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World Squash Federation
Australian Commonwealth Games Association
Oceania Squash Federation
Confederation of Australian Sport
Australian Olympic Committee

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

(Regulation 8 – Social Media Policy)



VERSION CONTROL

Version 1.0	June 2016
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Principal Partner



Official Ball



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Policy Overview

Squash Australia LPD has implemented a Social Media Policy. This policy takes effect immediately.

You will need to review the Social Media Policy and make yourself familiar with the contents of the policy.

What is a Social Media Policy?

The Social Media Policy sets out the expectations of Squash Australia LPD with regards to the use of social media for athletes, coaches and Squash Australia employees.

Some important points to consider

The Social Media Policy sets out clear guidelines and boundaries regarding the use of social media. You are encouraged to actively post from the Squash Australia official accounts as well as your personal accounts.

What do I need to do?

You need to read the Social Media Policy carefully and understand the expectations of Squash Australia LPD.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Policy

The world of social and digital media is an enjoyable and engaging place. As a Squash Australia (referred to as the Company) employee, coach or player you are encouraged to actively post from the Squash Australia official accounts as well as your personal accounts.

This document has been put together to help, educate and guide those who use social media in an official Squash Australia capacity. The benefits of Social Media for Squash in Australia are vast when used in a responsible manner and in compliance with the guidelines and policies.

Vision

Educational – We will help every child in Australia experience Squash through the school curriculum. Our volunteers and staff will work alongside teachers to help their children experience and enjoy Squash.

Recreational – We will promote Squash as a key part of a healthy lifestyle that contributes to a positive work/life balance.

Sporting – We will ensure that everyone with athletic talent reaches their full potential by providing the appropriate pathways, funding and coaching. We will also provide the competition opportunities and programmes to assist Australian players compete with distinction on the world stage.

This vision should inform all our communications, including social media.

Digital Guidelines

These guidelines will evolve over time as new technology and platforms emerge. They currently deal with the social media world as it is today, and are focused on a few basic aims:

- To promote and develop positive online discussion of Squash in Australia.
- To protect the reputation of official Squash Australia social media platforms online.
- To help moderate discussions appropriately.
- To ensure Squash Australia provides an official voice in this area.

Introduction:

Squash Australia is actively engaging our audiences online. In doing so, we must take into account some key challenges:

- When members share opinions online, they may reflect positively or negatively on Squash Australia.
- Individuals or organisations outside Squash Australia may use digital and social media to challenge the Companies rules/regulations and its reputation. Squash Australia will defend its position in such circumstances.
- Squash Australia topics are widely discussed throughout all social media platforms. It is important therefore that Squash Australia uses these same platforms to promote and outline official Squash Australia policies.

We engage with online audiences, not just on Facebook and Twitter, but also on blogs and other emerging social and digital media platforms. This Squash Australia Social Media Policies and Guidelines document will allow our official representatives to develop an active positive and responsible presence online, enhancing the experience and enjoyment for everyone's benefit.

Using Social Media

Being responsible on social media

Listed below are our guidelines for communicating on social media forums and other online platforms.

These guidelines will help us manage what is being said about Squash Australia on social media platforms, and how we and our audience interact.

These guidelines:

- Apply to Squash Australia employees, players, officials or contractors who create or contribute to blogs, wikis, social networks, virtual worlds, or any other social media platforms;

- Outline the principles that apply when engaging in social media activity on behalf of Squash Australia, or through official Squash Australia social media channels;
- Include a section for employees referring to Squash Australia while using social media platforms in a personal capacity.

All Squash Australia staff members are encouraged to take part in social media but the Company expects each individual to follow these guidelines. In that way everyone participates in a responsible, respectful and relevant manner that protects our reputation.

All Squash Australia related work is to be driven via the official Squash Australia account(s). This may be retweeted and added to by personal accounts, however the Squash Australia account must be the main drivers for information in all areas.

Squash Australia Values

- Transparent
- Honest
- Innovative
- Highly respectable
- Education is important
- Successful racquet sport
- Sport open to all – never mind age, ethnicity, religion

The guidelines – when officially representing Squash Australia the following nine principles will help guide our staff members who represent Squash Australia in an online, official capacity when speaking on behalf of the Company.

1. Follow Company Values

Approach online communities using sound judgment and common sense. Adhere to the Companies values, as well as other applicable policies. Please familiarise yourself with Squash Australia’s Communication Strategy.

2. Be Transparent

If posting from a personal account, make it clear that you work for Squash Australia. Your honesty will be noted in social media environments. If you are writing about Squash Australia, use your real name, identify your position within the Company, and be clear about your role.

If you have a vested interest in what you are discussing, be the first to say so.

You should neither claim nor imply that you are speaking on the Companies behalf – instead, use a disclaimer. For example:

“Squash Australia accepts no responsibility for the opinions expressed on this forum, which are those of the individuals expressing them, and do not necessarily represent the views of Squash Australia”

3. Confidential Information

- When posting on the internet do not disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to the Company, or confidential to any third party that has disclosed information to the Company.
- When in doubt, do not post. You are personally responsible for your words and actions online.
- As an official Squash Australia online spokesperson, you must ensure that your posts are completely accurate and not misleading.

They should not reveal any non-public information regarding the Company. Use sound judgment and common sense; if there is any doubt, DO NOT POST IT.

4. Be Respectful

- If you are representing Squash Australia, it is important that your posts convey the same positive spirit that Squash Australia instils in all of its communications. Be respectful of all individuals, races, religions and cultures. How you conduct yourself online not only reflects on you – it also reflects directly on the Company.
- When disagreeing with the opinions of others online, keep it appropriate and polite. If you find yourself in a situation that might become antagonistic, do not get defensive or disengage from the conversation abruptly. It is also important not to respond in the heat of the moment, in a way you may regret later. Feel free to seek advice or disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner that reflects well on Squash Australia.

5. Be Honest

- Keep in mind that you won't always know all the answers. Don't be afraid to seek help and advice from others who may be better informed than you.

6. Use of Imagery

- Personal Internet postings should not include Companies logos or trademarks without permission.
- Please respect brand, trademark, and copyrighted information and imagery.
- Do not post pictures of others without their permission.

7. Respect the law

- Internet postings must respect copyright, privacy, fair use, financial disclosure, and other applicable laws.

- Security is essential. When using social network sites and official Squash Australia websites you may wish to pass on interesting content or links. Be careful, and do not blindly repost something without checking the content.
- Avoid linking to outside websites unless you trust the source.
- Before clicking on unfamiliar links, pay attention to the security warnings that pop up on your computer. These protect you, Squash Australia and our members from computer viruses and malware.
- When using Twitter, Facebook and other social networking tools, follow their terms and conditions.

8. Don't plagiarise

Give credit where credit is due. Do not violate the rights of others by claiming ownership of something that is not yours, or by using someone else's content without their permission. Make sure that other people are credited for, and approve of, your use of their content. Do not use the copyrights, trademarks, publicity rights, or other rights of others without the necessary permissions of the rights-holders.

9. Dealing with major mistakes

- Correct any mistake immediately and make it clear what you've done to fix it.
- If it is a major mistake, let your line manager know immediately so appropriate action can be taken to minimise the impact.
- Squash Australia reserves the right to withdraw certain posts, and to remove inappropriate comments.

Using Social Media Digital Policies and Guidelines

The guidelines – when using social media personally as a staff member of Squash Australia, you are not always speaking for the Company when you are on social media. Squash Australia respects your right to use these media platforms in a personal capacity, but we would ask that you remember the implications of referring to Squash Australia when you do.

Recognise when Squash Australia might be held responsible for your behaviour online, and follow these principles when you are using social media channels as a private individual.

1. Adhere to Squash Australia's Communication Strategy, as well as other applicable documents. All Squash Australia employees, coaches and players are subject to Squash Australia's Code of Behaviour when online, even when they are not acting on behalf of Squash Australia.
2. You are responsible for your actions but remember that those actions may have consequences for Squash Australia. You have a responsibility when using social media platforms to not do anything online that might tarnish Squash Australia's image and reputation or bring the Company into disrepute.

3. Look out for compliments and criticism. Even if you're not online as a spokesperson for Squash Australia, if you spot positive or negative remarks about Squash Australia that look important, forward them to your line manager.
4. Leave it to the experts. If you see negative posts about Squash Australia, or see non-members trying to spark a negative conversation, avoid the temptation to react, unless you are an official Squash Australia's spokesperson. Again, forward the post to your line manager to address such comments.
5. Do not mix your official Squash Australia role with your personal life online. Not everyone will be able to make the distinction between the two. While Squash Australia respects freedom of speech, remember that all online users can see everything you post. Use your judgement and common sense.
6. Never disclose non-public information regarding Squash Australia, including confidential information.
7. Remember that it may cause conflict if you take a position online that is counter to Squash Australia's interests, policies and regulations.

Keeping it friendly

In order to keep forums on social media useful to audiences, we need rules of conduct. A clear policy on comments outlines what is acceptable and appropriate. The comments policy should be displayed on all official Squash Australia social media forums.

Here is our policy for you to post.

Comments Policy:

This is an open forum. We encourage you to get involved. However, this is also a family-friendly forum, so we ask that you follow these guidelines. Posts and comments that breach these guidelines will be removed and disciplinary action may follow.

- We do not allow comments or submissions that are violent, sexually explicit, obscene, racist, abusive, hateful, defamatory, libellous or inappropriate relating to under age players.
- We do not allow comments that suggest or encourage illegal activity.
- We do not allow solicitations, advertisements, promotion or endorsements of unapproved products or services.
- You take part in this forum at your own risk, taking personal responsibility for your comments, username and any information you provide.
- The appearance of external links does not constitute official endorsement by Squash Australia.

Moderation

Respecting each other online

While we encourage everyone to participate, Squash Australia is not responsible for material that users post. We therefore ask users to respect the views of others when they post, even when they disagree with those views.

Designated Squash Australia employees can post directly without the approval of the Company.

With that comes responsibility. We expect our representatives to uphold certain standards to keep our sites safe for everyone. If someone posts libellous, defamatory, offensive or violent content, we will take action to remove that post.

We will not remove valid criticism of Squash Australia. If someone has something negative to say about us but does it in a civil manner, and in the context of an online conversation, we will facilitate such opinion.

Squash Australia reserves the right to withdraw certain posts and remove inappropriate comments. Any comments considered to be defamatory are not allowed.

What is moderation?

When someone posts a comment on a social media channel, the site administrator can 'moderate' that comment.

In other words, they review the content and can approve it or not, before or after it is published. In addition to comments, this can also apply to video, audio and other content that a user posts on a site.

How best to implement social media strategy for Squash Australia

What we say and how we say it.

Just as we take time and care in crafting other Squash Australia guidelines, we should remember that our social media presence is part of our public personality.

Content is king

On official Squash Australia social media channels and websites we should provide interesting and relevant content for our audiences, whether it be news, videos, pictures, information about Squash Australia or other content. Think about what kind of content will be useful to our visitors, and what information will be of interest to them.

Tone is essential

When we create content for our users, we set the tone. This gives us a head start in any conversation. Therefore it is important to set a positive, constructive tone that will reflect well on Squash Australia. Part of setting a positive tone is how we respond to feedback.

Consider what people post, and respond calmly and constructively.

Be open and honest.

We are a Company backboned by players, which is to be celebrated. In our dealings with others on social media platforms, it is good for us to be spontaneous, open and engaging; and it's essential to be honest, respectful and transparent.

Listen to your audience.

Social media offers Squash Australia a great way to find out what our audience really thinks of our Company. This enables conversations that might not otherwise happen and it brings us closer to Squash Australia players. We can all share in dialogue that will benefit both our members and the Company.

Instant communication

Social media platforms are wonderful in that they offer people a way to communicate instantly with each other. This allows visitors to tell us what they think and to ask us questions. It also lets us respond instantly. However, it is often better to take a moment to think about a response before posting it. In that way you can give it full consideration. Once you have posted a response, it is too late to change your mind.

The internet is forever

What goes on the net stays on the net. If you post something on behalf of the Squash Australia, you can't take it back. So only post material that upholds the Companies reputation.

Be there

To set up an official Squash Australia social media forum and then forget about it is like starting a conversation and wandering off while the other person is answering. Be there to respond to your visitors, and be available to the public.

How to use your time online

Our users can be online any time of the day, so we need to be checking all forms of social media e.g. Twitter, Facebook and YouTube for relevant questions to your area. If you find a question for another department, please do let them know it is waiting there for them. If you are in a social media conversation then please check more frequently as you can expect a response.

Dealing with feedback

When we use social media platforms, we open the conversation to anyone, so we can potentially invite negative feedback.

We should be prepared to respond appropriately, quickly and effectively. Here are some ways to do this.

Straight problems

If someone on a forum has a legitimate issue and has expressed it clearly, you should respond, taking steps to fix the problem. Whether you respond privately to the poster, or in a message viewable by the public, depends on the nature of the problem. If you respond privately, it is good to also leave a message on the forum saying that the problem is being dealt with, and by whom.

Constructive criticism

This also requires a response. If someone makes a suggestion, you can acknowledge the suggestion with a positive message, even if it is not appropriate to act on it. This builds trust with the audience.

Negative criticism

If someone has a real issue and is annoyed or angry, do not dismiss it out of hand because of the tone. Firstly, check whether there is a genuine problem, thank the person for bringing it to your attention, and take steps to address it. Reassure the person that their issue is now being addressed.

Trolling and spam

A 'troll' is someone who, without a valid reason, adds disruptive or offensive posts or content to a forum. 'Spammers' are people who illegally post commercial or inappropriate content.

Watch out for these and delete their posts.