



Squash SA on Pathway to Success

2010 has already proved to be an exciting year at Squash SA. New staff, new directions, new tournaments and a new attitude for a sport that remains a very popular social & competitive fitness pursuit for all ages across the state.

South Australia has, until recently, fared well by producing a string of talented athletes who have gone on to become leading national and international stars of the sport, Household names including Chris Dittmar, Vicki Hoffman (Cardwell), Jan Miller, Glen Brumby and Doug Stephenson have all had glittering careers on the world stage over the past 30 years.

To continue to ensure a steady stream of champions, Squash SA has totally re-vamped its strategy and will shortly introduce several "Performance Pathway Programs". The emphasis will be on 'grass roots' development and talent identification at the junior level allowing for qualified coaching, nutrition and sports psychology, nurturing athletes as they progress to senior ranks. Currently committed & successful athletes remain well catered for with a series of annual grants available to support them with training, travel & coaching costs for their regular interstate & overseas commitments.

General Manager Phil Sinnott said, "In May this year, the Board undertook extensive consultation with clubs, parents and athletes to review the existing SAAS (SA Academy of Squash) structure with the outcome being the need to shift the focus to grass roots participation in order to grow the talent pool. Squash SA is dedicated to providing pathways that support South Australian squash athletes to reach their full potential – both on & off the court - and achieve success at a local, state, national and international level".

The **State Junior Development Squad** will comprise up to 40 male & female athletes from around the state who will be required to attend monthly training sessions. These sessions will take place across the metropolitan & regional areas so all ages & interests can access the state's best young players. The **Emerging Athletes Grants Program** will target 8 athletes (4 male & 4 female) who demonstrate the potential and desire to become a professional. Grants of up to \$3,000 per athlete per annum will be available to assist players with intensive coaching, interstate travel and court hire costs. The **Talented Athletes Funding Program** is for existing professionals and for those making the transition from the 'Emerging' to the 'Talented' athlete tiers. These players will be eligible to apply for part of a total funding pool of up to \$12,000 per annum to assist them with their specific training & travel needs.

Other initiatives include 'ambassadorial' roles for current professionals as mentors for the younger players; requirement for athletes of all ages to play regular pennant and enter in a set number of tournaments both here & interstate; adherence to the Code of Behaviour & Drugs In Sport guidelines for all squash members; to be eligible, junior athletes must also undertake some kind of professional development e.g. study, apprenticeship or work

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