

President's Report, 2018

Seattle Squash Racquets Association

I'd like to start my report by acknowledging the SSRA Board and their continued support and enthusiasm in helping squash not only survive, but thrive in our region.

Winter League

This past season, we had 7 teams in Division 1, 10 teams in Division 2 and 6 teams in Division 3, for a total of 23 teams. This is one more team than in the previous season and the season ran smoothly with lots of terrific competitive play.

I'd like to congratulate the winners from this season:

- Team Sedky in Division 1, captained by Khaled Sedky
- Team Nemesis in Division 2, captained by Imran Aziz
- Team Make Squash Great Again II, captained by Brandi Conforth

I'd also like to express sincere gratitude to the clubs that participated in the league: Columbia Athletic Club; PRO Sports Club; Seattle Athletic Club; University of Washington and the Washington Athletic Club. We very much look forward to their continued support and hope that we can field new teams from clubs that weren't able to participate this past season.

As the league administrator this past season, I'd like to personally acknowledge Karen Arango and Imran Aziz for their assistance in helping to run the league, in addition to Steve Jamieson and Eric Williams for their help with the finals party and Brandi Conforth and Greg Menikoff for designing and ordering the t-shirts.

For this coming season, Imran Aziz will be taking over administration for the league, and I would like to thank him for taking on this important role.

Summer League

This past year we also hosted our second Summer League. We had similar participation to the 1st year, despite a slight increase in fees. We again constructed 8 teams that were formed based on ratings rather than club affiliation and were able to schedule all teams to play out of the same venue each week. I believe the general feedback to this short-season format has been very positive and I'd like to congratulate *Frightning Fawad's* team (captained by Fawad Abbas) for winning the league. I'd also again like to acknowledge the PRO Club and Seattle Athletic Club for their support in hosting the league fixtures.

I very much hope we can continue to run the Summer League next year!

Tournaments

In tournaments this year, we've seen the Seattle Open run in January. Pro Club hosted the *West Coast 3 Person Teams* event in January. Seattle Athletic Club hosted the SAC Squash Softball

Doubles Open in March and the Washington State Open is due to run later in the year at the Seattle Athletic Club.

We are yet to run the Seattle City Championships event and this would unfortunately mark the second year that we've been unable to run this event if we cannot find a suitable date and venue.

This year we had 10 people from our squash community travel to Charlottesville, Virginia to compete in the World Masters tournament (the 1st time this event has been held in the United States). They were among 755 participants from around the world and the SSRA was proud to support the players from our region in this event. Hopefully we'll see even more players from Seattle compete at the next World Masters in Poland 2020.

Finally, this past year Seattle was represented by a record breaking 5 teams at the A, B and C levels at the 2017 Howe Cup, held in Washington DC. The Seattle teams reportedly had a great time both on and off the courts and the SSRA looks forward to continuing to support this important event.

End of Season Awards and Party

Our annual awards party this year was hosted at the Seattle Athletic Club. We started the event with a "King of the Courts"-style competition, followed by a lightening round event. After that, we enjoyed some food and drinks and presented our awards. I'd like to congratulate the following recipients:

- Dick Daly Service Award: Kate Frost
- SSRA Player of the Year Award: Rehan Luthra
- SSRA Most Improved Player Award: Dan Amrhein
- Brenda Wilcox Sportsmanship Award: Team Northgate, Division 2.

Thank you to Imran Aziz, Eric Williams, Annelize Naude and Tatu Murronmaa for their efforts in running this event!

PMI Dave Cutler Bellevue Invitational Tournament

In August 2018, YSK Events hosted the PMI Dave Cutler Bellevue Invitational Tournament. This again brought back world class players to our region, including Ramy Ashour (ret.), Greg Gaultier, Ali Farag, James Willstrop and Tarek Momen, but very importantly included a women's division as well with Raneem El Welily, Nour El Tayeb, Camille Serme, Joelle King and Reeham Sedky.

The SSRA supported this event through raffling off tickets, but I'd more generally like to thank our community for their support. The crowds were strong every night and we really are incredibly lucky to see events of this caliber in our relatively small squash community each year. On behalf of the community, I'd like to thank Shabana, Murad and the extended Khan family for

their tireless support and efforts in staging these world class events. We are very much hopeful to see another event in 2019!

Our Board and the Year Ahead

The coming season holds a lot of promise for squash. Karen Arango has initiated an SSRA Women's Squash League that will be held over the fall and winter months and we very much hope this will give women squash players a chance to play competitive squash in a friendly atmosphere, especially those who might not otherwise play in our open league.

I would mention that I believe it's important that we uphold the traditions of our organization, and in particular that we find a way to ensure that we run the Seattle City Championships each year. While running a tournament takes a lot of time, commitment and coordination, this event has significant history in our community and I believe it should be a priority of the SSRA to ensure that it runs each year.

As a board, we've required that each committee member hold specific responsibilities and we'll be holding a planning session in the coming weeks where we'll prioritize and assign responsibilities for the year ahead with new board after the AGM. A few short-term priorities though will include supporting Imran Aziz in preparing the upcoming league season and I hope we can modernize and remove the gender bias that exists in our current Bylaws. In addition at our upcoming planning session, I'd also like to take time to discuss our longer-term vision for the SSRA.

I'd like to again thank the members of the board for volunteering their time for our cause. I believe we're collectively a strong representation of our squash community. But most importantly, I want to finish by thanking our community for getting on court, playing squash and ensuring that squash continues to have a bright future in our region.

As always, we welcome your comments and suggestions and we look forward to another great season ahead.

Sincerely,

Henry Weber
President