

Instant Update

ISSUE 29

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2010



To: ALL WSF MEMBER NATIONAL FEDERATIONS

cc: WSF Regional Vice-Presidents, WSF Committee Members, WISPA, PSA, Accredited Companies

40TH WSF CONFERENCE AND AGM 2010

The WSF AGM is a headline grabber, especially in election years, but the programme of management and specialised committee meetings and the Conference sessions which precede the AGM are very important fertile ground, giving thoughts a forum and generally shaping World Squash policy for the next period.

This year the meetings were held in Chennai, India, following the Commonwealth Games in Delhi and this update should perhaps begin with the headlines from the 40th WSF AGM itself.

Votes were cast.....

There were 45 Member nations represented, and they saw N Ramachandran (right) re-elected unopposed as President for a second term. This followed the withdrawal of challenger Natalie Grainger earlier in the week, saying that on reflection her commitment to WISPA should be her top priority.



Voting for the Vice President positions saw Heather Deayton (Hong Kong) re-elected for her third two year period, along with Chris Stahl (England) for his second spell. However, Gerard DeCourcy (New Zealand), Vice President for the last four years was beaten by Mohamed El Menshawy (Egypt, left), who was re-elected after previously serving in the WSF role from 2004 - 2006.

"After two years in which I have prioritised our Olympic bid along with stabilising the WSF finances, I am honoured that the membership has seen fit to wish me to continue to build from this platform with our new management group," said President Ramachandran.

"It is always disappointing to lose a valued team member as we have with Gerard DeCourcy, to whom I want to pay great tribute for everything he has done - but it is also very pleasing to welcome 'Mensh', who will add a new dimension. We also thank Frank Van Loon now that his term as a co-opted Vice President has come to an end,"

El Menshawy, the Managing Director of a Cairo Sports Marketing & Innovation company, expressed his pleasure: "I am very delighted to be back with the team and look forward to working hard to add value to the WSF."

The meeting also voted in favour of aligning terms of office to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) so that at future elections presidential terms will be a maximum of two periods of four years, while vice presidents will have up to four terms of two years.

.....and motions discussed

A tender to host the Women's World Team Championship in France in 2012 was accepted subject to inspection, as was one for that country to take the Men's World Team Championship the following year. A great double effort from France which should see the Men's event being played at the planned national centre near Paris. Meanwhile, the cream of the world junior players will be able to play the World Junior Women's Individual & Team Championship combined with the Junior Men's Individual in 2013 on the Caribbean Island of Grand Cayman (currently the host of a major WISPA event). Lucky them!

More mundane but amongst other decisions taken, in a technical tweak, the term tin will now mean both the line and board below it, as it already does in common usage.

But the AGM motions and elections were only the end of several days of activity.

With a good deal of discussion too.....

The WSF Management Committee (ManCom) were busy in a number of areas. These included:

- Accepting the proposal that all future World Championships and activities (e.g. AGM, Referee and Coaching Conference) should be pre-allocated to WSF Regions in the year 2013 onwards, so that there would be an opportunity for all areas to host them with certainty. It will also enable the member nations to secure them sooner, providing earlier confirmation for everybody's benefit. (This links with ManCom's earlier agreement that tenders will now be accepted from actual places rather than simply nations, so that inaccessible or unsuitable options are not agreed. The nominations will still be made by member nations but be tied to the prospective venues / hotels etc).

- As ever, the Olympic ideal was high on the agenda and at the Conference presentations on TV, branding, and the CEO 'Visions' led the way as ManCom also plan the build-up to the next bid opportunity in 2013.
- Racketball as played on a squash court also featured, with WSF currently looking to align the playing rules and equipment before it grows too far so that it can grow in a co-ordinated manner under WSF aegis.
- It was also agreed that the alterations made to the doubles court and scoring have not been successful in ensuring that the game is entertaining at all times. Thus a full 'out of the box' review will be ongoing in the next few months (see below).
- Also on court, ManCom decided that guidance needs to be given on scoring so that players, federations etc have a rule of thumb to use. With this in mind it is recommended that while competitive play is PAR11 including all World Championships, PSA, WISPA etc., for general/recreational play the extended PAR 15 should be the norm, but with Hand In / Hand Out to nine remaining an option. Meanwhile at the AGM to align the setting it was agreed that the Rules be amended so that PAR15 at 14-all two clear points would be need to win the game, as with PAR11.

These were some of the featured items in the five point WSF Strategic plan which was the focus of the two day WSF Conference and will be the backdrop to future planning.

The headings are:

External Relationships – *the right connections*

Competition – *our shop window*

Best Practice – *doing things well*

Development – *squash for all*

Raising our Profile – *Getting Ourselves Noticed*

.....and with them now in place the focus shifts to delivering the aims.

Finally, as in previous years a WSF presentation is made to recognise somebody whose involvement with world squash has been invaluable. This year the award went to Dr Anne Smith (right) for her outstanding contribution to Squash and in particular her work on the Anti-Doping and Medical Committees. The award was endorsed with ringing applause.



DOUBLES REVIEW

The Doubles events at the Commonwealth Games in October featured a wider court and amended rules but by general consensus were not a success. Many women's matches and some mixed were entertaining of these and too many men's were simply tedious.

If we liken squash to cricket then doubles should be 20/20. Short, attacking and a crowd pleaser.

With this in mind WSF will shortly be embarking on a full review and then experimentation to achieve this. The intention is to look at all options, however radical, so that we reformulate to a more entertaining package in advance of the next World Doubles and events which follows.

While a panel is being convened to deal with this, comments and suggestions received during November will be welcomed and fed into them.

SARAH FITZ-GERALD INDUCTED



Australian squash great Sarah Fitz-Gerald has joined some of the world's most illustrious sportsmen and women with her induction into the Sport Australia Hall of Fame.

Fitz-Gerald was inducted as part of the 2010 intake at a gala dinner in Melbourne and now sits proudly alongside Australian sporting icons such as Sir Donald Bradman, Dawn Fraser and Herb Elliott in the Hall of Fame and joins fellow squash players Heather McKay, Geoff Hunt, Vicki Cardwell and Michelle Martin as members.

Fitz-Gerald and Martin's women's squash team, also featuring Liz Irving and Carol Owens, was inducted in the team's section in 2008.

"It's great credit to her to be recognised by her peers in this way," Sport Australia chief executive officer Bob Lay said.

"She's such a fantastic person – it's great to now have her as a member."

Fitz-Gerald is recognised as one of the greatest women's squash player of all time. She won the World Junior Championship in 1987, before bursting onto the senior tour to win 65 main tour titles as well as five World Team Championship titles, World Cup gold medals and the 2002 Commonwealth Games gold medal. Currently she heads the WSF Athletes Commission.

COMMONWEALTH GAMES COMMENT

One of the venue's most impressed visitors was Sir Matthew Pinsent, the four-time Olympic rowing gold medallist who was reporting for the BBC.

"Squash would be a good addition to the Olympics - it is relatively easy to set up, especially in a modern urban environment, and is fast and exciting to watch both on television and live," said Pinsent in a BBC blog.

"Crucially, the Olympics would be the absolute pinnacle of what the sport offers - unlike so many of the current sports in the programme (such as tennis, football and arguably now rugby sevens).

"The fact that squash can compete with many of the sports already in the Olympics on many of these makes me think that they must be head of the list should the 28 sports ever be increased even by one."



NEW WSF RULE GUIDELINE – DISTRACTION

The following guideline has been agreed with the support of PSA and WISPA as a change of emphasis to help make play continuous and allow spectators to get fully involved without being requested to keep quiet. It is applicable immediately.

To enable squash spectators to more actively enjoy matches - indeed to encourage them to do so, and to acknowledge that at public venues there will be ambient noise, it has been agreed that the general provisions of Squash Rule 13.1.3 (distraction) will not be applicable for competitive events where crowd interaction and other general noise are present. Players will be expected to carry on and not stop, and referees will not call for quiet in respect of general audience and venue noise.

Exceptions would be where very loud, surprising and isolated distractions occur, but lets will not be given to players who stop playing during a rally except in these exceptional circumstances.

ADVERTISEMENT



Shropshire squash enthusiasts will be pleased to hear that Lilleshall National Sports Centre has recently undergone a £50,000 refurbishment of its squash facilities, with further redevelopments planned across the Centre.

Funded by Sport England, the money has been used to upgrade the existing facilities, including new lighting, new floors and the installation of new glass back doors which will improve the facility as a coaching venue. Such improvements have secured national Governing body, England Squash and Racketball's support, who have committed themselves to increasingly make use of the new facilities.

Lee Moore, Lilleshall National Sports Centre General Manager said, "We are delighted with our new squash facilities, which will benefit our thriving community base of juniors and adults and elite squads, run by the governing body. We also hope that our new facilities will encourage new groups to try out squash; a great fitness sport you can enjoy with your friends and colleagues. And with England Squash and Racketball's support we may even find the next squash superstar!"

Lilleshall's Squash Club, the largest in Shropshire, and the Junior Squash Club, a coaching programme held every Saturday, will be just some of the clubs that will benefit from the recent refurbishment.

WORLD SQUASH DAY THEME: 20/10 FOR 2010

The theme for this year's World Squash Day on **Saturday 6 November** is to encourage clubs and associations all over the globe to increase playing numbers.

So, on November 6th, the challenge for every club in the world is to attract: 20 new junior players, and 10 new adult members.

World Squash Day founder Alan Thatcher added: "Squash has a massive worldwide following with some 20 million players enjoying the game in more than 120 countries.

The single most important thing that we can do for the sport is to bring on a new generation of squash players to safeguard the future of the sport.

"Therefore it is essential that clubs and squash associations all over the globe get behind World Squash Day to produce a significant increase in participation levels."

Last year World Squash Day generated a massive global show of support for squash's Olympic bid.

This year clubs and federations can announce their activities on the event website www.worldsquashday.com

Thatcher added: "The website has a list of ideas for clubs to get involved and organise events to showcase our fantastic sport."

Follow WSD on Facebook: www.facebook.com/worldsquashday

2010 WORLD & MAJOR GAMES REMINDER

PanAmerican Championships, Guatemala (5 – 14 November).

Asian Games, Guangzhou, China (12 – 27 November, Squash 18 – 25 Nov).

World Women's Team Championship, Palmerston North, New Zealand (29 November – 4 December).

Saudi World Men's Open, Saudi Arabia (2-10 December)

NEW PSA TOUR LEVEL NAMES FOR 2011

The PSA World Tour will consist of the following levels beginning next year:



PSA World Open

This is the Tour's Premier event with a minimum total compensation of \$275,000.

PSA World Series

Total Compensation upwards of \$115,000,

PSA World Series Final

The top eight players from the end of season PSA World Series Race will play in the final.

PSA International 25, 35, 50, 70

Total Compensation from \$25,000 to \$114,999

PSA Challenger 5, 10, 15

Total Compensation from \$5,000 to \$24,999

REFEREE REVIEW

Following a major review of the Referees Programme, Management Committee decided that the current Competency Based Training & Assessment (CBTA) criteria for nominating World and International Referees were too stringent. Now, new less stringent criteria have been developed which, it is hoped, will encourage more Regional Referees to seek promotion. These new criteria will be used at the next Annual Referees Review in 2011 - existing World Referees (WRs) and International Referees (IRs) due for re-nomination and all new nominees will be assessed against these new criteria.

The criteria for WSF Referees cover regular refereeing activity and valid assessments by experienced WSF Assessors over a 3 year period. They have been circulated to all Regional Representatives as well as to existing WRs, IRs and WSF Assessors. The current CBTA criteria for Regional Referees are now being brought into line – both sets of criteria will be placed on the WSF website shortly.

Meanwhile, the decision was also taken to combine the two categories and call them WSF Referees starting in 2011.

REFEREE DIARY NOTE:

The WSF Referee Conference 2011 will take place in Paderborn, Germany on 19 / 20 August – before the start of the World Men's Team Championship which begins there on 21 August.

Booking forms will be available from the WSF office in the new year.

MAJOR CHAMPIONSHIPS IN THE LAST TWO MONTHS.....

Soho Square Women's World Open Squash Championship, Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt

Final:

[1] Nicol David (MAS) bt [4] Omneya Abdel Kawy (EGY) 11-5, 11-8, 11-6 (30m)

Nicol David Wins Record-Equalling Fifth World Crown In Egypt

Malaysia's Nicol David won a record-equalling fifth World Open squash title in Egypt when she beat local hope Omneya Abdel Kawy in straight games in the final of the \$147,000 Soho Square Women's World Open in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Soho Square at Sharm El Sheikh.

Abdel Kawy, the fourth seed from Cairo who became the first Egyptian ever to reach the world final, was unable to get a foothold in the match until the second game, which she led 3-0 and 6-3.

But David was unruffled, and stepped up the pace to take the game. And the third was soon effectively decided with David taking leads of 3-1 and 7-2 before closing out the match 11-5, 11-8, 11-6 after 30 minutes.

"My focus was strong throughout the tournament," said David after the successful defence of the title in which she did not drop a single game. "I really wanted this. I didn't want to let it slip."

Nicol David became the dominant force in women's world squash shortly after the retirement of Sarah Fitz-Gerald, the distinguished Australian who first notched up a fifth World Open title in 2002.

"It's amazing that I can do something that Sarah has done, because she's such a great player," concluded the new champion – now the winner of 48 WISPA World Tour titles from 63 final appearances.

Commonwealth Games

Led by 19 players from the men's and women's world top 20 rankings, with representation from 27 countries, the championships field was truly world-class - with England emerging triumphant in the medals table, followed by Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia.



"It's definitely the biggest moment of my career," said England's world number two Nick Matthew after winning his second gold medal in Delhi - his first leading an English clean sweep of all three men's singles medals. Australia's Kasey Brown went home with three medals (one gold and two bronze), while New Zealander Joelle King became her country's most successful athlete, and clinched the chance to carry the Kiwi flag at the Closing Ceremony, after unexpected gold in the Women's Doubles and silver in the Mixed.

The event was staged in the purpose-built 11-court Siri Fort Complex - which featured a spectacular all-glass showcourt surrounded by seating for more than 3,000 spectators.

"The crowds overall were sensational - most players agreeing that they had never experienced anything like it anywhere else in the world," said WSF CEO Andrew Shelley.

"The exuberance of the spectators as Nicol David paraded the Malaysian flag around the showcourt after her singles gold medal triumph will remain with me forever.

"We attracted visits from some extremely distinguished guests of the Delhi hosts, including IOC President Jacques Rogge; Prince Albert of Monaco; and HRH Prince Edward, the Earl of Wessex (right)," added Shelley. "All expressed their enthusiasm for what they saw. Also present was WSF Patron HRH Tunku Imran from Malaysia who expressed himself absolutely delighted to be able to present women's winner Malaysian Nicol David with her gold medal!



CENTRES ON THE WAY UP

Here are a few projects currently taking shape by WSF Accredited companies:

One of the world largest squash facilities is currently under construction in New Cairo. The Amr Shabana Black Ball Academy, when completed in August 2011, will have 16 McWil Courtwall singles courts, one softball doubles court, and three glass courts – two three-sided and one all-glass court. This squash academy will be the home of Amr Shabana`s squash school, and a central focus of Egypt's squash activities.

ASB, builders of the ten courts plus all-glass singles / doubles courts at Siri Fort, Delhi for the Commonwealth Games (below) are constructing five ASB System 100 courts with 2 movable side walls

and a new Show Glass Court in Doha, Qatar. They are located at the Aspire Academy for Sports Excellence, one of the world's biggest sports centres, whose mission is to "develop exceptional sport champions who are highly educated leaders and help individuals realize healthy active sporting lifestyles."

Meanwhile in UK, St. George's Hill Lawn Tennis and Squash Club chose McWil Courtwall to develop a permanent all-glass court, with a fully electronic moveable glass side wall (above). The Club wanted to have a centre court hosting up to 200 spectators for tournaments, with the ability to convert the glass court from singles to doubles dimensions within few minutes.



Photo: SquashPics

Andrew Shelley
Chief Executive
World Squash Federation
Mobile: +44 (0) 7824 706437
Tel (office): +44 (0) 1424 447 440
Email: andrew@worldsquash.org

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25 Russell Street, Hastings, East Sussex UK TN324 1QU
Tel: +44 1424 447440 Fax: +44 1424 430737
Website: worldsquash.org