



vs



## SANDSTORMS SWEEP ASIDE RAIDERS

Kleckner shines as Dubai clinches tournament 2-0 to maintain crown as U18 Champions  
**30 January, 2010**

**Dubai,** The 2010 DFS Middle East Tournament kicked off on Saturday morning in Dubai's oldest ice rink, The Al Nasr Leisureland. The aged venue played host to a best of three series between the Sandstorms of Dubai, and the best U18 players from the Raiders of Qatar. This was the second tournament of the season, the first being a 2-0 whitewash in the city of Al Ain, in favor of the Sandstorms.

### Game 1

QATAR RAIDERS 1  
DUBAI SANDSTORMS 3

**Dubai,** The opening game saw the hosts closely prevail over the Raiders to take an all-important 1-0 lead in the series. Jason Eid opened the scoring for the Sandstorms when he received a pass from Victor Calugian close to the blue line. Eid then took a quick slap-shot which caught the goaltender off-guard, and slipped in through his legs. "He had no idea what hit him," said Jason Eid on his goal after the game. "I ravaged his five-hole."

Jarod Noseworthy leveled soon after for the Raiders when he banked in on a rebound. With the score at one a piece, both teams were on the lookout for a go ahead goal.

Englishman Toby Oakley rose up to the occasion for his team and slid in the Sandstorms second goal of the game. The goal came midway through the final period, and left the Raiders work cut out for them.

The Raiders pressurized the Sandstorms goal for an equalizer, but goaltender Mathew Jones was as safe as a house, and kept the Raiders at bay. The Canadian made a few stunning saves, a particularly mean one being a point blank stop with his glove off Pieter Van den Burg.

With a minute left in the game, the Raiders pulled their goalie for an extra attacker in the hopes of tying the game, but instead it was the Sandstorms who sealed the deal with ten seconds left. David Dokakis, who had had a quite game until the end, got hold of the puck at the center line and let rip a low snap shot which flew into the net. "I did it once at the Dubai Mall for the Penguins, so I thought why not have a go again, and it worked!" Dokakis said after the game, grinning ear to ear.

The goal concluded a hard fought game between two evenly matched teams. Jason Eid picked up the Most Valuable Player of the game award for a solid offensive display throughout the game



The players celebrated the win with an oven-fresh batch of homemade donuts made by Aarifa Suleman (a.k.a. Aarifa Mohamed). "Krispy Kreme is good, but these are just different," said one player.

## **Game 2**

**QATAR RAIDERS 2  
DUBAI SANDSTORMS 2**

**Dubai**, Game 2 saw the Raiders fight back valiantly and battle out a close tie against the Sandstorms. Maybe it was the donuts that had the Sandstorms sluggish on the ice, but the men from Dubai just were not skating hard enough, and the Raiders cashed in.

Victor Calugian and Diego Kleckner scored goals for the Sandstorms, while Tyler Noseworthy and Natasha Yurkiw netted goals for the Raiders.

If not for a stellar performance from the Sandstorms net minder Mathew Jones, the Raiders could well have headed into Game 3 with a chance at winning their first ever series in Dubai. Jones feats in goal earned him a well deserved MVP award.

"Too many donuts," groaned Sandstorms defensemen Sam Padmore after the game, massaging his stomach.

## **Game 3**

**QATAR RAIDERS 2  
DUBAI SANDSTORMS 4**

**Dubai**, Talk of big players, stepping up in big game's. New Zealander/American forward Diego Kleckner saved his best for last, as he unleashed a vicious attack on the helpless visitors from Qatar.

It was the Kleckner Show through and through. Diego worked well with Drew Gibson and David Dokakis to score all his teams goals, and ensure that the Sandstorms finished strongly to retain their crown as the U18 Champion of the Gulf.

A combination of speed, power, and insight was combined by Kleckner to score a record four goals in the game.

One of his goals was a flick straight into the net off a face-off, which left the opposite centre-man fairly amused, not to mention a little embarrassed. Another was a pinpoint wrist shot from a sharp angle which found the top corner of the net. It seemed as though Kleckner could do no wrong, as he kept scoring goal after goal.

Speaking after the game, he gave his remarks on his performance: "I just try keeping it simple you know, shooting the puck when I have a chance. I always try to get on top of the opponent, I don't like to be kept quite."

The four goal bonanza capped off a memorable week for Kleckner, who scored a whopping total of 22 goals in the week including house league games and the game against the men.

"Diego was on fire," said a resigned Pieter Van den Burg of the Raiders after the game. "When a guys playing like that, there's not much you can do. I thought we played alright, our defense was a little weak though."

The MVP award was bagged by Olivier VanDurme for playing an airtight game in defense. Defensemen are sometimes the un-sung heroes of a team, and it was good to see them finally being recognized. **(next page)**

Sandstorms president Isabelle Jones was delighted at a fruitful weekend of hockey for both the U15 and U18 divisions. "Congratulations to our U15A and U18A for winning the Championship in their respective division, and to our U15B and U18B for finishing in second place," she said, "I saw some of the most exciting games this weekend, with several ending in a tie! The four finals brought us great hockey."

Mrs. Jones also thanked all those involved in making the tournament a success: "Thanks to all the coaches, referees, scorers, fans who came out to cheer, and most importantly our sponsors, DFS Middle East, without whom this tournament would not have been possible."

It was a cracking day for the Dubai Sandstorms, and they heartily celebrated their second tournament victory over the Qatar Raiders in two months.

It seems as though the Sandstorms juggernaut is well and truly on the ascent to the top, following several triumphs at home, as well as abroad. Only time will tell if they can maintain this high level of play for a long time to come.

**Editors note:** Please forgive me if I have missed out on anybody's goals or credited a goal to someone that didn't score. I don't have a photographic memory nor did I have a score sheet of the games.

**Mohamed Suleman (a.k.a. Mohamed Mohamed)**