



Raf Goossens plays bumper pool as a player of the club 't Laerehof. At 20 he played bumper pool every now and then at the cafe. He quickly noticed that he played better than his friends. In 2002 he became a player of the BC Jong Rita Boys at Relst. Afterwards he left the club and played at the highest level for years. Eventually the training hours were a little bit too much and he decided to play from week till week on a lower level.

Your club organises the bumper pool championship of Brabant. How did you come up to organise something?

Well, normally the bumper pool championship of Brabant is organised by the Koninklijk Verbond Golfbiljart Leuven themselves. But this year, they didn't organise it. Since it may be organised by any bumper pool club, we decided to organise the championship together with bumper pool club Onder Den Toren.

Besides Belgium and the Netherlands, are there other places where it is still played regularly?

It's true that our sport is mainly practiced in Belgium and the Netherlands. I thought that it was originally a sport in the United States of America.

How do you think bumper pool will evolve?

The number of members will likely decline. Bumper pool is a sport that lasts until early in the morning! Usually the games start around 8pm. Six players of two different clubs compete against each other. Who will be playing against who gets decided on-site. Each match gets decided by two winning games. If you win the first game, but lose the second, you'll have to play a so called 'belle'. This causes that the game can last up till 3am! That's the time frame of a full working day! That's why this sport isn't so accessible for younger players, who also prefer going out to disco's or pubs.

Is there a reason why bumper pool starts that late?

This late start time has been for years. Many people still work and get their supper before coming to the game.

Can't it just happen during the weekend in the afternoon?

That choice was made back then. The advantage is that you still have time left for the family during the weekend.

Bumper pool is a technical sport. So the quality of the cue is also important. Can you explain to what you should pay attention?

A cue has an average weight of about 450 to 520 gram. The tip at the end is as important, if not more important than the cue itself! The tip creates the contact between the cue and the ball. Depending on the hardness or the softness you can get more or less effect from a ball. The cost of a good cue varies between 150 to 200 euro. These cues will get you started. The more expensive cues are especially expensive because of the decoration. The quality of these cues is comparable with the other models. It's true that the more expensive cues usually are made of wood of a better quality.

Thank you for the interview Raf.

We wish your club good luck.

Kevin Simons