

29 March 2011

## Talented Athlete Travels

In 2011 Squash SA began its new Talented Athlete Funding as part of its new Performance Pathway Program. Two athletes were allocated the inaugural funding, Justin Beard (23) and Ben Werchon (19).

Both Justin and Ben have started their year with overseas travel, with Ben heading to England and Scotland for coaching and training and Justin playing tournaments on the European Professional Squash Association (PSA) Tour.

Justin has travelled extensively in his first two months overseas visiting England, Finland and Turkey for PSA events and training sessions with highly ranked PSA players. During his travels he has experienced the highs and lows of travels including lack of sleep, snow, language barriers, frozen lake swims, meeting new people and even an appearance on live National Turkish Television promoting squash!

He has also had the chance to train with and play against some highly ranked PSA players including his traveling partner Matthew Kawalski of AUS (former WR 69), Kashif Shuja of NZL (former WR 40), Stewart Boswell of AUS (WR 17) and the amazing opportunity to train with Nick Mathew (ENG) currently ranked World No. 1.

Justin has also been in regular contact with Squash SA, his family and his appointed Mentor, Jason Mudge, and has shared his stories and successes. Justin's PSA results include:

- **Finish Open** – PSA Challenger 10 (US \$10,000) Exited in First Round Qualification 0-3 Rasmus N Nielson (WR 139)
- **Avrupa International** – PSA Challenger 10 (US \$10,000) Exited in First Round 0-3 Fabian Verseile (WR 109)

Ben Werchon has been on travels of a different kind with his first time visiting Europe. Ben has been able to place himself under the guidance of a number of respected coaches, including Roger Flynn, and programs both in England and Scotland.

Ben has visited London, Manchester, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and leaves shortly for his final destination of Ilkley. Ben has been able to play in a number of local tournaments, however most of his focus has been on his training program and learning about the game of Squash.

Ben quotes '...I've learnt a lot about the game of squash. I always thought it was simple. You got a room you hit it away from your opponent. Simple right? Oh how wrong I was'. Ben has been learning many new aspects of the game including when to attack and defend, body position and court position as well as improvements to his volleying game.

During his training, Ben has had the opportunity to hit with a number of accomplished players including Allan Clyne (SCT) WR 47, Stewart Boswell (AUS) WR 17 and Jaclyn Hawkes (NZL) WISPA top 20. Playing against players of this calibre has been one of Ben's goals for this trip.

Squash Sa would like to congratulate both players for their dedication to the sport and for their success on their overseas adventures.

Justin and Ben are both being funded up to \$4,000 for 2011 by Squash SA under their Talented Athlete Funding program.

**For more information please contact:**

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