

European Senior Championships, Caldas da Rainha (21-27 September 2014)

The European Senior Championships was held in Caldas da Rainha about 45 minutes drive to Lisbon. The city is not very big and busy, a few places for visit which as it was not my first time there I did not go to any of them. My trip was comfortable, direct flight from Barcelona to Lisbon, except delays on both ways flights. We were provided a transport from the airport to our hotel but as there were many players who were staying in different hotels, my journey from the airport to my hotel took me about three hours. The hotel itself was fine with good services apart from the breakfast which was not any great; we did not even have boiled eggs.

The hall was in 15 minutes walking distance to our hotel. Main had seven courts and a practice hall with two courts next to it. For the whole tournament from the start till finals we had two line judges who were young boys and girls and most of them were very good even though they were not badminton players. It was easy working with match control and referees. Our referee was Ronny De Vos from Belgium and Deputy Referees were Artur Zaluzhnoi from Estonia and Susana Maldonado from Portugal.

The first two days of tournament were long, I finished my last matches at 2300 and 2200 but the rest of the week was earlier. I had shifts off every day except the fourth day which was the day our assessment started.

On Monday and Tuesday we had power failure in the hall and actually the whole city caused by a very heavy summer rain, so the tournament had to be suspended for sometime but in both occasions I was off duty and on the final day the organizer decided to prevent any problem with electricity by using generator, so there was no more problem.

In total we were twenty eight umpires from different countries which fifteen of us were on the assessment for Badminton Europe accredited level. Our assessors were Carol Ui Fhearghail from Ireland, Preben Noeies from Denmark and Dave Hinton from England. One of the deputy referees, Artur Zaluzhnoi, was also on the Badminton Europe accredited assessment. The deputy referee and twelve of us passed the assessment and I was one of them.

Umpires according to their countries were as following: Belgium (2), Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany (3), Greece, Ireland (2), Israel, Portugal (4), Scotland, Serbia (2), Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, the Netherlands, Ukraine, Wales and Austria.

The tournament had a good level, many players who were champions in the past. The hall was full of spectators most times who were players or their friends and families.

We all received daily allowance and we had to buy our food which there was a restaurant in the hall but the food was quite expensive and in general prices compare to Barcelona where I live are higher. On Saturday night after prize giving ceremony there was a dinner which was forty Euros each person but umpires had 25% discount, most of us attended.

I had seventy six duties including Umpire mixed doubles 35, men's double 65 and service judge Women's double 35.

Hereby I would like to thank everyone who supported me.

Sara Shahhosseini