

SEA GAMES, TRIPLETES: FINALLY GOLD FOR THAILANDE

The Thais finally managed to win a gold medal in the Petanque competitions of the SEA Games, thanks to their "dream team" of the Men, but it was not without difficulty.

Certainly the semi-final against Malaysia was a mere formality with a scathing 13-0 in five ends while the other match saw Laos imposing harshly against Cambodia in a very balanced game thanks to a greater regularity. It was the shooter of Cambodia who gave the 13th point to Laos by trying to add one point to the one he already had to reach 11!

On the other hand, it was much more difficult in the final where the Thais took a catastrophic start especially their young shooter Samreang Sangsod with four holes on five shots, to be quickly led 1-7 after a 4 points end due to three holes and despite their middle, Suksan Piachan, stroke the jack but not enough strongly. Nevertheless he was the man of the match, playing with 100% success in both point and shooting.

This was particularly the case in the fifth end where he made two carreaux far to achieve a 5-points end which finally gave the advantage to his team for the first time : 8-7. The quality of his performance is to emphasize, for he had learned in the morning the death of his mother who forced him to fly back to Thailand just after the ceremony of the medals was finished.

Two ends later the Thais were at 12 and despite a return to 10 of their Lao opponents after a full end, they won the first gold medal of the Thai team.

In the Women's category, the quality has once again come to the fore, beginning with an amazing single of the Laotian versus the Thai triplet yet composed by three of the world champions. Realizing almost a no fault against a ghostly team in which only the experienced Thongsri Tamarkord held the shock, they quickly won 13-5.

The other semi-final was a festival of perfect blows between Vietnam and Malaysia which led the two teams to 6-5 in favor of the Malaysians after one hour playing. After a "casquette" of the Vietnamese shooter the Malaysian decide to shoot first on the boules of recovery, then to add points according to the carreaux succeeded by the shooters. Results: five strikes including a last carreau of the pointing player on the decisive boule and six points carrying the Malaysian counter at 12-5 before finishing in the next end against Vietnamese still shocked.

The final was a thrilling start for both teams, but with three lucky strokes in three consecutive ends, transforming three mistakes in the game of the ever-strange Malaysian coach, into a consequent advantage at 8-3. This did not discourage the Laotians who took advantage of a slight decline in the performance of the Malaysian shooter to go up to 7 in three ends. While the match seemed have to be long, the Laotians took the option of shooting with their last four boules against the best boules the Malaysians had pointed to shake the game after a new hole. Four strikes and carreaux later, they won the title with a 6-points end !

Results:

Men:

Semi-Finals Thailand beats Malaysia 13-0
 Laos beats Cambodia 13-10

Final: Thailand beats Laos 13-10

Women:

Semi-Final Malaysia beats Vietnam 13-5
 Laos beats Thailand 13-5

Final Laos beats Malaysia 13-8