



**OCEANIA SQUASH FEDERATION
"OSF"
REPORT TO THE WORLD SQUASH FEDERATION'S
2012 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Oceania Squash Federation (OSF) was formed in 1992 with a charter to develop Squash in the Oceania Region in co-operation with its member country and territory associations and to support the WSF in its objectives. The OSF also has the key responsibility of representing our sport at regional organisations such as the Pacific Games Council, Olympic Sports Federations of Oceania etc. in addition to arranging and administering regional events.

The charter governing the organisation was effectively unchanged until the 2011 OSF General Meeting when a new constitution was adopted following a twelve month review process.

The OSF is now operating under a new Charter which includes a more streamlined management structure and stronger governance provisions. With these significant changes being implemented a "settling down" period has been progressing during 2012.

Highlights of significant activities and events in Oceania over the past twelve months in addition to planned initiatives are summarised below.

1. The OSF continues to be supported by nine full member countries/territories of the Federation, namely Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Norfolk Island, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Vanuatu. Australia and New Zealand retain full member status of WSF while the other OSF members are Associate Members.

Although squash courts were recently constructed in Tahiti Nui with restricted access, prospects are encouraging for the country to join the OSF club.

The OSF charter still retains provision for Affiliate Membership to provide for those Oceania countries that do not have squash facilities but do have players residing in other countries.

2. Being an optional sport for inclusion in the Pacific Games and Pacific Mini Games squash is continually under pressure to be included on the Games programme. It will not be part of the 2013 Pacific Mini Games, due to Wallis & Futuna not having any squash facilities. However, it has been confirmed that Squash will be included as a sporting discipline at the 2015 Pacific Games in Port Moresby, PNG even though significant issues still need to be resolved concerning the provision of facilities.

The long term future for Squash in either Games will become increasingly difficult if the Pacific Games Council proceeds with recommendations currently under consideration and will require influence and lobbying for its retention.

Following the 2011 Pacific Games in Noumea, the Squash Programme is being reviewed with the objective of reducing the length of the programme and number of competitors.

3. The Oceania Championships is the major event for all member countries except Australia and New Zealand and is held every two years - wherever possible linked to the Pacific Games and Pacific Mini Games. The 2013 Championships will be hosted by Norfolk Island Squash.

4. The Australian Squash Open is the pinnacle event of the calendar in Oceania and continues to attract the world's top ranked players to the event. Once again the 2011 event was held in the Australian capital, Canberra.

The build-up to the Australian Open is supported by a number of PSA and WSA classified events held around Australia and New Zealand.

Oceania extends a warm welcome to the visiting players and is extremely appreciative of their making the journey to this area of the globe.

5. Youth and junior development continues to struggle in the region generally and is an ongoing challenge for the OSF and its member countries. Funding constraints to adequately resource coach education and development programmes, competition from other sports and lack of opportunities for our young players makes it increasingly difficult to retain their interest in the sport.

The OSF was extremely appreciative of the offer from the Victorian Squash Federation in Australia to host the Oceania Juniors in 2011.

6. Masters Squash continues to be popular in Oceania, particularly in Australia and New Zealand and demonstrated by successes at the recent World Masters Championships. The 19th Oceania Masters was held in Rarotonga and hosted for the first time by Cook Islands Squash.

7. Australia is continuing its focus on building its Australian Squash Tour incorporating all State and Territory "Opens" offering PSA and WSA divisions. All events in 2011 attracted full draws with a wide range of nationalities. Australia also staged an Australian Junior Open in 2011 for the first time with over 160 juniors taking part. The event will again be held in 2013.

8. Australia has been working on a strategy to have squash centres developed as community facilities and this is beginning to gain traction with new centres under construction or built in a number of States and the Northern Territory.

9. To address the great challenge of recruiting young players Australia is working in conjunction with the Australian Sports Commission on the development of a new participation programme - Ozsquash. The programme will have a flexible delivery structure starting in schools or after school care facilities leading to an "in centre" program.

10. The Cook Islands Open continues to retain its popularity and attracted 38 overseas visitors to the event in 2011. Unfortunately, ongoing issues with the Cook Islands government concerning the operation and management of the new courts built for the 2009 Pacific Mini Games is impacting on the future progress of the sport in that country.

11. Squash in New Zealand is progressing at a healthy rate. In the last twelve months -

- Their high performance programme, with greater transparency and new initiatives such as talent development centres augurs well for the future of the programme.
- Technology development has been a key focus for some time, and is now well advanced under a technology platform called iSquash. This provides a large number modules ranging from membership management, grading and results, and event management to "pay for play".
- The national coaching framework continues to expand with new modules being added. Over 460 coaches are now in the framework, 49 facilitators trained and over 1,000 coaching modules completed.
- 2012 is the year of Women's Squash and a national campaign promoting squash for women is being conducted throughout the country.
- A new "Squash in Schools" product is a major project for the future, together with the development of further iSquash modules and development and implementation of the national coaching framework.

12. New Zealand will host the WSF AGM in 2013 in Christchurch from 23 - 26 October.

13. Norfolk Island with a total population of 1,200 conduct each year the Norfolk Island Masters and attract players from Australia and New Zealand to a highly successful event. With no permanent coach they struggle to maintain junior membership.

14. Lack of facilities in the capital, Port Moresby, has seriously impacted on the sport in Papua New Guinea, including preparing teams for major events and junior development programmes. New facilities are proposed for the 2015 Pacific Games; however issues concerning their location in Port Moresby and funding for construction are still to be resolved.

15. Squash in Samoa has been experiencing a rise in interest, and the re-introduction of Junior Squash is very encouraging with sponsorship obtained for a development programme.

Squash has been confirmed as a participant sport in the 2015 Commonwealth Youth Games to be held in Apia and preparations for the event have now commenced.

16. Our newest member of the OSF fraternity, Vanuatu, currently has financial problems with the squash courts which are in need of repair. Unfortunately, this has seriously affected squash activities in the country.

17. The OSF has a number of standing committees that give specialist advice to the Federation and its members in addition to providing representation on the respective WSF committees via the OSF appointed representatives.

18. One of our most active committees is the OSF Rules & Refereeing Committee. Oceania now has 3 WSF Referees, one being WSF's youngest Referee and another WSF Referee is expected to achieve accreditation soon. In addition, there are now 5 Regional Referees in Oceania.

In 2011 a WSF Assessor attended the Australian Open and was of value for quality control for Regional and WSF accreditation. However, the downgraded event in 2012 does impact on refereeing with referees needing matches and assessments to maintain accreditation to upgrade.

Future aims in the Rules & Refereeing area are to -

- Promote and assist the development of the rules & refereeing in Oceania;
- Maintain a presence and support the WSF Referees & Rules Committee and Referee Review Board;
- Ensure a refereeing presence at major Championship events in the Region; and
- Keep countries informed on all relevant matters relating to Rules & Refereeing.

Financial support for refereeing development is an on-going challenge for the region.

19. The OSF is a member of the Olympic Sports Federations of Oceania (OSFO) and the Pacific Games Council (PGC) in addition to maintaining a close relationship with the Oceania National Olympic Committee (ONOC) and is committed to supporting the objectives of these organisations.

20. The OSF also continues to fully support the WSF and its objectives in the development of our great sport throughout the world and Oceania in particular. The OSF is also totally supportive of the WSF's 2020 Olympic bid.

On a personal note, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the WSF Officers and Administrative personnel for the support and encouragement they have provided over the past 21 years of my service to the OSF.

Finally, the principal commitment of the OSF is to without question service its members and assist them in developing Squash in Oceania.

Colin J. Clapper AM
President & WSF Regional VP
Oceania Squash Federation
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