

OCEANIA SQUASH FEDERATION
SIXTH GENERAL MEETING, NORFOLK ISLAND
DECEMBER 2001

OFFICERS' REPORT

This report covers the two-year period from when we last assembled in Noumea in October 1999. At the Noumea meeting the following Officers were elected:

Col Clapper (Australia)	President & Executive Director
Bob Stirrup (New Caledonia)	Vice-President
David Boyd (New Caledonia)	Vice President
Mousie Skews (Cook Islands)	Vice-President
Wati Swan (Fiji)	Vice President
Phil Trenorden (Australia)	Vice President
Butch Gifford (New Zealand)	Vice-President
Gary Robertson (Norfolk Island)	Vice-President
Michael Davis (Australia)	Finance Director

In the two-year period Mousie Skews resigned for family reasons and her position taken by Bernadette Raffe (Cook Islands), and Phil Trenorden resigned due to work commitments and was replaced by Sandi Davis (Australia).

To all of the Officers who have served the Federation, sincere appreciation is extended for their efforts in furthering the progress of our sport in the Oceania region.

A very important role is that of Oceania Regional Vice President to the World Squash Federation. Ron Griffiths of Australia occupied this role until mid 2000 when he relinquished the position. Ron had been in the position for a number of years and we thank him for his efforts in representing the region at the WSF level. Neven Barbour of New Zealand agreed to take Ron's place and in a short time has made a major contribution to the region through his enthusiasm and knowledge of the sport together with a strong vision for the future of the sport. We look forward to a long and continuing involvement by Neven with the OSF. A copy of Neven's report to the last WSF Annual Meeting held recently in Melbourne is attached.

The membership of the region remained stable, although it was gratifying to see both Cook Islands and Samoa elevated to full membership status of the WSF. It was also a tremendous boost for the region when Cook Islands and Samoa were successful in gaining development grant funds from the WSF.

The full members of the Federation are to be commended for their commitment in furthering the development of our sport in the region and support of the OSF:

Australia
Cook Islands
Fiji
New Caledonia
New Zealand
Norfolk Island
Papua New Guinea
Samoa

A considerable amount of effort has gone into attracting more member countries to the Federation without success. The major drawback is the lack of facilities in prospective member countries, and this remains a major challenge for the OSF.

The sudden death of Phillip Cridge on 11 September 2000 was a sad moment for our sport, not only in PNG but also in the entire region. Phil was dedicated to the sport he dearly loved and was a great ambassador for his country and the region. In recognition of Phil's contribution to the game, The Phillip Cridge Memorial Perpetual Trophy has been introduced and will be contested for the first time at this year's Mini Games.

A milestone is being achieved with squash being included for the first time in the Mini Games in Norfolk. In addition, it will re-appear in the South Pacific Games in 2003 in Fiji. The Oceania Championships, incorporating the South Pacific Cup, are contested under the Games banner. Squash can only benefit from this association and there should be a strong commitment to entrench squash into the programmes of these events.

The Seventh Oceania Masters was held in Cook Islands in June 2000 and was an outstanding success. However, the same could not be said for the Eighth Oceania Masters in Norfolk Island, which was totally beyond the control of the organisers. Due to the collapse of a major airline servicing the Island what promised to be a wonderful event with a high number of entries was effectively destroyed, as players were unable to obtain airline flights to Norfolk Island.

Appreciation is extended to Cooks and Norfolk for hosting these events. Masters Squash is a very important aspect of our sport and is the one place where players from all member countries can compete against each other.

Junior events and junior development continues to present a major challenge for the region. This is a critical area if our sport is to have a future, and the complex challenges on how to proceed must be addressed with vigour and commitment if the region is to progress in this new millennium.

In 2000 the Federation's emphasis was ensuring that all member countries had a range of coaching material adequate to meet all their needs. Squash Australia has produced some excellent coaching resource material and is to be congratulated for the quality and completeness of the material. The Federation obtained sufficient copies of all the material and distributed it to member countries to encourage and assist them in implementing effective coaching programmes.

The focus in 2001 has been on improving the standard of refereeing in the region. Chris Sinclair, Chair of the OSF Rules and Referees Committee, has been working tirelessly preparing suitable material, which can be employed in the region. These initiatives should be continued as an ongoing programme.

Squash in Australia is still facing difficult times as it is subjected to immense competition from other sports and changing social patterns. Staging the recent International Festival in Melbourne was an aggressive and ambitious move to lift and improve the profile of the sport in Australia. Hopefully there will be flow-on benefits from the Festival for Australia and the region generally.

New Zealand is showing some positive signs of the game emerging from difficult times, with potential for growth.

It becomes the collective responsibility of all squash administrators in the region to commit to growing our great sport across the entire region.

Oceania, and Australia in particular, is very proud to have currently world champions in both Men and Women's. David Palmer and Sarah Fitzgerald are great ambassadors for the sport and are to be congratulated on their achievements.

The Federation's financial position continues to be relatively sound, although its funds limit the amount of activity the Federation can undertake in the region. Special appreciation is extended to Australia and New Zealand for continuing to provide the Federation with the bulk of its revenue.

The financial accounts of the Federation for the two-year period to 30th June 2001 have been duly audited for presentation at the Meeting. Sincere appreciation is extended to the Auditor, Peter Hurwood F.C.A. for undertaking the Audit.

Sincere appreciation is also extended to the Chairs and members of the various special committees who play an important role in supporting the Federation. And also to my wife, Lorel, for undertaking the secretarial work and in assisting me in my role.

Finally, it has been a pleasure to undertake the role of President and Executive Director and to have the opportunity to present this report on behalf of the Officers.


Col Clapper