



GB 9 Ball Tour Stop 1 - 2008
GB9 Midlands Classic
Rileys American Pool and Snooker - Solihull
West Midlands

Fri/Sat/Sun 1-3 February 2008

GB9 Midlands Classic – One Long Weekend - Three Ranking Tournaments

This was the inaugural event of Britain's new official 9 ball tour, actually three tournaments in one long weekend with a prize fund totalling over GBP11,000 (US\$22,000 or EUR160,000) at each event – the Main Event (consisting of all 128 tour players), the Challenge Cup (for the 96 players aiming for promotion to the Pro Cup next year), and the Pro Cup (the elite top 32 UK professionals). The event was held in the beautiful Rileys Pool & Snooker Club at Solihull in the heart of England.



Majid wins first GB9 Pro Cup AND GB9 Main Tournament at Midlands Classic

This was a very successful and profitable weekend for Londoner Imran Majid as he eventually scooped up both of the winner's trophies for the two events he entered, along with the winner's cheques too.

A small hours win over Phil Burford in the final of GB9 Pro Cup event gave "The Maharajah" his first trophy, and although the match was fairly one-sided (11-4 to Majid) many tributes have been made of Burford's heroic route to the final, conquering 2007 World Pool Champion Daryl Peach with a 9-6 result in the Quarter-Final stage, followed by a 9-7 Semi-Final win over the man who took 3rd place at the same World Championships, Karl Boyes. An incredible feat for anyone – but an even greater achievement when you consider that Phil Burford is only 17 years old!

Majid then proceeded to win the gruelling 128 man Main Event with a nail-biting 11-10 win over fellow EuroTour champion and current EuroTour No.1 ranked player Mark Gray, a former world ranked (No.71) snooker player. The pressure can be immense in these "hill-hill" final racks and it's thrilling for the audience, but afterwards Majid said he was quietly confident as he has a good record against Gray in head-to-head matches.



This was the trophy that made Majid most proud, as this was achieved after a tough day on Saturday and was the larger event with a very high-quality field. Along with the UK's new World Champion Daryl Peach, were Euro Tour champions, and several Mosconi Cup players as well as several UK stars from the English Pool game.

Ainsworth-Smith shows strength of young UK talent



Re-emphasising the strength-in-depth of the young 9 ball talent in the UK, 18 year old Thomas Ainsworth-Smith won the final of the 96 player Challenge Cup with a gallant win over the more experienced Bradley Parker from Surrey.

As the score approached 10-10 and it was clear the match would be decided by a single rack the pressure mounted and the errors started flowing, showing how much this tournament meant to the players.

In the final rack, Parker had a clear cut chance to seal the victory with a fairly straight forward run-out, but an unforced error on his behalf gifted the match and the title to Ainsworth-Smith who held his nerve to clear the remaining balls.

Full details of all match results and final standings from all 3 events are available on the tour's official website: www.gb9balltour.com.

GB9 Ball Tour sponsorship opportunities

The GB9 Ball Tour has an attractive package for potential sponsors and is actively seeking a single "GOLD" title sponsor, as well as more silver sponsors as listed below. For details of sponsorship opportunities contact Mr. Lee Rigby by email at leerigby@gb9balltour.com

The GB9 Ball Tour (www.gb9balltour.com) is sponsored by:

Rileys - American Pool Snooker and Poker clubs, www.rileysltd.com/

The Pro Shop - American Pool Cues and Equipment, www.theproshop.biz

Z9 Billiard Cloth - Quality billiard cloth by Zobrekis, www.z9billiardcloth.de

Pro9.co.uk - The official on-line news and results website, www.pro9.co.uk/

CueSportTV – Broadcast quality match videos and interviews, www.cuesport.tv

The JPS Group - Lithographic Printing and display solutions, www.thejpsgroup.co.uk