



OCEANIA SQUASH FEDERATION 2013 ANNUAL REPORT TO WSF

OSF has nine countries/territories as full members including Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Norfolk Island, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Vanuatu. We are hoping to extend this membership to French Polynesia in the future, now that Tahiti has new facilities and the sport is slowly building in that region.

A new operational charter has been implemented during the last 12 months. Inclusive in this has been a significant change in the management of the organisation. After more than 20 years involvement in the Federation, 17 of these as President, Mr. Colin Clapper AM stood down from the Board in October 2012. OSF and its members extend our sincere thanks to Col for his tireless effort over these years to develop the sport throughout the Oceania Region. Butch Gifford also retired after many years as Vice President and was made a Life Member of the Federation.

Communication is key in such a spread out diverse region so we have completed the launch of a new Oceania website to encourage more interaction between countries.

Junior Development has been significant in the past year with both Australia and New Zealand developing specific programs to introduce the game to school-age children. Squash New Zealand's 'Kiwi Squash' has been piloted this year and will be launched in 66 schools in 2014 with a targeted participation of some 6,000 students between 5 and 19 years of age.

After Squash Australia successfully trialing their 'Oz Squash' junior participation program in 2012 it has been included in 25 Active After Schools Programs throughout the country this year. The program based on the 'Playing for Life' philosophy uses modified equipment to introduce children to squash. It has also extended to In-School and In-Centre Programs with further trials planned for later this year and released in 2014 to the wider community. Approximately 100 coaches have been specifically trained to deliver the program.

The increase of top-level competition across the region has continued during the year. The ongoing Australian Circuit has been a resounding success in attracting players to visit the Oceania Region. The circuit held in every state and territory throughout Australia hosted 27 professional tournaments and attracted overseas players from 28 different countries.

Australia has also implemented a Junior Squash Tour in 2013. 75 tournaments have been registered across the nation and 938 junior players have participated to date. Entries in the annual Squash Australia national junior events have increased steadily with an expected 221 players to compete at the upcoming 2013 Australian Junior Closed Championships in early October.

Although the number of professional tournaments in New Zealand decreased in 2013 due to lack of sponsorship opportunities, events for local players have increased to 450 events, many of these being regional and club based.

Our smaller island nations have also been active in hosting events with the Cook Island Open in Rarotonga, New Caledonia hosting their annual BCI International in Noumea and Fiji Squash hosting the Fiji P Meghiji Squash Revival Tournament. Squash Fiji are working hard to

re-ignite the sport in their country and with secured sponsorship for next year's event they are well on their way to succeeding this.

Masters Squash throughout the region is very active and draws large numbers to the various Masters events especially in Australia and New Zealand. The Oceania Masters Championships is held annually and attracts players from across the Region. In late 2012 the Cook Islands successfully hosted the 19th Oceania Masters Championships and Norfolk Island will be hosting the 2013 Masters Championships in September.

The Pacific Games and Mini Games are important to the ongoing development of our sport in this Region, and the bi-annual Oceania Championships are held in conjunction with the Games. It is unfortunate that squash will not be on the Pacific Mini Games Program in 2013 as the event is being held in Wallis & Futuna where there are no squash facilities. However, the Oceania Championships will be hosted by Norfolk Island as a stand-alone event in early October where member countries will be vying for Team and Individual Championship Trophies.

The 2015 Pacific Games will be held in Papua New Guinea where squash is one of the core sports. Planning is well underway for a new facility with 6 glass-backed courts of which 3 have movable walls to incorporate 2 doubles courts. The OSF is working closely with the PNG Organising Committee to ensure the facilities will be to international standards.

In 2012 the Oceania Junior Championships were re-introduced after a hiatus of many years. The 2013 Oceania Junior Championships will be hosted by Squash Australia in January 2104 at Queensland's Gold Coast. Preparations are well in hand with the Gold Coast Tourism Commission supporting the event. The 2015 event will be hosted by New Zealand.

Preparations for the 2015 Commonwealth Youth Games in Apia, Samoa are progressing. It is anticipated that the squash event will be a major success and the Samoan squash enthusiasts will provide plenty of support for this event which will showcase their country.

The 2018 Commonwealth Games will be hosted on the Gold Coast in sunny Queensland and we look forward to a large contingent of Oceania countries competing. A strong representation at the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games is anticipated.

New facilities have been built in Darwin Northern Territory Australia capable of hosting world class events in both singles and doubles squash. In September the Darwin International Doubles Tournament attracted players from Scotland, Australia and New Zealand. This was an important event in preparation for the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games for these countries.

On the World Scene Australia and New Zealand have continued to compete at an excellent level with 5 Men ranked in PSA's top 50 and 7 Women in WSA's top 50. At the 2013 World Men's Championships they acquitted themselves very well, Australia 4th and New Zealand 15th in the final placings. At the World Junior Women's Championships New Zealand surpassed Australia in the final rankings.

With 3 World and 7 Regional Accredited Referees, Oceania is fortunate to have a number of highly qualified referees who make a considerable contribution to the ongoing development of 'The Rules of Squash'. OSF has a sound structure for the examination and accreditation of referees and markers, with over 200 markers and referees accredited across the Region.

There was outstanding support across Oceania for the 2012 World Squash Day in support of squash's Olympic aspirations. All member countries supported the day and in excess of 90 squash centres conducted various squash activities. It is hoped that in 2013 our Members will once again embrace World Squash Day and 'Reach Out' to their community and encourage more people to become involved in the sport across the Region.

Oceania Squash would like to thank World Squash and the many individuals and organisations that put in such a huge effort to give Squash its best chance for inclusion in the 2020 Olympic Games.

Oceania Squash remains committed to supporting WSF in the governing and development of Squash throughout the World and fostering and promoting the sport in the Oceania Region.

Neven Barbour
President
Oceania Squash Federation