

CIMB Junior Scrabble Circuit (Malacca) 2011

26th March 2011, Kolej Yayasan Saad, Malacca

Commentary by Pang Xynna

As a part of the junior circuit series, this year's CIMB Malacca Junior Circuit was held at Kolej Yayasan Saad School, Ayer Keroh, Malacca. This leg of the competition saw participants from the 3 southern states; Johor, Malacca and Negeri Sembilan, converging to wrestle for glory and the tagline champion.

Among the pre-tournament favourites to clinch the title were Ignatius Wong from the Malacca High School, Johnston Tan from the Saint Francis Institution Malacca, Sharsindra Pratheen and Benjamin Choo, both from the English College of Johor and also Nikhil Theva Raj from the King George School of Seremban. They all triumphed their first matches in spectacular fashion.

The first few games were full of drama. Nikhil, Benjamin and Sharsindra lost games against unheralded opponents. Many new players managed to upset better and more established players. After 6 tough games, the only player left in the fray unbeaten was Johnston Tan. He was drawn to play Melvin Ong at Table 1. Johnston needed only a win to ensure that he emerge top of the pack that day and secure the title. Meanwhile, Benjamin Choo and Pang Xynna who were also title contenders then battled it out at Table 2.

As luck would have it, Pang Xynna pipped Benjamin Choo due to an overlook by the lad. Pang Xynna unknowingly played 'ADD(I)NGS' which was left unchallenged. A late recovery by the promising player from Johor Bahru however was still not enough as Pang Xynna defeated him by a mere 20 points to claim her 6th point. The twist to the tale does not end here.

Johnston Tan lost his final game to Melvin Ong. This meant that the trio, Johnston, Melvin and Xynna, all had 6 points from the 7 games. Therefore, the winner was determined by the highest cumulative spread. And guess who had the highest cumulative spread? Bingo – Pang Xynna! Although Johnston lost his final game to Melvin Ong, the former managed to pip the latter to finish in second place overall. Ignatius and Sharshindra completed the Top 5 fray.

The high word of the competition was played by Pang Xynna. Her word, FIZ(Z)LES, earned her 110 points, her personal best, in the third game against Harrivin Rajan, who coincidentally held the record for the tournament high game, a stunning 538 point victory.

Pang Xynna also made her way into history books as she became the first girl to win a Junior Circuit to break the traditional dominance of males in this word game.

A few parties should be appreciated as they made this event a success. First, Gabriel Martin, the tournament director who painstakingly sorted the pairings each round. Next, the MSA for organising this tournament. Last but not least, the Kolej Yayasan Saad administrators for permitting the usage of their school facilities.

The top 15 who qualified for the CIMB nationals are as follows:

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Player</u>	<u>Wins</u>	<u>Margin</u>
1	Pang Xynna	6	660
2	Johnston Tan Ee Jun	6	428
3	Melvin Ong Rahmatong	6	427
4	Ignatius Wong	5	691
5	K Sharsindra Pratheen	5	566
6	Benjamin Choo	5	484
7	Kenneth Wu Min Jin	5	420
8	Brian Tay Cheongyang	5	161
9	Azirfan Azhar	5	118
10	Shaysagiri Muthiah	5	25
11	Suah Jin Shaun	5	-54
12	Nikhil Theva Raj	4	621
13	Veylamuthen Murugan	4	578
14	Dzul Afieq Zulkifli	4	312
15	Moi Zjen Kuok	4	243