

## 'Diaries from Abroad'

'This month please read Bill Lathams latest diary from abroad'

My month has had busy patches while also having some time to relax. We traveled to France for the André Vergauwen (3rd and 4th from all European leagues) Cup Finals. I have also been a spectator going to Madrid to watch the Champions (1st and 2nd teams from all European leagues). My girlfriend Sandra joined me in Madrid to have a couple of days in Madrid and also watch some very good basketball.

In Paris, our first game was against SC Antilope and we won comfortably 84-45. Our second game was much tougher, against GSD Anmic Sassari (Italy) but we won 74-68, the game was close all the way with only single figures separating us the whole game. Our third and last pool game was against KIK Zmaj Gradacac this game was again tough, but we came away with an 82-61 victory. This saw us go into the semi finals undefeated where we faced Sandra Gran Canaria ( Spain ) the second Spanish team in the competition, we won 79-66. This game had a little more feeling than the others as players new each other and wanted the win just a little bit more. We faced GSD Anmic Sassari for a second time in the tournament in the final; this game was tough right to the end also, with both teams wanting to be the André Vergauwen champions. We ended the game 78-62 and were the only team to go through undefeated.

Champion's league, in Madrid, was great to watch, with several Aussies competing. Brad Ness and Shaun Norris ( Taranto , Italy ), Justyn (Galatasaray, Turkey ) and Brett Stibners (Fundosa Once, Spain ). Galatasaray won the tournament and saw Justyn win his second Champions league Cup. While at this tournament I was able to catch up with Murray Treseder, it was good to talk with him as he was my first Australian Rollers coach.

The weekend in Madrid was spent with Sandra. This was good fun as we saw a little bit of Madrid on the Sunday before the finals began. After the final had finished we had a quick trip to the hotel to collect the bags and then to the train station. I went to Granada with Sandra for a couple of days. I enjoy the town of Granada very much, with tapas and the university people all around makes for a fun environment.

While the European leagues were going on the Spanish league has continued also and we are now 18-2 with two more games to go in the league. We have 2 tough games to go in the league against Toledo this weekend and then Vigo the following weekend. We are hoping to have a strong finish. Two more game and if we win both we are the champions this year.

I am looking forward to returning to Australia in 4 weeks where I will be able to see my parents and also be a part of the wheelkings for another year. Also hoping to have a strong season with the team and see how good we can go this year.

Well that's all for now, hope everyone is well."