

Squash in Scotland Board Update (for the use of Regional Committees / Directors)

Following the meeting held on 10th May 2021

Introduction:

The Scottish Squash Board meeting of 10th May was held over Teams, given the current, and continuing inability to meet in person. Jennifer McCartney, the new Tayside & Fife Regional Director was welcomed, and Mark Potter's resignation due to personal reasons was noted, the Board thanking Mark for his contribution.

Finance & Commercial Committee:

The draft year-end financial position is coming in at circa £15k deficit – close to the position previously agreed by the Board of Directors. Although income is significantly down, most of the associated expenditure is also down for the period 2020-21. The overall impact is on the reserves which will move to the bottom of the allowed range.

However, there is a commitment to replenish the reserves over the coming years, and Scottish Squash is preparing an application to the **sportscotland** administered SGB Covid Recovery Fund, to hopefully secure additional financial resources to support the recovery of the sport across Scotland. The revised budget for the new year (2021-22) shows a circa £5k projected surplus.

A lot of work is ongoing looking for sponsorship, given a wide variety of partnership opportunities with Scottish Squash. A strong focus remains on securing a title sponsor for the European Masters Championship due to be held in Edinburgh in 2022, and on the pursuit of a second major and long term partner to support long term plans and other major events.

HR, Risk & Compliance Committee

The major risks remained around income and membership, and the Board will continue to assess membership income and a focus on its recovery.

Given the move of Dave Fallon to Athletics, the Committee had also supported the recent changes and recruitment process for the team. This has resulted in Allan McKay being appointed to Director of Development, Kevin Moran to Coaching and Competitions Manager and Cara Shearer to a full-time Development Manager role focusing on women and girls. We now seek a second (part-time) Development Manager with a focus on young people/programmes. With Kevin moving out of the senior performance role for players pathway, this leaves an opportunity for Kylie's role to expand.

Clubs and Governance:

The Diversity & Inclusion Steering Group were delighted to report that Scottish Squash has successfully achieved the Intermediate Level of the Equality Standard for Sport. This is an outstanding piece of work, and while it is *only* a certification, it recognises the hard work of the development team and the sport in general in improving diversity and inclusivity.

It was confirmed that the consultation stage of the proposed membership restructure had been completed with all regions and clubs now having been offered a bespoke consultation to discuss the resulting impact on their region/club. The uptake was high and the level of support, to move in the direction of the proposed new structure, was overwhelming. A full review of the consultation

process and an overview of the proposed next steps will be presented to the Membership Working Group, and then the Board of Directors, in due course.

A major priority has been to continue to work with clubs and facilities, through the Club Support Forum and other communication channels, to support them with their preparations for a return. Particular focus has been drawn to the **sportscotland's** 'Getting your facilities fit for sport' and 'Getting your coaches ready for sport' resources as well as the SGBs 'Preparing for a return to squash' resources. The Club Support Forum will remain in place as a tool to connect, communicate and facilitate club to club discussions moving forward and beyond the pandemic. A schedule for regular forum calls and a process for gathering suitable content is being prepared.

The success of the mascot competition, in both its reach in attracting interest from new audiences and with the final submission of 234 entries, was noted.

Glasgow West End squash newbie Callum Smith won the competition which involved asking kids (under-18) to create a mascot, with the winning drawing inspiring Scotland's official new squash mascot. Callum came out on top with his mascot 'Vollee'. Vollee will be officially showcased at the 2021 Springfield Scottish Squash Open, taking place at Inverness Tennis and Squash Club from the 22-26 September. Callum said: "The Scottish Open is going to be staged in the Highlands near Loch Ness so I decided to make Vollee a child of the Loch Ness Monster".



Competitions and Players

Some doubles training had resumed over the last week at Scotstoun Leisure Centre following their re-opening, with the new doubles coach David Pearson in attendance. Scotstoun had worked hard to support the return to training plan and this was vital given their availability of doubles facilities. Early feedback was that it had been a really successful few days, with a great deal of improvement noted and a positive mood across the camp.

The need to review the Commonwealth Games selection criteria in light of the postponement of the World Doubles Championship was also highlighted.

The Springfield Scottish Squash Open is still planned to be held in Inverness between 22nd-26th September 2021. It was confirmed that we're still waiting to hear the outcome of the funding application to support enhanced streaming provision of the event.

The European Masters Championship remains on the calendar for 2022, to be held in Edinburgh.

It was also confirmed that early conversations were ongoing regarding the International Islands Games being hosted by Orkney; with Scottish Squash keen to ensure that any involvement can be connected to a legacy programme to support the continued growth of squash across Orkney and the other islands.

An ongoing priority was to continue to support players by putting on more competitive opportunities as the return to play gathers pace. It was noted that there are more events starting to re-appear on the calendar, but there remains considerable work and time required to get approval to run events in line with current government legislation.

Young players (U18) were seeing a successful return to playing through the BounceBack events, with both ESC and Newlands having already held fully subscribed and well received events.

The first two online coaching level 1 coaching courses are underway and are progressing well.