

OCEANIA SQUASH FEDERATION
(OSF)

Report to the World Squash Federation Annual General Meeting 2004

In general, the last twelve months has been a period of consolidation for the Oceania region, with steady progress being made in a number of areas. There are positive signs of growth in several member countries, which is very encouraging after years of declining participation in the sport. A great deal of this credit can be attributed to good management and administration in those countries, and strong support of the regional federation. In addition, initiatives identified at the OSF Strategic Planning seminar/workshop held in 2003 with the aid of IOC funding are beginning to have an impact and producing positive results.

Significant items of interest within the region are summarised as follows:

1. The number of member countries remains unchanged, while efforts continue to embrace new members to the OSF/WSF. Most of these are small island countries that do not have squash facilities and have a very small population.
2. General meetings of the OSF are held bi-annually. The next meeting is scheduled to be held in Rarotonga, Cook Islands during the period of the Fifth Oceania Championships.
3. The Inaugural Oceania Open was held in conjunction with the 2004 Trukai Squash International and PNG Open in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea in July 2004. The event was an outstanding success and is a further step in developing a strong international tournament circuit in the region. An indication of the tournament's success is an expression of support from the sponsors for next year's Open in Port Moresby.
4. A special Oceania event for lower grade players was held in conjunction with the Trukai International as a development initiative. It is proposed to continue this initiative in the future.
5. Squash Australia is heavily involved in preparations for the 2006 Commonwealth Games to be held in Melbourne, Australia. Squash Australia is currently negotiating with Games organisers to have the court facilities refurbished and the purchase of a portable glass court.
6. A series of successful PSAWISPA tournaments were held in Australia and New Zealand during 2004, attracting many overseas players to the region.
7. The Oceania region continues to produce elite players for the international scene, including Rachael Grinham who achieved a number one world ladies ranking in 2004.
8. The PNG Squash Team that competed in the 2003 South Pacific Games was one of the three finalists in the PNG Sports Team of the Year Awards, while Derek Hunter was a finalist in the men's PNG Sportsman of the Year Award.
9. The Samoa Squash Rackets Association is working closely with the Organising Committee for the XIIIth South Pacific Games to be held in

Apia, Samoa in 2007. They are currently negotiating with the Games organisers for the construction of new squash facilities for the Games, including doubles courts.

10. Norfolk Island Squash was recently amalgamated within the Norfolk Island Leagues Club, providing financial injection into the sport enabling the engagement of a full time coach and almost immediate benefits with an influx of new players.
11. PNG is also attracting new players to the sport, including those from other sports, mainly due to the high profile and media coverage squash currently enjoys.
12. The OSF will provide every possible support to Cook Islands Squash, as the tenure of the only facilities on the Island is being reviewed, immediately following the Oceania Championships in October 2005.
13. Squash Fiji is enjoying an increase in player numbers, providing more local tournaments and reviewing plans for future development, including a joint venture with the Suva Lawn Tennis Club to construct and operate new squash facilities with singles and doubles courts.
14. The Tau Games will be held in 2005 in Suva, Fiji and squash is expected to be a participant sport comprising schools within the Oceania region.
15. Steady progress has been made in the coaching and development areas, with the guidance of the OSF Coaching & Development Committee and with the goodwill and guidance of the region's two larger countries, Australia and New Zealand, both of whom have been most generous with their support towards the smaller countries in the region. The OSF Coaching & Development Committee has been very active in the process of a player grading system for use by the smaller countries and development of a register of coaches to assist associations and clubs select a suitable coach to meet their requirements.
16. Squash New Zealand has focused on a number of key strategies and activities over the past twelve months: Growth of the Game, Best Practice and Performance. Two significant resources have been completed – the Club Tool Kit and the Squash Development Manual. Both of these documents provide a "hands on" practical support for Clubs, Districts and volunteers at "grass roots". A National Coach Development position, supported with government funding, is currently being advertised. Squash New Zealand moved into new offices in March 2004. A Website Search Engine has been developed to allow people to search for their playing and grading particulars. The system is also available to other Oceania countries.
17. Squash New Zealand has been awarded the 2006 World Junior Squash Championships.
18. Squash Australia has continued its major revision of all squash aspects during the past year. Its Policies and Procedures Manual has been produced on CD Rom. New initiatives have been introduced regarding the training and support of coaches, where the number of qualified accredited coaches continues to grow – now almost 500. A major activity has commenced to train and qualify suitable referees for the 2006 Commonwealth Games.

19. The OSF Rules & Referees Committee, has been extremely active, particularly through the initiatives and enthusiasm of its Convenor, Chris Sinclair. Chris has been heavily involved with the WSF Referees Review, releasing Rules & Refereeing Newsletters to OSF member countries, was official referee at the recent Trukai International in PNG and presented refereeing clinics in Port Moresby. Squash Australia's Rules & Referees Committee is developing a register of accredited coaches which will be available for use by the region.
20. An OSF Website is currently being developed and should be operation in the near future (www.oceaniasquash.biz). The website will provide links to the WSF and OSF member country websites.

The Oceania Federation looks forward with optimism to further growth and development of squash in the region over the next 12 months, and in supporting the WSF in its objectives and initiatives.

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