

Getting Started Hosting Sanctioned Competitions

The competition structure in Scotland provides flexibility and accessibility for organisers who are new to the process, with a key focus on increased participation in our sport.

What are sanctioned competitions?

All competitions officially sanctioned by the national governing body (NGB), featuring on the national competitions calendar and contributing to national development statistics.

From the 2026-27 season, Scottish Squash's previous sanctioning system – Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum – has been replaced by a new three-stage competition pathway: **START**, **PLAY** and **PERFORM**. The new structure is designed to bring greater clarity, inclusivity and purpose to the national calendar, helping players identify the right events for their level.

Which players are competing at which stage?

Stage 1 – START | New juniors taking their first steps in competition. Focus on fun, using the right ball and beginner-friendly formats, ensuring a great experience on court. START events are designed to celebrate every milestone along the way.

Stage 2 – PLAY | Club players seeking fun, varied competition against others of a similar ability. Social squash, exercise and the chance to compete outside your home club; improve and enjoy the game in a relaxed environment.

Stage 3 – PERFORM | Competitive players looking to challenge themselves and measure their game at a higher level, at tournaments carrying greater prestige and prizes. Events are linked to representative selection criteria points systems.

SporthyHQ

The preferred tournament software used in Scotland for running competitions is SporthyHQ. Organisers will need to be an administrator of a club or region to set up a competition. Hosting on SporthyHQ provides consistency in the competition pathway for players.

Which level of competition should I host?

Clubs new to hosting competitions are encouraged to host **START** and **PLAY** events, or a **START/PLAY Hybrid** event. These are the perfect entry point for organisers and players who are new to competitions.

START

If you are looking to support a network of junior players in your area, consider a START event to give players a fun challenge against other young players; it might be their first experience of competition.

- Ensure different ball types are available to support with grouping players appropriately; it is not recommended to group by age.
- Celebrate and reward each achievement—for instance, most improved players, best rallies and best effort—allowing players to build confidence.
- Create a team feel and relaxed atmosphere, with no pressure on results. Consider combining the day with other social activities at the club.
- Consider custom rules, mini-teams and flexibility to give the players the best possible experience on court.

PLAY

PLAY sanctioned events are the most common sanctioned events, targeted at adults (and possibly some experienced juniors). PLAY events can be any format, but are typically graded by organisers to ensure entrants compete against others of a similar standard.

- Ensure players know which ball(s) will be available, or if one ball is designated for the whole event.
- Consider using SquashLevels to group players appropriately, or using a handicap system if you have only one draw.
- Consider combining with coaching sessions or workshops to give players opportunities for improvement; celebrate their success.
- Consider a series or tour format and build your event profile; build a community.

START/PLAY Hybrid

These combined events are designed to welcome all abilities, thereby including beginners who may need flexibility with balls or formats. The tournament sign-up page should feature at least one grade designated as START, i.e. the right one to be entering for players at the START stage of the pathway.

- Be transparent on your tournament page with guidance on expected standards and which balls will be available.
- Provide information about any differences in format between the START and PLAY events.
- Provide contact information for players unsure which event to enter.

What other competitions can I host?

PERFORM

PERFORM events require a pre-season application for hosting, typically in May-June each year. This stage incorporates Junior and Senior Gold events, Masters Regionals, the Scottish National Championships and the Scottish Squash Cup.

If you have hosted other events at your club and are familiar with SportyHQ, consider working with your club to submit an application.

- Masters Regional events are organised by Regional Associations in collaboration with a host club. Speak to your [Regional Association](#) for more information.
- Junior Gold events count for points towards the Junior Order of Merit, attracting junior players targeting representative selection.
- Senior Gold events feature prize money (and often local sponsorship) and count for points towards the Senior Order of Merit, attracting senior players targeting representative selection.
- The five Scottish National Championships (Junior, U23, Senior, Masters, Racketball) are Scotland's most prestigious domestic competitions, at which a range of national titles are competed for.
- If your club chooses to enter the Scottish Squash Cup, you will have the option to submit a hosting bid for the annual Finals Day, featuring the top Men's and Women's teams in the country.

Further Information

[Competition Structure](#) • [Hosting Support & Resources](#)



TOGETHER FOR SQUASH IN SCOTLAND

Competition Hosting Benefits

PLAYERS

For Players

Skill Development

Players learn to adapt to different opponents, styles, and scenarios.

Motivation & Engagement

Competition adds excitement and purpose to training by giving players goals to strive for.

Character Building

Teaches important life lessons such as perseverance, discipline, humility in victory, and grace in defeat.

Social Opportunity

Builds friendships and a sense of belonging within a team.

Pathway to Progression

Competition allows coaches to assess development and identify talent.
Provides stepping stones for players aspiring to higher levels.

Fun & Enjoyment

When framed positively, competition is simply fun - the excitement of competing, hitting winners, grinding out a tough point.

CLUBS

For Clubs

Community Engagement & Visibility

Raises the club's profile locally by showcasing its facilities, coaching, and players.

Recruitment & Retention

Provides a platform to attract new players, parents, and volunteers.
Existing members feel more connected and proud of their club when it hosts successful events.
Creates a fun, welcoming environment that encourages players to stay.

Financial Benefits

Opportunity to generate revenue through entry fees, food/drink stalls, raffles etc.
Potential to attract sponsors who want visibility within the community.

Development Opportunities

Coaches and referees gain valuable experience in competitive environments.
Young volunteers (e.g., older players) can get involved in organising, officiating, or event management.
Helps the club build capacity and leadership skills.