

NATIONAL SQUASH FORUM

“Moving Forward Together”

Summary Notes from the National Squash Forum, held Friday 29 November 2013 in Auckland

GENERAL UPDATE

INTRODUCTIONS

- Squash NZ welcomed Kim Paviell as the new Canterbury Manager and Mike Weston as the new Auckland Development Manager
- There were no other changes in other District Presidents and staff
- Balls and mini tournament calendars were handed out to those who could carry them and Squash NZ has couriered the remainder. Wall poster calendars will be sent directly to clubs

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

- Jim highlighted greatest achievements in first year of 2013-15 Strategic Plan

STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

- Pennie reported on results of the 2013 Stakeholder Survey, highlighting that the satisfaction score had risen from 59% in 2011 to 72% in 2013 and talked through some of the highlights
- A summary document is available and will be made available to stakeholders shortly
- A response strategy will be developed in January and made available to stakeholders

DISTRICT CHANGES

- Jim discussed projects at “Waikato-BOP”, “Top of the South” Clubs and the “Hurricanes” Districts
- Ash (BOP) talked about the success of the WaiBop collaboration, highlighting the co-operative nature of the partnership and the benefits of having someone working full time for squash in the combined regions
- Stu (Canterbury) talked about the challenges and opportunities surrounding the impending Canterbury border changes
- Grant (Central) talked about the increased collaboration and early discussions between the Central, Wellington and Eastern Districts

HIGH PERFORMANCE UPDATE

- Paul introduced the busy year of 2014 for high performance, the world events for that year and the changes to the junior programme
- Draft High Performance booklet has been sent to Districts and will be available on the Squash NZ website when finalised

SQUASH FIT

- Pennie introduced Squash Fit and its two stages
 - advertising deal with Squash Fit which provides Squash NZ with small income
 - Squash Fit Boot Camps that are currently being developed and will be available for clubs to run early 2014

- More information will be available in the New Year

OCEANIA DONATION CAMPAIGN

- Jim talked about a new initiative for 2014 to support the development of squash in the Oceania region. The Oceania Donation Campaign is aimed at collecting old or unused squash gear which will be donated to Oceania nations to assist with their development programmes
- More information will be available in the New Year

NATIONAL AWARDS STRUCTURE

- Pennie highlighted how the national awards are currently structured (Volunteer and Club are through District nominations and Coaching Awards are nominated directly to Squash NZ)
- Many issues with the current system were highlighted, namely that District dates did not match up with Squash NZ so there was no easy way to coordinate the collaborative structure
- All agreed that a collaborative approach was the best but that there were issues to be ironed out
- Squash NZ suggested making decisions at the mid-year President's Meeting but majority would like decisions made before that date, so that Districts could plan accordingly and asked that Pennie communicate a discussion paper on this subject in the New Year

ACTIONS

- Squash NZ send out updated District contact details to all Districts
- ~~Squash NZ courier any remaining balls and tournament posters to relevant Districts~~
- ~~Squash NZ provide forum powerpoint to attendees~~
- ~~Squash NZ send stakeholders Stakeholder Survey summary~~
- Squash NZ develop and publish Stakeholder Survey response strategy
- Squash NZ send more information on Squash Fit when it becomes available
- Squash NZ send more information about Oceania Donation Campaign when it becomes available
- ~~Squash NZ to send Draft HP booklet to Districts for comment~~
- Squash NZ to send discussion paper on National Award structure

KIWI SQUASH

- Pennie introduced Kiwi Squash, the national junior development programme, which is nearly complete and ready for implementation and showed the draft Small Nix manual
- It was suggested that the manuals are available for download but that the details of those downloading it are taken so that they can be followed up
- A number of template suggestions were noted and will be available in the New Year when the programme is launched:
 - Media release
 - Travel consent forms
 - Template invite to after-school programme (see Auckland's example)
 - Information on where School statistics can be viewed
 - Follow-up email for District and/or club to send to participants

- It was suggested that Squash NZ coordinate t-shirts or polos for District staff – Squash NZ agreed to get quotes and ask Districts for orders
- Some districts asked if existing equipment could be used or equipment purchased directly from suppliers that Districts may have a relationship with – Squash NZ preference is for Districts to order through Squash NZ so that there is collaborative buying power with the supplier
- The costs of the programme were discussed but Squash NZ reiterated that these were individual to each District to ensure flexibility of the programme, although Squash NZ will outline fixed costs (ie. DVD, manual, equipment etc.)
- All agreed that an expensive launch was not needed but that there should be some national media / press release around the programme being available
- Squash NZ highlighted that they would communicate with clubs and RSTs directly, but that it would be the responsibility of the Districts to communicate with their local schools
- The issue of police vetting for coaches was raised – to be included in information

ACTIONS

- Squash NZ to get quotes on Kiwi Squash polos printed and ask Districts for orders

AFFILIATION

- Jim introduced the Squash NZ affiliation model that would be implemented in 2015
- Biggest question and discussions were: “how will Districts collect their fees?”
 - Ash (BOP) discussed the pilot licensing scheme that BOP have been trialling for two years
 - Russell (Southland) highlighted that Southland had been charging affiliation based on Grading List (not SEMs) for years now, with no problems
- The incoming SNZ Board would consider and develop the detail of the proposed new affiliation model and produce a marketing campaign to be rolled out at the district roadshows in 2014.
- The mid-year president’s forum would focus on how districts would collect their affiliation and clarify details of the SNZ proposal.

ACTIONS

- Squash NZ add District affiliation models to mid-year President’s meeting agenda

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

- Pennie summarised the Year of Youth Squash and asked for feedback on the campaign
- Feedback included
 - YoYoS resources sent too late in the year – need to be much earlier for planning purposes (even finalised for mid-year President’s meeting)
 - YoYoS not as successful as YOWS because most Districts/Clubs already running junior programme whereas YOWS really highlighted a gap and an opportunity
 - Does not need to be a campaign – and does not need to be a year

- Suggestions for 2014 included
 1. Continue YoYoS and focus it around the launch of Kiwi Squash
 2. Continue YoYoS but simply call it Youth Squash
 3. Continue YoYoS but focus on the 18-25yo as they are technically still 'youth' – focus on the U23 Champs and Pay2Play
- No decision was made so Squash NZ to take on feedback and make a decision for 2014 but be clear to communicate it to Districts and Clubs very early in 2014

ACTIONS

- Squash NZ to decide what to do in 2014 and communicate in Jan/Feb
- Squash NZ to start communications about a 2015 campaign and discuss at President's meeting

BRANDING

- Grant (GSA Design) introduced a collaborative branding concept design which was met by approval by the majority
- All but one District (Midlands) agreed to contribute \$1200 towards design costs
- All agreed that a steering group be formed to move the project forward – volunteers were Jo Noonan (Auckland), Chris Buckland (Midlands) – and anyone else interested to contact Grant Smith directly

ACTIONS

- Jim to coordinate Committee and liaise with GSA Design

ISQUASH

COMBINED GRADING LIST

- Michael introduced the upcoming changes to the iSquash Grading List, including the Combined Grading List, highlighting the implications for competitions (interclub, tournaments). Strong communication generally considered important, so that players know whether they will be in a mixed/men's/women's event *when they enter*
- Discussion around what the double/single dot ball threshold should be concluded that the status quo should remain. Ie: B2 and above use a double dot ball, C1 and below use a single dot ball, with the player with the most grading points having the choice. Where men play women, the player with the most grading points has the choice

DEMONSTRATIONS

- Pennie demonstrated Bulk Email in iSquash
- Pennie demonstrated the new Coaching and Referring qualifications search in iSquash

ACTIONS

- Squash NZ to put demonstration videos online in iSquash

EVENTS AND NATIONAL CALENDAR

- Michael presented some statistics around national event participation numbers
- Michael highlighted the major changes to events next year, including
 - Event rotation (to be drawn at AGM next day)
 - Senior Nationals format
 - Reintroduction of U23 National Champs
 - Hosting fees and contributions
- Michael encouraged Districts to make their District Opens WSA/PSA Closed events
- Michael encouraged Districts to be pragmatic about ball selection – with general consensus in the room
- Michael discussed the calendar setting process and highlighted some constraints, suggested that these were discussed more in-depth at the mid-year President’s meeting
- The gap between District and National Finals – for both Superchamps and Champion of Champions – was discussed. General consensus was that the competing objectives of a long gap between the two events (to facilitate fundraising and affordable travel), and a short gap (to provide a level playing field and prevent juniors from improving too much before National Finals), need to be balanced
- Fran (Waikato) indicated that they would be hosting a regional U23 champs and encouraged other Districts to do the same, to encourage participation at that level and promote the national champs
- The Superchamps Grading List cut-off date was discussed, and it was reiterated that the objective of the change to bring the cut-off earlier (to eight weeks before the suggested weekend of District Eliminations) was to give greater certainty to players, clubs and coaches

ACTIONS

- Squash NZ add calendar restraints to mid-year President’s meeting agenda

GENERAL BUSINESS

- Squash NZ reminded all that refereeing DVDs were available for purchase for \$30 from the office
- Wayne presented overall membership figures as a graphical display
- Grant thanked Squash NZ for the positive forum and highlighted the benefits of the combined forum where everyone got the same story, shared ideas and gave admin people the chance to be involved. The forum provided the opportunity for the Districts and Squash NZ to work together collaboratively for the benefit of the sport.