

OCEANIA SQUASH FEDERATION 2016 ANNUAL REPORT



This is the 25th year of operation for the Oceania Squash Federation, taking on the role of promoting and assisting squash development throughout the Oceania Region.

Oceania is a region of the South Pacific Ocean that consists of many different island groups, covering an area of over 8.5 million square kilometres. There are 14 countries and 11 dependent territories within the Region.

Our membership base remains at 10, which includes all countries and territories within the Oceania Region that currently have squash facilities. Throughout these there are over 750 squash venues attracting approximately 31,000 players competing in regular competition and a further 121,000 playing recreationally with family and friends. Many of the smaller island Members have only 1 squash venue, some with only 2 courts and apart from the larger Member Countries of Australia and New Zealand squash management is administered by volunteer administrators and committees.

The construction of new squash facilities in both Samoa and Papua New Guinea during 2015 has rejuvenated the sport in those countries. The new squash facility built for the 2015 Pacific Games in Port Moresby has reinvigorated squash in the PNG Capital and junior, senior and doubles competitions are held weekly, together with mini tournaments held on a regular basis. Samoa has also rebuilt their squash community and are now conducting regular competitions and tournaments.

Exciting news out of Australia that the Darwin Squash Centre, who recently hosted the World Doubles Championships, will have major extensions including a state-of-the-art moveable centre glass court and seating capacity for over 500 people. This will transform the Darwin Centre into Australia's and Oceania's premium squash facility.

However the lack of facilities in other Oceania Countries and Territories continues to be a major obstacle. The cost of building a new sports facility for many of the smaller countries is beyond their financial capacity and unless private enterprise builds commercial premises incorporating squash courts it is unlikely that our Membership base will increase for some years.

A range of local and international tournaments have been held in the region over the past twelve months attracting players from across the globe. The Australian Open, together with other major tournaments held in Australia, New Zealand, Norfolk Island, Cook Islands, Fiji New Caledonia and Tahiti throughout the year has provided our region's elite and junior players with plenty of opportunities.

Australia continues to support their local players by working with event organisers to host the Australasian Squash Tour in 2017, a senior tournament circuit across the country held in conjunction with PSA tournaments, to encourage more participation of Australia players. New Zealand are also looking forward to 2017 when they will host the World Junior Championships, World Masters Games and the Oceania Junior Championships.

Junior Events continue to be keenly contested within the Region with annual Trans Tasman Junior Series between Australia and New Zealand held in conjunction with the Oceania Junior Championships. The 2016 Oceania Junior Championships were hosted by Australia on the Gold Coast and plans are well underway for the 2017 OJC to be hosted by Squash New Zealand in Auckland. Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea fielded players in the recent World Junior Championships in Poland. This experience will no doubt bring further enthusiasm into the junior ranks vying for a position in their country's team to contest this event much closer to home next year.

Oceania players found success at the recent WSF World Doubles Squash Championships in Australia with New Zealand taking the Women's and Mixed Doubles Gold and Australia Silver in the Men's and Women's Event.

Australia and New Zealand continue to lead the way within the Region with development programs and OSF are working closely with our smaller Member Countries to continue coaching and refereeing development program across the Region.

Oceania Squash remains committed to fostering and promoting squash in the Oceania Region and supporting WSF in the governing and development of squash across the world.

Neven Barbour
President
Oceania Squash Federation