

Report of Irish Squash Board Meeting

Date: 8th May 2011

Venue: Sport HQ, Parkwest

Chairperson: Michael J. Hynes

Attendees: John O'Connor, President
Eddie Murphy, Coaching Sec
Gerry Connaughton, NCO
Lee Healy, Junior Sec
Brian Mahon, Masters Secretary
Frank Marks, Ulster representative

Apologies: Rory Gillen, Tariq Zaki, Brian Williams, Dermot McNamara

1. Approval of Minutes of meetings of 20th February and April 3rd.

Following a general discussion of the meeting of 20th February there was unanimous agreement that the minutes constituted an accurate account of the meeting.

The Board were presented with copies of the email sent by Rory Gillen to Michael Hynes in which he stated that he had legal advice that the Board acted outside its authority with regards to Ed Dunne. Given the clear legal advice given by John Hogan, the Board were happy that this was not the case.

The adoption of both minutes was proposed by Brian Mahon and seconded by Lee Healy.

2. Matters Arising – No matters arose.

3. Resignation of Secretary

The Board regretted the events which brought about the resignation of our former Secretary, Ms. Emma Toolan. The resignation came about mainly due to the contentious issues that had arisen on the board over the past few months.

Irish Squash had written to Emma thanking her for her services over the past year.

4. Development Review

The discussion document prepared by Michael Hynes was presented to the Board.

It is important to strike the balance between grassroots development and high performance as advised by the Irish Sports Council.

Deirdre Faul (Leinster Regional Development Officer) joined the meeting and gave a presentation in which she outlined her experience of developing squash at ground level in schools and clubs. While she has had significant successes she has encountered many obstacles. Specifically, she found it difficult to gain entry to schools. One really required a contact in the School to gain entry – to be successful this had to involve personal contact.

Communication was a problem – notifying the school, notifying parents etc. Also transport was often a problem. There was also a lack of active coaches.

Brain Mahon stated that a good option would be to offer a school a block of six weeks.

Clubs needed to have a junior structure. It was pointed out that Gerry Connaughton had an successful and mature structure for junior squash in Thurles and this could be used as a template by other clubs. Gerry was willing to share his expertise and experience.

Frank Marks outlined the situation in Ulster and promised to provide details of the Galas that they organise in order to give beginners a degree of competition.

Eddie Murphy stated that we needed to identify active coaches who were interested in and willing to become involved in Junior coaching. [Action: Office to do this]

Eddie stated that what Deirdre had done was very useful. He then introduced us (short video) of the bouncing castle concept used in Australia. This aroused much interest as it could be brought to shopping centres, sporting event etc. The ESF had actually purchased some of them (cost has been reduced to €1,500). Irish Squash will invest in one of them.

Contact was being made with Aisling Blake with view to having an 'Aisling Blake Camp' during the summer.

5. Board Procedures

Nothing arose under this item

6. Membership Structure

Lee Healy had prepared a document dealing with this issue.

Arising from the discussion, the document will be modified.

Recommendations:

Adult affiliation fee: €15

Junior affiliation fee: €10

Family affiliation fee: €40

These are subject to an audit of the current membership showing increased revenue to Irish Squash. The Operations Manager has prepared a report on the Affiliation fees charged by other NGBs (see her report)

7. Board Reports/Correspondence

The Operations Manager's report is appended.

Connacht Report is also appended.

David Ayerst had queried the seeding in the A section of the West of Ireland open. Michael Hynes reported on this and will contact David Ayerst.

There was also a refereeing query to be addressed.

Lee Healy presented a Junior Report covering the following issues:

Junior International Teams:

The U13 and U15 teams travelled to the 4/5 countries internationals in England accompanied by coaches Eoin Ryan and Kieran Doherty and manager Ciara Davey (Old Level 1 coach).

The U19s travelled with Eddie to Switzerland but one of the players returned home ill.

The U15/U17s compete in the Euros next weekend and will be accompanied by Ian Hackney and Emma Toolan

Lee also stated that while Irish Squash had provided a generous subsidy to travelling juniors in view of the economic climate, this had adversely affected the amount of coaching hours available (unlike other sports, Irish Squash coaches are paid). However 10 hours coaching were provided for each of the teams.

Juniors on Development Squads:

The board was reminded that work on determining which juniors would be involved in a development squad based in Ireland and on the senior squads wherever they were to be held had been agreed between the 4 persons on the sub-committee (Senior Coach, Development Squad Coach, Coaching Secretary and Junior Secretary). This had been reported by e-mail prior to the last board meeting but due to other business had not been discussed.

John O'Connor and Michael Hynes commended Eddie Murphy for the excellent work he had done at the recent European U-19s in Switzerland.

John O'Connor stated that he had attended the Irish Open in Fitzwilliam and remarked on the excellent relationships between Irish Squash and Fitzwilliam. He was invited to and attended the Black Tie Dinner held there the previous Friday.

John O'Connor stated that he had attended the European U-19s in Switzerland (Friday – Sunday)

John O'Connor attended the AGM of the ESF in Finland (3 days). He gave a presentation on the European Club Championships (Belfast, September 2011).

Arising from the ESF meeting, Irish Squash should now actively lobby Pat Hickey, President of the Irish Olympic Council, for the inclusion of squash in the Olympic Games.

John had also attended the European Senior Championships.

The Office had an email from Arthur Gaskin seeking information on the grant he would receive for the current season. A previous decision resulted that only Madeline Perry and Aisling Blake would receive a grant as only they were full-time on the respective circuits.

Frank Marks gave an update on the state of play for the European Club Championships. Cost of banquet for outsiders would be €30 per head. He also stated that he had invoiced those provinces for the teams that failed to present at the Irish Senior Interprovincial Championships.

Eddie Murphy gave an update on Coaching. Part 1 courses had been or were being run in Galway, Dublin, Belfast, Munster and Sligo.

He has met Thomas ? at in Switzerland and had discussed the difficulties he was having with the Level 2 coaching course. He plans to speak with Nick Ryder after 15 May.

He also stated that the ESF was planning an U-23 tournament and this was warmly welcomed as it would help in bridging the gap between U-19 and senior squash.

Brian Mahon presented his Masters' report (appended)

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8. AGM Preparations

The AGM would be held in Sport HQ and the usual notifications would be made.

9 AOB

The Chairman thanked the members of the Board for their Attendance.

The meeting concluded at 4.30 pm.

Signed: