

Basketball Bündnermeister 2008

**Nine players – eight nationalities – one team
Congratulations!!!**



Back row, left to right: Dennis, Niko (Captain), Bleda, Moe, Jacopo, Dr Schmitt
Front row, left to right: Ricardo, Anton, Andrés, Markus

Results

Preliminary Round

Lyceum Alpinum vs Chur	17 – 22
Lyceum Alpinum vs Surselva	23 – 2
Lyceum Alpinum vs Schiers	8 – 16
Lyceum Alpinum vs Academia	32 – 14

Final

Lyceum Alpinum vs Schiers	16 – 15 (13 – 13 after full time)
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Report

This was one of the most incredible tournaments I have had the pleasure to be part of. Starting off with a decent performance against Kanti Chur, the boys nonetheless found that luck was against them. At least ten shots jumped out of the hoop, lay-ups miraculously failed to go in, while the opposition hit shots from anywhere on the court. Game over? Hardly.

Surselva, our second opponents were clearly a weak team and for a while it looked like we were going to keep them from scoring altogether. However, in a back-to-back match we again failed to score with any consistency, while Schiers – unbeaten in the preliminary rounds – scored on virtually all their numerous free throw opportunities. Strangely enough, even this second defeat had not put us out of the tournament yet. Our friends from the Academia in Samedan had trounced Kanti Chur, afterwards thanking us for tiring them out completely during our match just before. This meant that three teams were tied for second place and it came down to baskets scored for a place in the final.

The asking rate was clearly against us: we needed to beat the Academia by an 18-point margin to get to second place. But the team rallied around the reconvalescent captain Nikolajs. We had beaten Academia comfortably twice in the preparation for the tournament. Everybody played their heart out and at half-time we were nine points up, exactly half of the points we needed. Yet the Academia did not go down without a fight and the match ended with a nailbiter. With only seconds to play we were up by 16 (30-14) when Jacopo went for a big shot, hitting it at the final sound of the buzzer: we made it!

The girls had a fantastic match to win their final, getting the boys pumped to do the same. In the best game of the day passes went to hand, guards kept possession, while the big men under the basket scrambled successfully for rebounds. But Schiers played a great match too, coming back from 7-11 to tie at 13-13 after full time. Dennis, whose vision and calmness were such a key in the final, was fouled brutally to miss the second half of extra-time, after Schiers had scored two points in the first, going 15-13 up. Nikolajs stepped up to score one free throw after the foul on Dennis and a courageous drive and perfectly timed shot from Ricardo got us ahead. The dying seconds were pure drama. Turnovers, fouls on both sides, confused calls by the referees and a desperate opposition ended up in getting us two free throws with the clock running down. Nikolajs failed to score but it did not matter anymore: time was up and the boys had successfully defended their title, realising an unprecedented double in the process.

Congratulations to all the players for their amazing commitment. A big thank you to Mr Mark Jones, whose vociferous support and experienced advice in crunch situations was crucial. Finally, a massive thank you to the awesome crowd, led by the two school captains and their friends.

Dr Curt Schmitt, Coach