



## **Minutes from 2014 District President's Meeting.**

**Jet Park Hotel and Conference Centre  
Saturday 5 July 2014, 9.00am**

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### **Present**

**SNZ Board:** Tony Johnston (Chair), Linda Kenny, Tony Alexander, Greg McKeown, Matt Taylor, Steve Dunbar.

**Presidents:** Linda Matson (Northland), Tim Marshall (Auckland), Fran Hopkins (Waikato), Ash Brownrigg ( Bay of Plenty), Mike Willis (Eastern), Grant Smith (Central), Malcolm Thomas (Wellington), Stuart Camp (Canterbury), Doug Smart (Midlands), Neil McDonald (Otago), Russell Brocks (Southland).

**SNZ Staff:** Jim O'Grady.

**Observers:** Philip Vodanovich (Auckland), Warren Hall (Wellington).

**Apologies:** Ash Brownrigg and Mike Willis – lateness.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting held 5 July 2013 were taken as a true and correct record.

Moved: Grant Smith                      Seconded: Doug Smart                      Carried

There were no matters arising.

### **Introduction**

Tony Johnston, Chair SNZ, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Jim O'Grady provided an overview of SNZ and a dashboard of activity in the last twelve months.

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### **SNZ and District Rebrand**

Grant Smith gave a PowerPoint presentation on the rebranding project and implementation. Apart from Midlands, all districts had received their brand style guides and resources and were now using the brand consistently for all their regional programmes and activities. Grant reinforced the need to use the brand in accordance with the style guide requirements.

Philip Vodanovich asked if a club template incorporating the new logo could be developed. Stu Camp felt that for club signage the logo should be much larger.

It was suggested that the national team should have a name along similar lines to other national teams. Suggestions included- Racket Blacks, Squash Blacks, Black Nixs. SNZ to pursue this idea.

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### **Associate Membership and Privileges**

Jim O'Grady provided a summary of the proposed new hybrid SEM / GLL model and outlined some of the discussion that had taken place around associate membership and entitlements.

#### **Secondary Schools**

The meeting supported the criteria adopted for secondary schools players by SNZ.

- Players could not compete in SNZ national events
- A grading list fee of \$5.00 per player to be on the SNZ grading list.
- There was a discussion around secondary school player privileges. It was agreed that districts could decide whether they can play regional or club events and this would be reviewed at next year's meeting.

#### **Universities**

SNZ raised the possibility of reviving university clubs and suggested a discounted fee based on the grading list might apply to students and university staff to encourage the revival of university clubs. There was mixed reaction to this suggestion with Fran Hopkins, Waikato, suggesting that this would lead to many students leaving their current clubs. Others felt that the idea had merit but it was agreed that more work was required to establish the correct guidelines for a university affiliation policy.

#### **Commercial and Recreation Centres**

Currently commercial centres pay per player on the grading list and do not pay SEMs yet they are entitled to all the benefits that full member clubs enjoy. SNZ had proposed commercial centres should pay more for these privileges if they did not pay SEMs and a fee of \$90 had been suggested, but had also questioned whether commercial centres should have graded players at all.

It was recognised commercial centres were never likely to pay SEMs as they were commercial operations and would not entertain an affiliation model that could affect their profit.

There was mixed support for the idea of a higher fee with some concern that any fee above the existing level was unfair. There was support for the idea that commercial centres should not be able to get grading codes. It was agreed that the Board would give further consideration to this category of membership to clarify privileges and entitlements before the levies were set later in 2014.

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### **Club Development Workshop**

The Board of SNZ was seeking input into the annual planning process and had chosen club development as a key theme for 2015. The meeting broke into three work groups to discuss club development with the focus on –

- What do we want clubs to be?
- What does a successful club look like?
- How do we judge success?
- How can we help clubs manage themselves better?

After the workshop sessions each group reported back on their ideas for club development in 2015. Some common themes emerged from each group –

- Many clubs were tired, run down and had no money
- Hard to find and retain volunteers
- An age group that did not want to commit to traditional membership
- Finding the right person was the key to a successful club
- There are plenty of resources and tools already available
- Clubs could conduct a WOF
- Squash had plenty to offer but we don't promote ourselves well
- Need to create the right culture
- Clubs need good governance and good management
- Some clubs don't want help

From the discussion a number of ideas were proposed for the Board to consider.

- SNZ and districts need to work together on any club development plan
- A pilot club development programme involving a partnership between selected clubs, their district and SNZ could be trialled for a year
- SNZ provide the lead to get a dedicated resource to implement the programme
- All three partners would contribute resources to the programme
- Target clubs where there was real potential to make a difference
- Find the right person in the club to work with to initiate the programme
- Establish a hero club in each district to be a role model for success
- Run district club development workshops and seminars
- Introduce a squash loyalty card

It was agreed that Board would consider the ideas as part of the annual planning process.

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### **Implementation of the SEM / GLL Affiliation Model**

Greg McKeown outlined the new hybrid SEM / GLL model and explained the implementation process. SNZ would run a grading list July 31 to capture all graded players and clubs would be asked to submit an SEM return as at July 31. As this was three months earlier some clubs with a balance date between 1 August and 30 September would have to furnish the same return as 2013.

The amount of the SEM and GLL fee for 2015 was discussed but without the grading list and SEM data the figures could not be confirmed. SNZ affiliation revenue would increase by CPI and any growth, but no overall increase was proposed as a result of a change in the affiliation model. It was suggested that a cap of + or - 10% be imposed on the fee changes for individual clubs. The Board agreed to take this into consideration when modelling the fees for 2014/15.

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### **SNZ Annual Draft Plan 2015**

Jim O'Grady explained the newly adopted approach by the Board to the annual planning process so that budgets and operational plans could be developed and confirmed prior to the start of each financial year. Planning would commence in May / June with stakeholder discussions in July and draft plans progressing through August and September for adoption 1 October.

A draft annual plan had been circulated to the Presidents prior to the meeting for discussion. Several points were noted-

- There was a feeling that there was too much detail in the plan
- The plan should be more specific
- Many items were repeated or rolled over from previous years
- A report card or score card would be a good indicator of progress

### Connection

SNZ should have a specific marketing plan post CWG  
Suggested that 2015 be the Year of the Club  
Develop an overall marketing strategy for SNZ

### Clubs

Consider a club development resource in the annual plan  
Help and support clubs with fundraising  
Clubs receiving assistance should report back on their projects  
Districts should meet with every club at least once a year

### Pathways

Continue with the current High Performance programme and structure  
Continue to develop the national coaching framework and modules  
Continue to foster national events and increase participation

### Leadership

Review the structure of the national office  
Investigate the feasibility of a commercial manager  
Emphasis the value of collaboration between the districts and SNZ

A proposal was put forward for the second stage of Kiwi Squash. Tentatively called Squash Start the programme was initially aimed at beginners in the 13 – 19 age group but it became clear as the concept was being developed that it was equally applicable to adult beginners.

The programme would use Big Nix as the base resource and a number of coaching modules would be developed in conjunction with the programme. There was general support from the meeting for the proposal to proceed.

For the last three years SNZ has run a national roadshow and it was the feeling of the meeting that it was time for a change. Most felt that a series of district forums, with club development as the key theme, would be more beneficial and relevant.

Grant Smith spoke to idea of appointing a commercial manager for SNZ with a focus on developing partnerships and sponsorship opportunities. There are a number of potentially attractive properties which could be packaged and promoted to a potential commercial partner. The key was finding the right person or organisation to work with SNZ to realise these benefits. It was agreed the Board would investigate the concept with a view to incorporating such a role into the annual plan and budget for 2015.

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## **General Business**

### Calendar

A draft skeleton calendar had been circulated to districts prior to the meeting outlining the major national events for 2015. Broadly it was similar to 2014 with some changes incorporating district feedback –

- Masters and Superchamps National Finals swap dates
- Slightly smaller gaps between District and National Finals for Superchamps and Champion of Champions
- NZ hosting Oceania Junior Champs and Trans-Tasman Masters Test Series

Event rotation and hosting fees/payments begin in 2015. Event rotation is likely to result in additional travel/more remote locations for many events (relative to the recent past).

It was suggested the U23 Championships might be moved to an earlier date in the season, possibly April.

### Combined Grading List

The CGL had been introduced following consultation and approval at 2013 Presidents' meeting. It was aimed at lowering barriers to involvement and participation for women by enabling them to access whatever level of competition they desire.

Feedback so far mostly positive – aside from some negative experiences early on when tournaments used only mixed draws. The benefits/results of the Combined Grading List will not become fully apparent for another couple of years.

From January 2014 onwards, all juniors will have been able to play against either/both boys and girls. In five years, all juniors graduating to senior squash will be used to the idea of playing 'mixed' squash. As players of all ages get used to the idea, there should be fewer women leaving the game due to inability to access sufficiently close/competitive matches.

Linda Matson, Northland, had prepared a discussion paper on the CGL and was concerned that the changes were detrimental to women's squash. She felt that the number of women playing in tournaments and other events was declining because they did not want to lose points when playing men and therefore they did not enter these events.

She noted the lack of A Grade women entering tournaments and felt the CGL might be having an adverse effect on the number of women in the higher grades.

Mike Willis, Eastern, said that numbers participating in their events had increased since the introduction of the CGL. The balance seemed about right for Eastern and having a CGL simply made it easier to run mixed competitions such as interclub.

After a vigorous discussion it was suggested that a half grade adjustment might correct any perceived imbalance that existed. It was agreed SNZ would carry out a review of the CGL and seek feedback from players, clubs and districts before taking any action.

Tony Johnston suggested that SNZ look at a new grading system based on three grades A, B and C with four sub divisions in each grade. He felt that a C4 grade was preferable to F grade. It was left to the presidents to give this future consideration.

### Bounceback Insurance Scheme

Tony Johnston provided an update on the Bounceback insurance scheme. 39 clubs had signed to date and once the target of 50 had been achieved Stage 2 could be activated. Crombie Lockwood were actively pursuing those clubs who had expressed an interest but had not signed up as yet.

### SNZ AGM 2013

The 2014 annual general meeting of Squash New Zealand would be held in Auckland.

- Venue: Jet Park Inn, Auckland
- Conference: Friday November 28 (full day)
- AGM: Saturday November 29 (9.00 – 12.00)

Go for Gold

SNZ had launched a national club membership campaign to coincide with the Commonwealth Games. Matt Taylor had prepared all the material for the campaign at no cost and this had been sent to every club and was available through a dedicated page on the SNZ website. Feedback had been encouraging with a number of clubs indicating they had signed up new members in response to the campaign.

It was suggested SNZ could email ex club members from the iSquash database.

WMG 2017

Philip Vodanovich reported on the successful bid by squash to be included in the World Masters games to be held in Auckland, April 2017. 28 sports were confirmed for the programme and with more than 25,000 competitors expected it would be the largest sporting event ever seen in NZ.

Dunlop Blue Spot Ball

Dunlop had supplied each district 2 dozen blue balls to trial in response to growing sales of the ball in NZ. Both Dunlop and SNZ were keen to see how the balls were used and gauge the reaction to the blue ball.

Stu Camp noted that other Dunlop balls seemed to be breaking more frequently and did not last as long. Any concerns should be addressed to the supplier or Dunlop NZ.

Other

Grant Smith reported on a number of matters –

The Christchurch City Council had submitted a bid to host the World Junior Women's Championships in Christchurch in 2017.

The three event PSA series in 2014 had been very successful and it was hoped to include a WSA event in 2015. As well the current host venues were looking to increase the status and prize money for their events in 2015. A business case would be submitted to SNZ for support in 2015.

The 2015 Oceania Junior Championships would be held in NZ and be part of the WSF World Junior Series.

Samoa would be the host nation for the 2015 Youth Commonwealth Games and NZ had submitted an expression of interest to send a team to the event.

Tony Johnston thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 4.05pm.

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Chairperson  
Squash New Zealand

Date

**Minutes of the Special General Meeting held July 5, 2014.**

Tony Johnston formally convened the Special General Meeting and confirmed the roll call.

**Present:** Linda Matson (Northland), Tim Marshall (Auckland), Fran Hopkins (Waikato), Ash Brownrigg ( Bay of Plenty), Mike Willis (Eastern), Grant Smith (Central), Malcolm Thomas (Wellington), Stuart Camp (Canterbury), Doug Smart (Midlands), Neil McDonald (Otago), Russell Brocks (Southland).

**Apologies:** There were no apologies.

**Items of Business:** That the changes to the constitution of New Zealand Squash Incorporated as circulated to district presidents on the 5 June 2014 be approved.

Moved: Greg McKeown      Seconded: Stu Camp

**Discussion:** Warren hall sought clarification on the requirement in the annual membership return for email addresses. It was agreed that if they were not available SNZ would accept the membership return accordingly.

Greg McKeown proposed a small amendment to rule 14.7.to read - The Board of Squash New Zealand must meet a minimum of six (6) times a year.

Moved: Greg McKeown      Seconded: Grant Smith      Carried

There being no further discussion Tony Johnston put the motion which was carried unanimously. The Special General Meeting was closed at 1.20pm.

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Chairperson  
Squash New Zealand

Date