

11 JUN 1999

Sports-Squash

INAUGURAL KL SQUASH OPEN ATTRACTS STRONG FOREIGN FIELD

KUALA LUMPUR, June 11 (Bernama) -- National champion Ong Beng Hee and current national number one Kenneth Low are the only two local players listed in the men's main draw of the inaugural Kuala Lumpur Squash Open Championships here from June 29 to July 4.

In the first round, Beng Hee, ranked world number 79, will meet Egyptian Mohd Medhat Morsi, ranked world number 58, while Kenneth will take on Kashif Shuja of Pakistan.

In the women's main draw, only local number two Kuan Choy Lin made it into the 16-player draw while national number one Nicol David is among 16 players listed to play in the qualifier.

There are four slots each reserved for qualifiers in both the men's and women's main draws.

Kuan Choy will meet Australian Melissa Vacca in the opening round.

In releasing the draw and unveiling details on the championship here today, the Squash Rackets Association of Kuala Lumpur (SRAFT) president Abdullah Sani Karim said the championship offered a total prize money of US\$9,000 (RM34,200).

The top seed in the men's section is Australian world number 35, Billy Haddrell while in the women's category is another Australian, Carol Owens ranked world number 10.

Abdullah Sani hoped that the championship would be an annual affair.

He later received cheque from the main sponsor, TA Enterprise Berhad, for RM60,000. The company was represented by its executive chairman, Datuk Tony Tiah.

Also present at the function was Asian Squash Federation president Mokhzani Mahathir.

The championship will be held at the National Sports Council (NSC) Courts in Jalan Duta here.

--BERNAMA

DC ABG