

Instant Update

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To: ALL WSF MEMBER NATIONAL FEDERATIONS

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

2009 WSF AGM & Conference, Kuala Lumpur

Membership

44 Members were represented, of which **Amar Simha** from Nepal, and **Omer Elkhair Ibrahim** from Sudan, were first time attendees. **Serbia** was admitted as a new Full Member of the WSF.

Olympic Bid 2009

The **Squash 2016** campaign was reviewed at the conference which preceded the AGM, and presentations made re future campaigns. **HRH Prince Tunku Imran**, WSF Patron, gave an insiders' view as an IOC Member and encouraged WSF to keep on trying. There were presentations from **Alan Thatcher**, the driving force behind **World Squash for 2016 Day** in May, entitled 'Vision for Squash 2020'; and from Olympic Bid Manager **Scott Garrett** on his experience of the bid and the way forward for Squash. Both of these papers are available to Members on the WSF website (access details for WSF Members section are available from Lorraine or Jazz in the office).

Pierre Ducrey, the IOC's Head of Sports Operations and IF Relations, attended the AGM and briefed the delegates on the process which led to the announcement of the IOC decision in August. He acknowledged that Squash had a range of strengths, and that a strong link had been established between the IOC and the WSF. After taking a variety of questions from the floor, Ducrey urged the sport to 'keep pushing'.

Athletes' Commission

There was overwhelming support for the establishment of an **Athletes' Commission** – an initiative promoted by the IOC - comprising four members appointed by the **PSA** and four by **WISPA**, plus one member appointed by the WSF. It was also agreed that nominees of the two player bodies, together with the Athletes' Commission Chairperson **Sarah Fitz-Gerald**, would join the WSF Executive Committee.

Anti-Doping

WSF Medical Committee Director **Dr Anne Smith** gave Members an update on the WADA anti-doping regulations. A new WADA Prohibited list will take effect from 1 January 2010. There are some very important changes here – which all Members will have to understand, and in many cases implement, as some relate to Administrators, Managers and Coaches. See the full presentation on the WSF website.

Racketball

In the USA, racquetball has been played for very many years on a different sized court. But a version of the game - which is essentially squash with a larger, bouncier ball and a smaller, larger-headed racket - can also be played on the international sized squash court. This has proven to be increasingly popular, especially as a starter for squash and to keep more mature players in the game as it is less stressful on knees and hips whilst still providing an excellent workout. **England Squash** and **Squash Australia** have both embraced Racketball and are encouraging it amongst their clubs and centres with considerable success. These two Federations are trying to bring together their playing rules for Racketball and WSF suggests that all Members take a look at promoting this game as a useful way of increasing court utilisation. See the presentations made by England and Australia on our website.

Championships

Mrs **Jackie Robinson** (England) is the new Director of the WSF Championships Committee. Currently President of England Squash, Jackie has a great deal of experience in this area and has been a committee member and technical delegate at WSF Championships for many years. The AGM awarded the **2011 Men's World Team Championship** to **Germany** (in Paderborn); the **2011 Women's World Junior Team & Individual Championships** to **Egypt**; the **2011 Men's World Junior Individual Championship** to **Belgium**; the **2012 World Junior Championships** (both Individuals and the Men's Junior team event) to **South Korea**; and the **2012 World Masters Championships** to **England**.

The entry deadline for the **2010 Women's World Team Championship** in New Zealand is confirmed as 27 February, while the closing date for entries for the **2010 Men's Junior Championships** in Quito, Ecuador, has been extended until 8 January 2010. Entry forms for the **2010 Women's Junior Individual Championship** will come in the New Year. The website for the **2010 World Masters** in Germany is fully up-and-running with early entries offering quite a saving on the entry fee.

Olympic Games and Major Games

Former WSF President **Susie Simcock** has retired after many years as Director of this committee - and wished her successors well. **George Mieras**, with Deputy Director **Jacques Fontaine** (France), has taken over this role. Susie's last representation for WSF was a trip to Mexico just before the AGM to press – which she did successfully - for squash to be included in the next **Pan-American Games**. This is great news, and we wish Susie well in her retirement.

AGM Award

World Squash Day founder **Alan Thatcher** was awarded the WSF plaque for his outstanding contribution to squash, in particular the work on WSD.

2010 AGM

This will be in **Cochin**, in Kerela State in India, immediately after the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi.

WSF Olympic Meeting Hosted by IOC President Jacques Rogge

Shortly after the AGM, President **Ramachandran** was invited to meet IOC President **Jacques Rogge** in Lausanne to discuss Squash's position on becoming an Olympic medal sport. Dr Rogge was accompanied by **Christophe Dubi**, Head of the IOC Sports Programme Commission, while the WSF was also represented by Secretary General **George Mieras**. Mr Ramachandran spoke plainly about the acute sense of disappointment felt by the entire Squash community at the outcome of the 2009 bid – but expressed the sport's desire to put that in the past and move forward, to seek advice from the IOC as to what might be needed and foster the good relations built up still further. Dr Rogge responded positively to the principle and invited Dubi to give Squash an idea of areas in which the sport's case might be strengthened.

"We received some very clear advice relating in particular to development of the game worldwide and broadcasting," said the WSF President later. "An offer of help by the IOC was made, and gratefully accepted, and ManCom will immediately set about planning our strategy for these next years - in association, of course, with PSA and WISPA, building on the vital unity established during the 2009 campaign."

East Asian Games

Squash made its debut in the 2009 Games in Hong Kong – and the hosts made a clean sweep of the medals, winning all seven golds available! Later, the HK Squash Team was extremely honoured to receive a special greeting from **Donald Tsang**, the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region at a special Celebration Luncheon. "Having witnessed Squash in its debut in the East Asian Games, Hong Kong Squash can be doubly proud," said WSF Vice President **Heather Deayton**. "Firstly for collecting Gold Medals in all seven categories and secondly for their organising committee which put together an extremely exciting and well-run eight days of competition.

WSF Marketing Committee

WSF ManCom has revitalised the WSF Marketing Committee, which is now the main responsibility of Vice-President **Frank van Loon**, with **Volker Bernardi** from Germany as Director. The committee is now progressing membership and contacts and we wish them success in their very important endeavours – particularly as it is vital that the WSF has funding already in place by the time of the 2013 Olympic Bid presentation.

Tour News

Ramy Ashour survived a marathon 110-minute final (the longest match of his career) against Englishman **Nick Matthew** at this month's **Saudi International** to not only win one of the biggest **PSA World Tour** events of the year, but also to be sure of becoming world number one for the first time in January – the third Egyptian to hold the title in 14 months! New York-based **Julian Illingworth**, the world No28 and the highest-ranked US player of all-time, has been elected to the board of the PSA ... Malaysia's **Nicol David**, women's world number one since August 2006, picked up the **WISPA Player of the Year Award** for the fifth time in a row at the **World Squash Awards** in London in November, while Egypt's **Karim Darwish**, who topped the PSA world rankings for all but one month of 2009, received the **PSA Player of the Year Award**. A special **Services to Squash** award was presented to WSF Seedings Panel Director and WISPA CEO **Andrew Shelley** ... After signing an agreement with digital specialists **Perform** in October, PSA launched its new internet TV streaming service www.psasquashtv.com at the Saudi International, providing free coverage of the event from quarter-finals.