

BLUE BERET

UNFICYP Sports Day

At the crack of dawn on 7 July, the finest sportsmen and women in UNFICYP's sectors started a long day of competition for the coveted title of 2017 UNFICYP Champions. Teams from Sectors One, Two, Four, HQ and a combined Force Troops team all participated in the day's events with gusto, making for an exhilarating day under the summer sun.

In the day's first event, a football tournament, it looked as if every match would end in a 0-0 draw after the first couple of games; however the Force Troops team broke the deadlock with a convincing 1-0 win over Sector One in the third match. As the mid-morning heat intensified, each of the teams eventually began to score and concede goals, with the Force Troops eventually winning the competition. The highlight of this competition was a penalty shootout between UNFICYP HQ and Sector One in the third place playoff; following two missed penalties by Sector One, UNFICYP HQ overcame their opponents to finish third, with Sector Four finishing second.

With hardly a pause, the event switched locations to the swimming pool area, where the beach volleyball competition – coordinated by Sector Four – and the swimming gala, coordinated by Sector Two, were conducted concurrently. Both events brought out the same competitive, friendly spirit witnessed in the football tournament; this time, Sector One put on a memorable display in the volleyball, winning the tournament, while the Slovak Engineers from the Force Troops were clearly trying to win the best "Top Gun" lookalike team. The swimming gala produced some incredible times, including an astonishing time of 26.56 seconds by Sector One in the 50m Freestyle event.

It was however, the UNFICYP HQ team who dominated, winning the 100m freestyle, 100m breaststroke, 50m breaststroke and the swimming gala overall.

After a well-earned lunch break, each of the teams met again to compete in the final event – the swimming pool obstacle course. During this event, six competitors from each team were required to ascend an inflatable assault course and then swim to the end of the pool in a team relay competition; in the second relay, each of the competitors also carried pool floats to make it harder. This clearly was the highlight of the day, enjoyed not only by the competitors, but also by the spectators who managed to relax in the sun whilst cheering on and often making fun of their teammates and other competitors. After both relay races, the Force Troops team managed to narrowly beat the HQ team's time to finish with the fastest time, making them champions of that event and the Sports Day champions overall. With some time to spare in the programme, the Force Troops, even managed to undertake – and win! – a third relay of the assault course in order to beat the challenge of the combined Command team (made up from Sector One, Sectors Two, Sector 4, HQ and the Forces Troops' Commanding Officers and Officers-in-Command).

Force Commander Major General Mohammad Humayun Kabir officiated at a prize-giving ceremony before the event officially ended. Congratulations to the Force Troops team, and to all the worthy competitors who participated in such an enjoyable contest! Our sincere thanks also go to the organisers for putting on yet another stellar event.



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