



## Press Release

### MORE SUCCESS AS ASPIRE'S SUMMER CAMPS DRAW TOWARDS CLOSE

#### *STRONG PERFORMANCES IN FOOTBALL, SQUASH AND TABLE TENNIS*

**Wednesday, 4 August 2010, Doha, Qatar:** ASPIRE Academy for Sports Excellence student-athletes have continued to shine on the world stage, as their summer camps draw to a close.

In Northern Ireland, ASPIRE's 1993 footballers finished off an impressive tournament, which included a win over defending champions Manchester United, by defeating FC Porto of Portugal 2-0 to finish fifth in the Milk Cup.

ASPIRE 1995 won their opening game in the same tournament but, after losing their second match - to English club Watford 3-2 - they were entered into the Sleamish Trophy. The team responded well - winning all their remaining matches, including a penalty shoot-out in the final against Derry to claim the trophy.

ASPIRE 1997 ended their summer camp with a friendly tournament in Copenhagen. The team finished with a total of four wins, two defeats and a draw.

In a tournament in the Czech Republic, ASPIRE 1998 'A' finished second, and ASPIRE 1998 'B' came third. The 'A' team lost 2-0 in the final against Slavia Prague, while Abdulrahman Al Ali was named as the competition's best goalkeeper.

ASPIRE's table tennis students and graduates competed at senior level in the Morocco Pro-Tour tournament.

In the Under-21 division, Fahed Al-Mughanne and Mohammed Al-Saadi both made it to the quarter-finals. Fahed, partnered by Ahmed Al-Mohannadi, also reached the last eight in the doubles competition.

The Arab Squash Championships took place in Saudi Arabia, with current and graduated ASPIRE students involved.

In the Under-17 tournament, Omar Abdulla made it through to the quarter-finals of the cup competition, while Faisal Al Marri lost his first match, but then reached the final of the plate competition, where he was beaten by Tariq Shaheen of Saudi Arabia.

Recent graduate Ahmed Tamimi lost a tough five-set match in the first round, before winning his way to the plate final, where he also suffered a five-set defeat.

In the team event, Qatar was represented by ASPIRE students Omar Abdulla, Abdulla Tamimi, Abdullah al Mass and Faisal Masoud. They had an excellent tournament, beating Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Iraq. However, Egypt proved too strong in the final.

**END**

### **ASPIRE Media Information**

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### **Notes to Editors:**

Created in 2004, the ASPIRE Academy for Sports Excellence in Doha has the dual aims of identifying and transforming promising student-athletes into world-renowned champions across a wide range of sports, and to act as a beacon to draw sporting culture into the center of life in Qatar and the surrounding region.

The Academy is distinguished by a philosophy which aims to develop the student as a whole, providing him with full academic, social and sporting development.

Unrivalled facilities, housed in and around the world's largest purpose-built indoor sports dome, ensure the Academy's reputation as one of the foremost sporting and educational institutions in the entire international community, enticing an ever-increasing number of visitors and users, from sporting legends to global political leaders.

Every aspect of the development of elite athletes is catered for by one indoor and seven outdoor football pitches, athletics tracks, an Olympic-sized swimming pool, diving pool, combat arenas, gymnastics arena, special fitness weight rooms, lecture halls, dormitories to accommodate what will eventually become 1,000 students, a medical center and many more facilities.

In 2010, ASPIRE hosted the IAAF World Indoor Athletics Championships, attracting a record number of countries (149) and participants (more than 1,100 athletes and officials). The event also witnessed the first-ever world record on Qatari soil – Teddy Tamgho of France setting a new world indoor record of 17.90 meters in the Triple Jump.

The WIC saw too the first ASPIRE graduate to take part in a major world championship. High jumper Mutaz Essa Barshim is also the first graduate of the Academy to hold a national record in an Olympic sport.

In a move unique in world sport, ASPIRE has signed a cooperation agreement with the Qatar Association of Athletics Federation (QAAF), the core objective of which is to produce elite athletes able to represent Qatar, with success, at major international athletics events and meetings. QAAF's most talented young athletes are to become student-athletes at ASPIRE Academy, where they will receive both their training and education.

Launched in 2007, the ASPIRE Football Dreams project annually tests more than 600,000 young footballers from all over the world, including Africa, Asia and Latin America, as part of the largest-ever talent search within the sport.

The ASPIRE ACTIVE initiative is a community engagement program spread across the country, ensuring that thousands of the nation's residents have accessible and advanced health and fitness

activities as routine aspects of their lives. Each social group is catered for by tailor-made classes and programs.