

## LUXEMBOURG CRICKET 2022

A busy season ahead for Luxembourg cricket for two reasons. First, the relaxation of Covid restrictions and secondly the increasing popularity of the game in the Grand Duchy.

The men's national team feature in three ICC International T20 tournaments this summer.

In June Luxembourg host Switzerland in a three game series. A month later they travel to Prague for a tri series with the Czech Republic and Austria.

Which all leads to the European Regional 2024 T20 World Cup qualifiers in Finland in late July. Guernsey, Austria, Bulgaria and Slovenia are Luxembourg pool opponents. The ultimate prize is to qualify for the 2024 Finals hosted jointly by the USA and the West Indies.

Later on in September the national team play in the ECN T10 tournament in Malaga, Spain. 20 nations will compete for the title. Scotland, Belgium, France and Malta feature in Luxembourg's group. Ireland will participate for the first time and share a pool with Spain, Austria, Czech Republic and Portugal.



Members of the Luxembourg National Squad – Atif, front row, 3<sup>rd</sup> from right

“There are approximately 40 players in the international squad. The rules allow you to bring 14 players to a tournament. So there are no guarantees any more. The competition for places is increasing every year” comments former Malahide CC seamer Atif Kamal who hopes to add to his 8 Luxembourg caps.

Atif plays for Walferdange Optimists CC in the domestic league which is T20 only. He also turns out for the Optimists CC 1<sup>st</sup> XI who play in the Belgium League, Division 2 (50 over ODI rules). Non Belgium teams are not permitted to play in the first division. Opposition includes teams from Brussels, Ghent, Antwerp and Mechelen.

“Each away game is a five hour round trip but the travel is a price worth paying. The cricket is strong and I enjoy the 50 over format” says Atif.

Recently, Atif was elected onto the Executive Committee of the Luxembourg Cricket Federation.

“It is a privilege to be elected and to put something back into the game. Also, I hope to draw on my experiences in Irish cricket with Malahide CC and Cork County CC.”

Overall the game continues to thrive in Luxembourg. More young players who have learned their cricket locally are breaking through onto the domestic and international teams. Women’s participation is increasing. The numbers attending indoor and outdoor training and weekend tournaments would suggest a women’s competition is not far away.



Pierre Warner Oval, Luxembourg

One of the biggest challenges facing the small central European country is ground space. Basically, nearly all of the cricket is played on the Pierre Warner Oval but the hope is that with the increasing profile of cricket the local Communes will allocate new pitches.

Finally, results and details throughout the summer can be followed from a number of sources including:

<https://luxembourgcricket.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/luxcricket/>

<https://www.optimists.cc/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/occlux/>

Brian Gilmore 2022