

# OFF THE BACK WALL



## Dates for your diary

JULY 25 - Tasmania Junior  
Pathway Training Camp  
(Launceston)

**(Compulsory for all Pathway  
Juniors)**

AUGUST 13-14 - Tasmanian  
Racquetball Open

AUGUST 27-28 -  
Kingborough Open

AUGUST 20-21 - State Junior  
Team Training Camp with **Zac  
Alexander** (Hobart)

**(Compulsory for all state  
team members)**

SEPTEMBER 5-15 - Australian  
Masters Squash  
Championships (Darwin)

SEPTEMBER 24-27 -  
Australian Junior Squash  
Championships individuals  
(Sydney)

**(Recommended for Pathway  
Juniors)**

SEPTEMBER 29-OCTOBER 2  
- Australian Junior Squash  
Championships Teams  
(Sydney)

**(Compulsory for state team  
members)**

## Club News



This issue we feature a short article on one of Tasmania's Clubs.

For those of you who have not visited, Devonport Squash Club is fortunate enough to host its Tuesday night pennant matches in an 8 court centre which includes two glass back courts; one with balcony viewing and the other a grandstand for spectators.

The Club's pennant is run by a hard working committee with a focus on juniors, with a junior line recently incorporated into their roster.

Junior coaching is conducted prior to the matches on Tuesday night under the guidance of the club's accredited coaches for juniors of all levels with ages ranging from 6 to 14.

Devonport is proud to have to have hosted many major events including the Tasmanian Open (PSA) bringing in a host of high-class international players to the centre.

Their yearly run Devonport Open has grown in numbers with many mainland players entering. This year's tournament was held in conjunction with the 2016 Tasmanian Open and attracted in excess of 100 players to the courts with comments made that next year's Open will no doubt be even bigger and better!



## Tasmania's Queen of Squash

This issue shines a spotlight on one of Tasmania's finest female players who fittingly deserves to be crowned the Queen Squash in Tasmania.

We dedicate this section to a young lady we all know so well, who has not only been a top-flight player in Tasmania but also a well-respected Australian Masters Player.

Sound familiar? I am writing of our very own Gaye Mitchell who has received yet another trophy to place with the many others sitting proudly in her trophy cabinet.

Gaye's playing career could best be described as starting with a bang at the age of 20 when she experienced a walloping, her opponent 'bagelling' her in three 9-0,9-0,9-0. Naturally this only spurred her on and before too long, whilst still in her 20's, she earned a well deserved selection to represent Tasmania in the last Australian Open Teams Competition, held in WA.

At the age of 35 Gaye began her Squash Masters journey and with her good friends Judy Fox, Sue Denman, and Geraldine Brown hit the road, touring to Geelong, Victoria where she won the Over 35 Open Women's Division.

With a young family then Gaye only managed to play in the Masters competitions occasionally.

Once she reached the the age of 45, however, she was able to rekindle her Masters career by winning 4 age group titles: over 45's,over 50's,over 55's and over 60's.

Gaye has been a regular member of the Australian Team to play in the over 35-60 Trans Tasman three-test series between Australia and New Zealand.

Asked what her highlight of her career has been and Gaye will no doubt tell you " Winning the World over 55 title in New Zealand in 2008".

Another great milestone by Gaye was competing in Hong Kong and finishing a well respected third in the over 60's, a huge achievement against such high quality Masters Squash Players.

Gaye currently holds the position of Secretary of the Tasmania Masters Squash Association and has done for many years working tirelessly in her role.

Gaye, all in Tasmania who have met you and seen you have marvelled at your skills on the court and we thank you for being such a proud Tasmanian Ambassador for Squash.



## *SQUASH FIT*

**SPEED.** The ability to move quickly in all directions is a key element of many sports, but it is particularly crucial in squash in regards to our ability to both get onto the ball to attack, and also to retrieve the ball in defence.

One of the main differences in speed specific to the game of squash as compared to a lot of other sports, is the relative distances covered by the player. It's approximately 11.5m from corner to corner across the diagonal of a squash court, so the furthest length a squash player will ever travel in a single direct movement in a game is only around 10m-considerably less than in many other sports such as football, rugby, or even tennis.

Taking data from elite sprinters however, it is suggested that it usually takes around at least double this distance to even approach our top speed-so in a game of squash, it's important then to make the distinction that the 'fast' player is rarely actually moving at their maximum pace, but is instead relying heavily on the related attributes of Acceleration (the rate of increase in velocity), Agility (ability to quickly and efficiently change direction), and Reaction (speed of response and initiation of movement).

These elements can all be addressed together in a properly structured squash-specific speed session. (Nisbet, 2015).

## *TRAINING PRINCIPLES*

One of the key things to remember when training speed for squash is to maintain the quality of the workload. Too often speed sessions are inadequately designed, and work/rest ratios are not appropriately structured.

A good general rule of the thumb to use in pure speed training is to utilise a work-rest ratio of between 1.3 and 1.5. Repetitions should be kept short, usually a maximum of around 15 secs (so 15secswork, to 45-75 secs rest for example)

Sessions should usually last no more than about 10-15 efforts, or around 15-20mins.(Nisbet,2015)

## *RACKET TOUCH DRILL*

An excellent squash-specific speed drill for you to try is the Racket Touch Drill.

To set this up, place a racket in each corner of the court, handles facing out. Starting from the T push dynamically away and move as fast as possible to reach into a controlled lunge, touching the racket handle in the back right corner of the court with your playing hand. Push back to the middle of the court ensuring one-foot touches the T, and then turn out to the opposite side to move quickly in to touch the racket handle in the back left of the court.

Repeat for 4 repetitions-so alternately touching each of the rackets in the back corner twice each. Each set of 4 reps should take no more than 15secs, so you'll then rest for around 60secs before going into your next set. Complete 5 sets into the back corners, followed by 5 sets in the same format working instead into the front corners.

**Reference:** Nisbet G, *Squash Fit*, Squashxtra May 2015, page 24-25.

See you next edition. ED