

REPORT TO THE 29th A.G.M OF THE BARBADOS SQUASH RACKETS ASSOCIATION (BSRA) - FOR THE PERIOD MAY 21, 2008 TO MAY 20, 2009.

This report is submitted on behalf of the Council of the BSRA to the membership and covers a period of twelve months since the last Annual General Meeting.

ADMINISTRATION

Affiliation

The BSRA is recognized as a National Sports Federation by the Barbados Olympic Association Inc. (BOA) and the National Sports Council (NSC). The BSRA is also affiliated to the World Squash Federation (WSF), the Federacion Panamericana de Squash (FPS) and the Caribbean Area Squash Association (CASA).

BSRA Council

At the 28th AGM the following members were elected: Mr. Craig Archer – President; Mr. Orson Simpson - Senior Vice President; Mr. Norman Rice - Junior Vice President; Mr. Shawn Simpson - Treasurer; Mr. Alex McDonald - Secretary; Ms. Yvonne Parris - Assistant Secretary; as well as the following four Council Members: Mr. Tony Mackenzie, Mr. Joe Steinbok, Mr. Richard Walcott and Mr. Marlon White. Mr. Steinbok resigned from Council in February 2009 and was replaced by Mr. Dean Straker. Mr. Walcott resigned from Council in March 2009 and was replaced by Mr. Sanjay Amin. The Council met on seven occasions during the period under review, all in the Barbados Olympic Centre.

Sub-Committees

The seven appointed BSRA sub-committees and their conveners were as follows: Disciplinary (Norman Rice), Fund Raising (Tisha Truss / Shawn Simpson), Junior Development (Joe Steinbok and then Tony Mackenzie), Public Relations and Marketing (Alex McDonald), Selection and Ranking (Craig Archer), Squash Development (Orson Simpson), Tournament (Craig Archer / Tony Mackenzie). All sub-committee members are thanked for their various contributions to the performance of these committees.

Membership

There has been no significant change in the BSRA's membership base. There are three affiliated clubs: Barbados Defence Force (BDF), Barbados Squash Club (BSC) and Pleasant Place Squash Club (PP), and approximately 75 ordinary and 50 junior (i.e. under-19) paid up members. There are approximately 200 – 250 persons who play socially. Mr. Rudy Goodridge remains the only Honorary Life Member of the Association.

SPORTS POSITIONS HELD, AWARDS AND APPOINTMENTS

Barbados Olympic Association Inc. (BOA)

Craig Archer is currently a Director of the BOA. His term of office will end in 2012, after the summer Olympic Games in London, England.

World Squash Federation (WSF)

Craig Archer is a member of the Technical Committee of the WSF which is chaired by Chris Herridge of England. Most of the work of this committee is carried out via e-mail, but Craig Archer attended one meeting of this committee that was held shortly after the WSF AGM in Manchester, England on October 18, 2008. The current two-year term of this committee will end in October 2010.

Caribbean Area Squash Association (CASA)

Craig Archer was re-elected to the position of 7th Officer of CASA at the beginning of 2008. This fifth consecutive two-year term of office will end in August 2009. The other CASA Officers are as follows:

President – Mr. Roger Salandy; Vice President – Mrs. Nicole Currie; Secretary – Mrs. Michele Cornilliac; Treasurer – Mr. Julian Henry [all T&T]; 5th Officer – Ms. Karen Anderson [Jamaica]; 6th Officer – Mr. Ian Patrick [Cayman].

INTERNATIONAL OR MAJOR MEETINGS ATTENDED

Caribbean Area Squash Association (CASA)

There was no General Meeting of CASA in August, 2007 due to the passage of Hurricane Dean through the Caribbean which caused the Caribbean Squash Championships in Jamaica to be abandoned. The next CASA AGM will be held in Trinidad in August 2009.

Federacion Panamericana de Squash (FPS)

The BSRA was represented at the 19th Annual General Meeting of the FPS held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on July 18, 2007 but did not attend the 20th AGM held during the Pan American Squash Championships in Cuenca, Ecuador in June, 2008. The next FPS AGM will be held during the Pan American Squash Championships later this year, if one is held. Both the primary and the back-up host associations (i.e. either Argentina or El Salvador) have indicated recently they are not able to host these Championships this year.

World Squash Federation (WSF)

Craig Archer represented the BSRA at the 38th Annual General Meeting and Conference of the WSF held in Manchester, England from October 16 – 18, 2008. This was the seventh WSF AGM that the BSRA has attended. The major decision taken at that AGM was agreeing to unify the scoring system for the game of squash across world to be Point-a-Rally to 11 (PAR-11). This change went into effect from April 1, 2009. The next WSF AGM and Conference will be held in Subang Jaya, Malaysia from November 13 -14, 2009.

Barbados Olympic Association (BOA)

Orson Simpson and Norman Rice represented the BSRA at the Annual General Meeting of the BOA held at the Sherbourne Conference Centre on November 28, 2008. Craig Archer also attended in his own right and was re-elected as a BOA Director for a third four-year term.

National Sports Council (NSC)

Both Craig Archer and Orson Simpson attended the NSC's 26th Annual National Sports Awards Ceremony held on February 7, 2009.

FINANCE

Sponsorship

The lifeblood of this Association continues to be the generous support of our loyal sponsors. Sponsorship and grants from the **Barbados Olympic Association Inc.** was in excess of \$34,000 in 2008 and enabled our continued staging of domestic competitions and events, as well as overseas tours and the other work of this Association. The BSRA continues to be exceedingly grateful for assistance given by the BOA. Other tournament sponsors such as: **Sagicor General Insurance Company, River Bay Trading Company, Rotherley Construction Inc., Guardian General Insurance Co.** as well as the **National Sports Council** are all thanked for their continued and loyal support of the tournaments on the local squash calendar. All of these competitions were held at the **Barbados Squash Club** and the management of the BSC is once again thanked for its continuing support of squash over the years. As usual a special word of thanks goes out to **Mr. Tony Roach**, the long serving Club attendant, who is always so helpful during our events there.

Fund Raising

As you will see from the Treasurer's report which will be presented shortly, the BSRA realized a deficit of over \$35,000 in 2008, which is more than a three fold increase of the deficit of approx. \$10,400 in 2007. This deficit was financed from the BSRA's reserves but is unsustainable and the trend must be reversed in the current year otherwise the BSRA's cash flow position will be affected during 2009. Last year the BSRA's income fell, due to reductions in grants from the BOA and the NSC, and at the same time our expenses grew by almost 8%. There was unfortunately not enough effort made in the fund raising arena and this is a trend that will need to be addressed immediately. Council has discussed the matter at its last meeting and it is hoped that after this AGM the Fund Raising Committee will energetically take up the challenge of raising funds to help pay for the Association's various projects.

The cost of the BSRA's tours this year will not be as large as in recent years since we will be hosting the 27th annual **Junior Caribbean Squash Championships** (July 10 - 19, 2009) and the senior **Caribbean Squash Championships** will be held in August in Trinidad. It is not altogether clear where the 8th annual **Pan American Junior Squash Championships** will be held since it was to be in Mexico, but was cancelled due to the swine flu problem there. As mentioned earlier an alternate venue for the senior **Pan American Squash Championships** has not been confirmed yet.

COMPETITIONS / TOURNAMENTS

Regional Competitions

In November 2008, **Cheri-Ann Parris** represented Barbados in the Ladies Individuals at the 7th Junior Pan American Squash Championships held in Peru.

Caribbean Competitions

The highlight of the year in review was the performance of the Barbados senior squash team at the biennial Southern Caribbean Squash Championships in August, 2008 in Guyana. In the ladies final the #2 seed, **Karen Meakins**, was defeated in four games by Nicolette Fernandes (Guyana). **Cheri-Ann Parris** defeated the **Lilianna White** to finish third.

On the men's side **Shawn Simpson** defeated Trinidadian, Colin Ramasra, 3-0 in the final to claim his first ever overseas Individual title, **Bryant Cumberbatch** also defeated James Bentick (OECS) in four games to finish third. Congratulations to all concerned!

In the team competition that followed, the Barbados Men's and Ladies' teams both won their respective team championships but the depleted Veteran's team could only finish third and hence we were pipped by Guyana in the Overall Team Championships and had to settle for silver. The entire team of fourteen players and one official (i.e. Manager, Norman Rice) are congratulated for their excellent performances. Hopefully this is a sign of things to come in Trinidad in August 2009.

At the 26th **Junior Caribbean Squash Championships** held a month earlier in Bermuda in July 2008, under the guidance of new team manager, **Tony Mackenzie** and junior coach, **Marlon White**, the Barbados junior team placed fifth in the girl's and seventh in the boy's team events. In the individuals, Barbados came away with one silver medal with **Cheri-Ann Parris** losing in the GU-19 final to a Trinidadian player based in the UK.

Domestic Competitions

In the period under review there were seven tournaments held in Barbados, most of which were BSRA organized. Details of these tournaments can be found on our website (www.squashbarbados.org)

Thus far this year, the **Sagicor General Junior National Championships** were held in April. The BSRA received the same sponsorship as last year from our loyal sponsor who has sponsored this event since 1979! Details of this tournament are available on the BSRA's web-site.

The recent 35th annual **National Squash Championships** were sponsored for the twelfth year by the BOA via its domestic competition grant. The age group champions were: Ladies over-35 Karen Meakins; Ladies over-40 Sonia Perkins; Men: Mark Sealy (over-40); Andrew Nunes (over-45); Nigel Griffith (over-50); David Foster (over-55). The Open Individuals will commence next week and will be played from May 25th – 30th.

Sincere thanks go out to the members of the Tournament Committee, especially the new Convener, Tony Mackenzie, and all the other volunteers, who helped run these various BSRA tournaments throughout the year.

SEEDING

As a result of all the above activity the top ten seeded players for 2008 are as follows:

Men: (1) Shawn Simpson (2) Gavin Cumberbatch (3) Mark Sealy (4) Bryant Cumberbatch (5) Nigel Griffith (6) Fabian Goodridge (7) Marlon White (8) Rhett Cumberbatch (9) Mark Gilkes (10) Leon Truss.

Ladies: (1) Karen Meakins (2) Cheri-Ann Parris (3) Lilianna White (4) Nadia McCarthy (5) Carla Jackson (6) Ayoni Bradshaw (7) Lea Solomon (8) Cilla Seale (9) Tanya Marshall (10) Zoe Lisk.

In addition, the confirmed top ten seeded players for 2007 were as follows:

Men: (1) Shawn Simpson (2) Gavin Cumberbatch (3) Mark Sealy (4) Fabian Goodridge (5) Nigel Griffith (6) Marlon White (7) Bryant Cumberbatch (8) Alex Garcia (9) Rhett Cumberbatch (10) Don Benn.

Ladies: (1) Karen Meakins (2=) Cheri-Ann Parris & Sonia Perkins (4) Lilianna White (5) Nadia McCarthy (6) Bo Harris (7) Carla Jackson (8) Ayoni Bradshaw (9) Elizabeth Johnson. (10) Rae (Muffin) Johnson.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Over the past year we have continued to receive reasonable coverage for local tournaments in both the print and electronic media. This coverage, however, is usually conditional on press releases being written and sent to the media houses since very few sports journalists in Barbados understand our sport. The new P.R. and Marketing Committee will need to work harder to spread the workload and make the game of squash more newsworthy, since that is the only way that the image of squash will improve. Members are once again reminded that much information about the Association, as well as full results of most local tournaments, can be found on our website www.squashbarbados.org

JUNIOR DEVELOPMENT

Both Karen Meakins and Marlon White continue to oversee the coaching aspect the Junior Development Programme (JDP) which takes place from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Saturday afternoons at the BSC. The challenge for the JDP now is to bring the level of administration up to par, since this area has been falling down over the past two or more years. Parents of juniors in training are invited to assist the BSRA and the JDP in this regard. In addition, all National level and former National level players are urged to offer to assist with a few sessions of the JDP, which runs for approximately ten consecutive weeks, three times a year. Between 30 and 40 juniors are being coached at present.

SQUASH DEVELOPMENT

Officiating Programme (Refereeing)

The **Caribbean Officiating Programme for Squash (COPS)** was not held in Barbados during the period under review. It is planned that during the Barbados Open in June another referee certification and assessment will be carried out by the two local assessors: Craig Archer and Orson Simpson. In total 52 persons from six countries have been certified over the past four years in this programme, including 11 at the B level, 13 at the C level and 28 at the D level. This Barbadian initiative has the blessing of CASA and has been hailed as a tremendous success at the Caribbean, Pan American and the World levels. The above two local B-1 referees (Craig Archer and Orson Simpson) are now qualified to certify and evaluate up to and including Level B. Four levels of certification are available in this programme:

- Level D - Has passed exam and is somewhat knowledgeable of rules. Can mark and referee lower level Inter-Club level matches.
- Level C - Has passed exam and has average knowledge of rules. Can referee lower levels of Inter-Club level matches (#2 to #5 string matches), and early rounds of National Championships.
- Level B - Has passed exam and has better than average level of knowledge. Capable of competently and confidently refereeing Inter-Club #1 string matches and the finals of any local tournament, including National Championships.
- Level A - Has passed exam and has high level of knowledge about rules. Capable of confidently refereeing at the CASA Championships and /or the FPS Pan American Squash Championships level.

A follow up course is planned to coincide with senior CASA in T&T in August. It is pleasing to report that four graduates of this COPS programme formed the officiating crew at the largest Ladies tournament ever held in the Caribbean (a US\$37,500 WISPA silver event), i.e. the Cayman Squash Open which was held from May 5-10th this year. Orson and Craig were joined by Karen Anderson (Jamaica) and Alwyn Callender (Guyana). By all accounts the referee team was very well received and all four team members have already been invited back for the 2010 event in April next year.

Coaching

The BSRA must try to secure the services of a full time Squash Technical Director for 18-24 months minimum. This need is urgent and must be addressed by the incoming Council within the next 3-4 months.

Facilities

The BSRA does not own any squash courts and continues to rely on the BSC to provide courts at a reasonable price in order to host all of its tournaments and events. The building of, or access to, new squash courts should occupy the attention of the incoming Council as a matter of urgency since the lack of courts is retarding further development of the game locally.

CHALLENGES

For yet another year too much work being undertaken by too few persons, both on and outside of Council. Members who offer themselves for positions on Council should carefully consider if they have the time to devote to the work of the BSRA before accepting a nomination for any position. If they do not have the time then it will not be unreasonable for them to decline to serve. **All members, especially current and former national players, are once again urged to offer to assist the BSRA whenever possible.** Although more could always be done, I am confident that members will agree that the BSRA enjoyed a reasonable year, on many fronts. I am therefore looking forward to the challenges of the year ahead!

Craig Archer

Craig Archer - President
2009/05/20