

OCEANIA SQUASH FEDERATION

Discussion Notes from 2013 Workshop held on Saturday 9th November following the Annual General Meeting at Sports House, Brisbane

1. **WSF Annual General Meeting** (Jim O'Grady)

A brief summary of the recent WSF AGM & Conference which was held in Christchurch, New Zealand. Program ran over 4 days with 65 attendees from 35 countries. OSF represented by Neven Barbour.

The Olympic Bid campaign was discussed and disappointment across the sport noted. WSF keen to try again, however finances will be a major factor. With the appointment of a new IOC President there may be a chance that the IOC will review the Olympic system and include other sports. Considered very important to keep the momentum going.

Because of the Olympic Bid the 2013 World Squash Day didn't get much importance. Members noted that 2012 World Squash Day was a success and we need to put our ideas forward to WSF for 2014.

2. **New Member Country** (Carol Kawaljenko)

Contact has been made with representatives of the group working towards forming a new Tahitian Squash Federation. Squash has been revitalized in Tahiti and new facilities built. They have the 3 necessary associations to meet the requirements to form a Squash Federation and a General Assembly Meeting will be held on 16 November to formalise the Federation, constitution and committee. Hope to have it established early in 2014. Very keen to get squash recognised and send players to PNG Pacific Games.

Action Required : EO to continue communications with Tahiti

3. **Communication Strategy** (Neven Barbour)

Communication is the most important tool for the Federation. Without regular contact between member countries it is difficult to plan and assist members. Col Clapper agreed that it has been difficult over the years communicating with members and the importance of identifying the right communication channel.

OSF need our members to send in more information to upload to the new website. Been very difficult to identify a key person within each country to be responsible for providing that information. It is vital to have as much information up on the website as possible.

The easiest way to communicate would be for someone from OSF to visit each country, meet with their committees, sports councils/governments and other entities to identify specific needs and how OSF can assist. However OSF's limited funds do not allow this.

Facebook may be another way to communicate, especially through younger players across the Region. It could be a good communication tool.

The lack of attendance at meetings may be resolved by using other communication mediums such as Video Conferencing, Skype and teleconferences. Could the AGM be held without face-to-face attendance?

Action Required :

- EO to explore Facebook option.
- Members to identify appropriate person to supply information for Website
- EO to investigate use of alternative communication methods for meetings.

4. **Commonwealth Youth Games – Samoa 2015** (Neven Barbour)

WSF has concerns as currently the courts at Faleata Sports Complex have been dismantled and used as office space until late in 2014. IOC will be visiting Samoa in near future. OSF working closely with Samoan Squash and WSF to ensure squash competition goes ahead.

Action Required : OSF to continue to work with Samoan Squash & WSF

5. **Pacific Games**

(Edmond Pereira) - PNG Games are progressing well and arrangements seem to be well in hand. Neven (as Technical Director) has been working with the PNG Organising Committee to design the squash facility. PNG Squash are meeting with the Games Commission to discuss options of how the new facilities will operate after the Games. PNG need to ensure they communicate with OSF more regularly.

(Andrew Minogue) - Executive Director of Pacific Games Council attended the workshop and outlined the history and requirements for Pacific Games and advised the hosts for the following Games:

2015 Pacific Games	PNG (squash included)
2017 Mini Games	Vanuatu (squash not included)
2019 Pacific Games	Tonga (squash not included)
2021 ?	TBA (Tahiti, Fiji or Guam possible hosts)

28 sports have been included in the PNG Games, of which squash is a non-compulsory sport. Only 5 countries have expressed interest in the squash competition so far (ie Cook Islands, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Fiji and PNG). At least 6 countries are required to ensure competition will go ahead. Samoa have not lodged their list of sporting teams and Norfolk Island have not included squash in their competing sports. OSF needs to promote to encourage both these countries, and other possible countries to put in teams. Norfolk Island may be able to use discretionary eligibility clause to have a player who has competed under the old rules and does not meet the current eligibility requirement of Australia Passport included in team. Need to check PG Charter Eligibility Rules.

For some time now there have been ongoing discussions as to the possible inclusion of Australia & NZ in the Games. A trial inclusion of an Australian Junior Development Team in Sailing at the recent Wallis & Futuna Mini Games was successful. Further trials may be considered in the future.

(Carol Kawaljenko) – In 2011 our Members requested a change to the number of players in the Women’s Team Event as there has been some difficulty fielding female teams. Members want to reduce the Women’s Team Event players to 1 less than in the Men’s Event.

(Edmond Pereira) – Should OSF adopt the team composition for WSF World Teams Championships and Commonwealth Games?

(Andrew Minogue) – A request to change playing arrangements should be lodged as a matter of urgency for consideration by the PGC.

Action Required:

- PNG to include OSF in all emails sent re Pacific Games Organisation.
- OSF to contact Samoa & Norfolk Island re their inclusion in PNG Games
- OSF to check eligibility rules in regards to NI players
- OSF to lodge request to change playing arrangements asap

6. **Implementation of New Squash Rules – January 2014** (Chris Sinclair)
Australia & NZ Trans Tasman Junior Test & the 2014 Oceania Junior Championships on the Gold Coast will be the first event utilising the new rules in the Oceania Region. Need to ensure that all referees are updated on rule changes.

7. **WSF Junior World Championship Scheduling** (Gary Hampson)
The proposal put to the WSF AGM that the individual events continue to be held annually and every 2nd year the team championships be held at the same time but at a different time and venue to the individual event was defeated. There were concerns to the financial implications of having 2 major junior events in the one year and the possibility of countries not competing in the individual events that year.

Currently WSF Junior Championships are:

- annually - individual boys & girls
- alternating annually – boys & girls team championships

As the OSF representative on the WSF Championships Committee, Gary was seeking input from members. It was agreed that only Australia and NZ are adversely affected and should communicate direct with Gary, the WSF Championships Committee and WSF.

8. **Oceania Junior Championships**

A new OJC Regulation was approved by the Officers early in 2013 giving the Host Country control of all aspects of the management of the Tournament including appointment of officials, referees etc.

(Gary O'Donnell) - 2014 OJC will be held at the Palm Beach Aquatic and Squash Centre on the Gold Coast from 18th to 21st January. Entries close on 6th December. Event has been registered as a WSF Tier 2 event for Under 19 events. Will be run on similar format to Australia Junior Open and Closed Events – with Under 11, 13, 15, 17, 19 events for both girls and boys.

(Chris Sinclair) - expressed concern that this does not give opportunities for referee assessment and professional development. OSF to revisit Regulation and make changes where appropriate.

The scheduling of Championships needs to be considered to ensure maximum nominations can be attracted and events do not clash, especially in NZ & Aust.

Action Required : Officers to consider request by Australia and New Zealand in regards to hosting rights (ie Australia 2014, 2016, 2018 and New Zealand 2015 & 2017).

9. **Commonwealth Games**

Squash Australia working closely with ACGA to ensure facilities built for the 2018 Commonwealth Games will be left as a legacy for the sport. Some concerns that the squash venue for the 2014 Glasgow Games will be mostly removed only leaving 6 courts.

10. **PSA & WSA Events** (Neven Barbour)

(Neven Barbour) – Are PSA & WSA events viable and of value to member countries. Tournament Promoters struggling to secure sponsorship and/or funding of concern. Do they motivate our juniors to aspire to better things? Does it really give value to the sport?

(Carol Kawaljenko) - media exposure in larger cities is very difficult, however media in country/smaller communities is very valuable to the local squash community. Much easier to get local TV/Radio/Newspaper exposure in country areas, especially if Tournament Promoter is motivated.

(Jim O’Grady) - PSA tournaments are a valuable pathway for local NZ players.

(Gary O’Donnell) - Australia have a well organized Australian Tour that has been attracting a lot of overseas players over the past 2 years. Extremely beneficial to reducing Australian player rankings without them having to travel extensively overseas. Prior to tour Australian inception a player could not achieve better than a top 100 ranking, however with the implementation of the Tour a player can achieve top 60 before having to travel internationally.

11. **Junior Development Programs**

(Gary O’Donnell) - OzSquash program may be possible in other Member countries. Need to train coaches appropriately. Still have several old coaching manuals that are available if anyone interested.

(Konio Vai) – The distribution of old and broken racquets to smaller countries is very beneficial. Allows more kids to participate who don’t have gear.

(Carol Kawaljenko) – been done in the past very successfully through Darwin and a couple of other centres.

(Gary Hampson) – Would it be beneficial to consider partnering a state or centre with one of the smaller countries. Can we identify if there are any relations from smaller countries who are affiliated with a club or region?

Action Required :

- EO to investigate ways to collect old/used racquets for distribution.