foothold with both their matches nicely poised at 3-2. Warwick, however, were not to be disappointed as they moved up a gear with the ever-popular Jay Murphy sinking the winning nine-ball to give Warwick their third UPC Nine-ball Championship in five years.

The UPC Individual Championship had a wide-open field of competitors eager to take the crown of Nottingham's Adam Shaw, who despite not competing was in attendance supporting the Nottingham contingent. There were notable performances from Matthew Bradley, Mike Potter, Lee Mager (LSE) and Matt Tugby (Nottingham) who reached the semi-finals for the second time in two years. In the semi-finals, Bradley ended Tugby's hopes of going one better this year whilst Potter overcame a two-rack deficit to progress at the expense of Mager.

In the final, Bradley took the early initiative as Potter seemed to be struggling to settle. As an assured cueist with a high-quality snooker pedigree, Bradley was not in the mood to give an easy opportunity for Potter to establish his rhythm and continued to dominate and run-out the whitewash to win the UPC Nine-ball Individual Championship.

Matthew Bradley was delighted with his win and summed up his emotion after the final by stating, "This is definitely my biggest achievement in pool. In such a large field of quality competitors, I'm delighted to come through in the end."

A selection of pictures from the event taken by Big Dave Knight from pro9.co.uk are available to view and purchase from:

<http://www.photoboxgallery.com/PoolPhotos>

Attention now switches to the BUSA-UPC Eight-Ball Championship/Trophy/Shield that will be contested on the weekend of 19-22 February 2009 in our exciting new 8-ball venue of Vauxhall Holiday Park, Great Yarmouth.

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Notes to editors:

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

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.