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Squash New Zealand Report 2013

To: Oceania Squash Federation

SQUASH NEW ZEALAND

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High Performance

With the restructuring of High Performance Sport in New Zealand more emphasis has been placed on performance and results with a focus on targeted Olympic sports. For squash the key priorities are the 2014 Commonwealth Games and individual World Championships. Complimenting these strands are the Junior High Performance programmes and talent development centres which are the breeding grounds for our future elite athletes. Now that the Olympic decision has been made Squash New Zealand will conduct a review of the programme and develop a new strategic plan for high performance squash.

Technology

Squash New Zealand continues to invest in iSquash, the IT platform that support the majority of squash activity. Early in 2013 the Member Management module underwent a major overhaul with numerous features added to help club administrators with their jobs.

The number of clubs using the online web based court booking module continues to grow with a number of improvements having been added that make it easier for users and clubs alike. The access and security module has recently been upgraded incorporating a full "Pay to Play" feature.

The competition module has been enhanced with additional draw options and user features and has been widely used throughout the country with more than 107,000 results entered each year. Currently Squash New Zealand is working on the introduction of a single grading list that will utilise a common points scale for males and females. This will enable results for mixed gender competition to be entered into the grading list and allow for more mixed competitions both in interclub and tournaments.

Coaching

The national coaching framework continues to develop with the addition of further modules during the year. Over 800 coaches are now in the framework, 49 facilitators have been trained and over 2000 coaching modules have been completed. The framework



incorporates components that are aligned to the new junior squash in schools programme called “Kiwi Squash” which will be launched early in 2014.

Development

The increased use of technology such as web based court booking systems, access / security systems and membership databases has enabled clubs to provide better services for their members. A focus has been to improve the level of communication with a revised newsletter format to around 15,000 club members, an enhanced website, greater contact with club personnel and the use of social media. This is best demonstrated by the success of the “2020 Back the Bid” Facebook campaign which attracted widespread support throughout the country.

2013 is the Year of Youth Squash which is a national campaign to encourage our districts and clubs to promote squash to players under 19 and to encourage them to participate more in our sport. The goals include inspiring youth to choose squash, supporting clubs to increase youth participation and engaging with school squash players. The campaign is supported by a group of youth ambassadors and promotional material available through our website.

A new initiative for 2013 was the introduction of a secondary schools grading list which allows young people who play squash at secondary school to have a player code get their results onto the grading list. This year around 800 new players have been added to the grading list with another 2000 hopefully added in 2014.

Programme Director

An area for future development is to improve the quantity and quality of our refereeing database. The introduction of a club referee qualification and the appointment of Glenn Carson as a WSF Regional Referee and Assessor have been highlights during the year.

Our national events remain strong with an increase in participation numbers in the last year. There are 450 events on the national calendar and indications are that these events continue to be well supported. There were two very successful PSA events in 2013 and three are planned for 2014.

Masters squash is well represented at national and international levels. Unfortunately Australia was too strong in the biennial Trans-Tasman test series but the event is definitely a highlight on the master’s calendar. The 2017 World Masters Game in Auckland promises to be a huge event for squash and planning is already well underway.

The Next Twelve Months

The focus for the national office is improving the level of service and delivery to our member clubs. Programme development is a key part of this and the launch of “Kiwi Squash” in 2014 is aimed at increasing player numbers by giving kids a taste of the squash at school then building the connection to their local club.

There are a number of exciting facility development projects in the pipeline for 2014 / 2015 which will be a great boost for the sport. There is no doubt that new facilities do attract new members and hopefully this investment in new squash courts will be good for the growth of the game.

Squash New Zealand continues to support a Coachforce Programme through its member districts and in 2014 this will be extended to incorporate Kiwi Squash elements as part of the funding agreement. The programme has now been operating successfully for four years with participation numbers increasing each year.

The World Squash Federation annual general meeting and conference is being held in Christchurch from 20 – 23 October and will incorporate the induction of seven new members into the Squash New Zealand Hall of Fame.

Jim O’Grady

Chief Executive
Squash New Zealand