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life



## Black Knight 2003 university & college squash championships

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2003 Canada Winter Games,  
coaching, and more

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# SQUASH *Life*

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## 2003 BLACK KNIGHT



LINDSAY AULD

BY DAVID COOPER

The first two months of 2003 have seen frenzied activity on the Varsity squash calendar culminating in the 2003 Black Knight Canadian University and Colleges Squash Championships held at the University of Toronto from Feb 28 to Mar 2. This is the 3rd year of the event and although this year's championship was not a qualifying event for World Student Games, the tournament entry of 50 players in 4 events equalled last year. Although the event was well supported by Ontario schools, it was great to see Alana Miller and Josh Struthers from the U of Manitoba, Marcie Davidson from U of Victoria, Aly Kanji from the U of Calgary and Mike Reid, making his 2nd appearance along with Ashleigh

Barnwell from U of New Brunswick.

The spirit and enthusiasm shown by all players was tremendous taking their share of disappointment and elation with composure. Over 100 games in 4 events were squeezed into the 3 days with some players managing to get 5 games. If one moment was chosen to reflect the weekend, it would not be a moment from any of the finals, although all of them were great squash and very entertaining for the crowd, rather it would be the last game held on Saturday evening. Games in the afternoon had taken longer than usual and the last game scheduled for 4:40 pm finally got on court just after 5 pm. Nearly everyone had gone, except the 2 players, Stephen Hunt from Queen's and Alex Pollock from Western, the referee

Michael von Graffen and a handful of friends. The match was a qualifying round for the Men's Open 9/10 place but was played with as much enthusiasm as if it was the Men's Open Final. As the clock ticked past 6 pm Alex finally inched past Stephen 3-2. Their efforts epitomized what varsity squash is all about - the chance to match one's skills against fellow varsity athletes regardless of what the game means. In many ways this was "pure squash" as the reward for either player was minimal.

On Sunday afternoon the 4 finals were hotly contested. In the Women's C/D Combined, two U of Toronto players - Flavia Fayet and Andrea Nickel were matched up. The interest there was that Flavia had been a varsity player all season while Andrea had

just joined the U of T team. Once again maximum effort was on show as Flavia defeated Andrea 3-1. In the Men's B Nathan Hall from Western overcame the running power of Dave Ponak from Toronto. The Women's Open Final between Toronto's Carolyn Russell and Manitoba's Alana Miller had been eagerly awaited and the game didn't disappoint. It had everything B great shots, tremendous retrieving and running, hard hitting and a series of feisty let calls which Tournament Referee, Bob Wakfer handled with a calm assurance as both players battled each other as well as the ball. Although Carolyn won 3-0, Alana made her work very hard and entertained the crowd. In contrast the all Western Men's Final between Rob Nigro and Andrew Jones was much less contentious but still full of amazing squash. Both players know each other's game inside out and although the rallies were long and often spectacular, Rob cruised past Andrew 3-0.

And so the 2003 Championships closed at 4 pm on Sunday March 2nd and the sentiments of both Rob Nigro and Carolyn Russell in the acceptance speeches echoed the thought of the players...this is a great tournament and can only get better and bigger. Players like the idea of combining a team event along with the individuals as a way of encouraging more players to participate and maybe Squash Canada could consider opening up more than just one place for both the men and women Open winners for the 2004 World University Games. In fact anything which encourages more players to play competitive squash while at university can only improve the image of squash amongst the university administrators and decision makers. ©

KARLENE HEADLEY-COOPER



ROBERT NIGRO (LEFT) AND ANDREW JONES



200 YEARS OF SQUASH EXPERIENCE FROM LEFT: DAVID COOPER, STEVE HUNT AND JACK FAIRS



CHAMPION CAROLYN RUSSELL (U OF T), LIZ HOFFMAN, ASSISTANT DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF PHYSICAL & HEALTH EDUCATION (U OF T), AND G.THANG, BLACK KNIGHT

# what's happening to university squash in Ontario?

BY DAVID COOPER

**a**s the varsity squash season came to an exciting end with Ontario Athletic Association (OUA) Finals held for women at the Royal Military College, Kingston and for men at the University of Western Ontario questions and doubts are already surfacing about the direction of university squash in future years. There have been many positive events recently and in the coming weeks which show that there is a need for well funded and competitive squash programs but most of the talk around the courts at the OUA Individuals hosted by Brock at St. Catharines Racquet Club was about the proposed changes to the OUA squash program for next year.

The OUA has been trying to come up with a better and more rational schedule for all sports. This has been prompted by the expansion of competitive sports in some universities which has put a financial strain on all varsity competitive budgets. Squash, it appears, will lose one of its 3 or 4 round robin events and also the OUA Individuals, so reducing the amount of varsity squash available for student athletes at schools which play squash. Liz Hoffman, the Assistant Dean at the U of T hopes that this reduction in

OUA play will be replaced by more inter-school exhibition games so that the number of playing opportunities will not diminished.

The U of T has already begun to explore these opportunities by inviting teams from schools in the USA to play

questions and doubts are already surfacing about the direction of university squash in future years

Toronto. In January this year, the U of T women defeated Cornell 6-3 and then lost to a very strong Harvard team 8-1. Both events gave the Varsity Blues players a great insight into what their counterparts are doing south of the border. The UWO men's team has been doing this regularly for a number of years and been very successful both with results and in attracting top Canadian prospects to stay in Canada. The U of T were invited to participate in the US Colleges Women's Team Championships, the Howe Cup, this year but had to decline as half the team is comprised of post-grads who are ineligible according to the US rules. Head Coach of the U of T Dave Cooper said that he hoped to rectify this in future years and take a team to

compete in the Howe Cup by expanding the U of T women's squash program.

However the fear amongst all current squash playing schools, some of whom now receive no university funding, is that it will be even more difficult to attract squash athletes if the number of competitive events are reduced. In this case some squash programs in schools may disappear altogether. For any OUA

sport to continue as an "OUA event" it must have a minimum of 6 competing schools. At the moment the women have 6 (including McGill) and the men have 8. Both events could see themselves under threat given the new OUA direction in competitive scheduling.

It is vital that if university squash is to survive and indeed flourish in Canada but particularly in Ontario, we must do everything we can to promote and support varsity squash and shout its achievements from the roof tops. Anyone who was at St. Catharines for the individuals or at RMC or Western for the team finals could only have been impressed by the commitment, level of play and camaraderie of the players. ©

## OUA ROLL OF HONOUR

### OUA Individuals

Women: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Kim Farah (Western); 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Kim Milne (McMaster)  
Men: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Rob Nigro (Western); 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Andrew Jones (Western)

### OUA Team Finals

Women: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Toronto; 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Queens; 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Western  
Men: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Western (20<sup>th</sup> consecutive title); 2<sup>nd</sup> place, McGill; 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Queens

### OUA Coaches of the Year

Women: Kim Milne (McMaster)  
Men: Jack Fairs (Western)

# Canadian University and College Squash Championships

BY LINDA MACPHAIL  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SQUASH CANADA

## Where do they Fit?

The 2003 Black Knight Canadian University and College Squash Championships were successful, with the largest number of universities participating to date, in this third year for the competition. We thank David Cooper and the University of Toronto for their superior hosting of this event, and ensuring the student athletes had a great competitive experience.

Squash Canada has worked with the CIS (Canadian Interuniversity Sport; formerly CIAU) and the CCAA (Canadian Colleges Athletic Association) to establish this event, with regard to both eligibility and promotion. Presently, squash is not a national sport of either institution; though squash is a recognized sport of the OUA.

Following a review of the outcome and goals of the inaugural 2001 event, the 2002 Black Knight Canadian University and College Championships

was designed with an expanded format. In addition to the men's and women's open draw, B, C and D skill level events for men and women were added. This meant that the enhanced competition featured both a:

- High performance component with the open draw - the winners of the men's and women's events earned a berth on the Canadian team to the 2002 World University Squash Championships.
- Sport development component with the B/C/D skill level draws B by offering university recreational players an enhanced competitive event, we aim to promote the sport of squash to the student athletes, and encourage them to continue their participation in squash (ultimately to becoming squash club members in the future).

We see the Canadian University and College Championships as having the

potential to play many roles for squash in Canada:

- promotion of the sport to the university/college level athletes.
- providing the Provincial / Territorial Squash Associations with the opportunity to have provincial College/University Championships to feed into the national event (work with the Canadian Jesters on promotion).
- providing a high performance opportunity for the athletes, particularly to players who were competitive junior athletes
- providing squash with more exposure through the CIS and CCAA with the possibility of becoming a national event with those institutions.

We are looking forward to planning and promoting the 2004 Black Knight Canadian University and College Championships. We hope to see you there! ©

### Summary of Participation

	2003	2002	2001
Men's Open	18	16	16
Women's Open	12	7	8
Men's B	15	8	
Men's C/D		15	
Women's B/C/D	5	4	
Total # athletes	50	50	24
# universities	12	9	8
# colleges		3	
# Provinces/ Terr.	6	6	4
Men's Open Winner	Rob Nigro Western	Rob Nigro Western	Trevor Borland U of M
Women's Open Winner	Carolyn Russell U of T	Christi Liebel U of C	Marnie Baizley U of T

In the decade of the '80s, the mean age of a squash player was about 22. Today that mean age has doubled. Players now in their late '30s and beyond have been accorded the lofty and venerable designation of "masters." Many of these masters still play a formidable game of squash, substituting guile and deception for their youthful speed and resilience. • That the masters contingent is still extremely competitive is not surprising when you look at the playing credentials and achievements of their younger years.

## life in the old boy, yet!

BY TONY SWIFT

I have played many important matches in my lifetime on the squash court and won more than my fair share of titles, but the National Soft Ball Title I won two years ago at Mayfair Lakeshore is cherished and special.

In my 40's, I won National Soft Ball Championships and a couple of Hardball Nationals. However, when I moved to the Toronto Lawn Tennis Club from Bridlewood, almost twenty years ago, the North American courts at The Lawn were not conducive to matches on the international courts. Playing tough matches on the wider courts usually resulted in me getting injured sooner rather than later. It didn't take me long to decide that I was not prepared to sacrifice the golf season because of injuries sustained on the squash court. Consequently, I went into 'retirement' from soft ball singles and took up doubles with a vengeance at Toronto Racquet Club.

What a wonderful game! I wish I had played it earlier. For at least ten years I have enjoyed success on the doubles court with at least seven different partners (what does that tell you!), including a National Mixed Doubles Championships with my wife Sue, and a world title with my friend

Maurice Heckscher from Philadelphia. Over the years, my championship partners have included George Morfitt (3), Steve Dulmage (1), Dave Bogert (6), Mike Manley (1), Molson Robertson (1), Sue Swift (1) and Maurice Heckscher. Winning is easier when you have a great partner.

Then came a renaissance at my club, The Lawn. After 35 years the Board agreed to convert our four North American courts into three International courts. A new lease on my soft ball life began. I set a goal to win a national title while still in my 50's, and went back into fairly serious training at the age of 58. My training was not as extreme as it was in my 40's when I would cut out all alcohol for four months before the championships. I started working out on the bike, doing weights, and losing weight. I played in the 2000 Championships at Mayfair but lost to Henry Thiessen from Winnipeg, an old rival from way back when. I won the first game, pulled a groin muscle in the first rally of the second game, after which there was no contest.

All season I had focused on playing Henry in the final of the 2001 championships. To my relief, Sharif Khan beat Henry in the semi-final. In my

semi against Howard Armitage, I nearly didn't make it and had to struggle to win 10-8 in the fifth after 75 minutes. I wasn't sure whether I would recover for the final the next day, but the training paid dividends and I felt strong against Sharif, who I managed to beat in the final without losing a game. A win against Sharif Khan in the final of the Canadian Championships has a nice feel to it, and made all the hard work worthwhile.

Perhaps I should have retired after my win against Sharif, but I have decided to give singles one last season to see if I can add a title in my 60's. So back to the training for a few more months before a meeting with Robbie



Tony Swift (left) finally 'masters' the great Sharif Khan

Osher, Peter Hatcher, Sharif or Henry Thiessen in Edmonton, after which it really will be doubles only. Honest! My only regret is that Jim Adam will not be there for his unfailing support, nor Frank Welsman who was my sparring partner every year as part of my preparation to sharpen my game. I hope they will be watching over me in my run up to this year's National Championship. ●

## Niagara's travelling troubadours

BY MAGGIE STEYN

There's something very relaxing about a weekend spent away at an out-of-town squash tournament. Which is not to say that relaxation is not to be found at home, but at home there's always something niggling at the back of my conscience, begging for my attention. Nor am I saying that the squash tournaments here in the Niagara Region aren't a great deal of fun - well-attended, well-organized and great value for money...but it's not the same as a road trip!

So I'm always open to the idea of

packing a bag and heading for another part of the province should the occasion arise. Whenever the big white envelope arrives from Squash Ontario every month, I check it out immediately for a flier for a likely tournament that is within weekend driving dis-

tance (flying and days off work not being part of our budget). Then I know that a call to Cate, Shirley and Meg will more than likely yield some traveling companions.

We've been competing in Masters' tournaments for a few years now.

### 2003 Masters Soft Ball Events

APR 3-6 Mayfair Lakeshore, Toronto  
MAY 1-4 Royal Glenora, Alberta

### 2003 Masters Doubles Events

MAR 27-30 Toronto Cricket Club, Toronto  
APR 11-13 Toronto Lawn Tennis Club, Toronto

Spring Squash Challenge 416-466-3777  
Canadian Masters Championships  
ian.paton@royalglenora.com

Marianne Caldwell 416-485-5930  
Canadian Mixed Doubles 416-922-1105



Shirley Ancker, Cate Mee,  
Maggie Steyn and Meg Johnston

Shirley and Cate have long been member of teams in our Men's Divisions.) We generally room together in the closest hotel, so we have a chance to catch up with each others lives over leisurely breakfast-in-bed in the mornings.

We shall be heading off to the Provincial Masters at Brockville in late March. Hopefully the weather will be kind to us

for our journey around the lake and we look forward to a great weekend of re-acquainting ourselves with players, tournament-chairs, referees and of course Squash Ontario representatives, and as usual, finding that ohhh sooo comfortable viewing area from which to watch the squash go by on a winter's Saturday afternoon in the province...oh...and we'll have to play a few matches too, I suspect! ☉

Maggie Steyn, (on behalf of Cate Mee, Shirley Ancker and Meg Johnston), Niagara Region

Since 'Veterans' and 'Masters' age categories for club-run tournaments used to be fairly 'elastic', a couple of the troupe used to have to creep in under the wire, but I think we are now all legally the right side of 40!

Our first group 'event' was the now defunct Veterans and Masters Team tournament that was held at the Racquet and Fitness Academy in Etobicoke in January. The first year of the event, when I entered us as a team, I didn't realize that the competition would be all-male teams. However, we were so warmly welcomed by everyone and all of the matches that we had, played in such good spirits that we continued to enter every year until sadly it eventually folded.

We always enjoy Bob Mundy's tournament in Burlington. The Halton Child and Youth Services Tournament (formerly the Caveat) was held the first year at Burlington Racquet Club, but then moved 'across the road' to Cedar Springs. I think this February's event was the ninth consecutive year that Bob and Janet have run this, and the ninth one we have had the pleasure of attending.

It isn't just the squash, although we always get great competitive matches, but it's the chance to lounge on the bleachers on a Saturday afternoon, with a bottle of beer, or a glass of wine, surrounded by other weary bodies, watching some great matches and catching up on conversations that we maybe started the previous year. (Of course, Cate will be knitting - socks or a sweater in some complicated pattern, requiring many needles, but little concentration on her part.)

It's also an opportunity to catch up with each other, since we don't see each other routinely on Niagara Region's League squash-night. (Meg and I play in the Women's Division, but

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# DELIGHTFULLY DOUBLES



Rob Paskulin & Dave Fullerton (finalists),  
Mike Way (TRC Pro), Sam Nisenboim (Tourn. Chair),  
Mike Costigan and Jay Gillespie (winners)

Up until this season, the number of players participating in Ontario Doubles Championships was on the wane. Too few teams in the Men's C over the past several years resulted in retiring the title as was the case with the Women's B. This appeared to be an alarming trend, one not dissimilar to the untimely passing of the hardball game a decade ago.

The Squash Ontario Competitions Committee knew some drastic action had to be taken and under the guidance of Lolly Gillen, it undertook an extensive survey of existing doubles players. On the issue of the entry fee, there was an overwhelming consensus that if the fee was dropped from the

\$49.00 to \$32.00, this would definitely increase participation. The reduced entry fee would no longer require a hosting club to provide a meal.

honed skill of 'friendly' persuasion, the draws for each of the 4 championships filled to capacity. (See shaded chart below)

Championship	2001/2002	2002/2003	%Increase
Ontario Mixed Doubles	Cancelled	70 (35 teams)	100%
Ontario Open Doubles	38 (16 teams)	60 (30 teams)	58%
Ontario Men's B Doubles	34 (17 teams)	62 (36 teams)	82%
Ontario Veterans Doubles	70 (35 teams)	108 (54 teams)	54%

In addition to this somewhat radical approach, Squash Ontario unveiled its not so secret weapon - Lolly Gillen! She singlehandedly ensured that each provincial doubles championship this year was a success and she did this by peppering people with email and telephone calls. Using her extremely

These are remarkable increases and to paraphrase Mark Twain, "rumours of the doubles' games demise have been greatly exaggerated."

There are a number of key ingredients which need to be present for success, not the least of which are the host club and host. Squash Ontario is extremely grateful to Willie Hosey and Mayfair Parkway Racquet & Fitness Club for playing host to two of these events - the Open Doubles and the Mixed. We thank Eric Baldwin and Jamie Nicholls and the Badminton & Racquet Club for breathing new life into the B doubles and last but by no means least, our gratitude to Sam Nisenboim and the outstanding members of the Toronto Racquet Club. Each year they outdo themselves in hosting the Veterans, Masters and Seniors Doubles and 2003 was no exception.

Support for the doubles community comes also from the corporate sector and we thank Royal LePage, Second Skin, Harrow, Muskoka Cottage Brewery, Harrow, McDonalds, Steam Whistle, Johnson & Johnson, Hemingways, B Sharp Technologies, Ridley Windows, Parmalat Inc., Lynch, Morrison Lamothe, Creemore Springs Brewery Limited, New York Bagel, Klear Glass, and Head - where would we be without you?

And to our champions and finalists, we say congratulations and thank you for playing and supporting the game in Ontario. As one of the last bastions of hardball doubles squash, it is important to not only keep our doubles courts busy and active, but to encourage new people into the game. ©

## 2002 - 2003 DYNAMIC DOUBLES DUOS

Ontario Open Mixed Doubles Champions	-----	-Leslie Freeman and Scott DuImage
Ontario Open Mixed Doubles Finalists	-----	-Caro Paskulin and Pat Richardson
Ontario Open Veterans Mixed Doubles Champions	-----	-Lolly Gillen and Willie Hosey
Ontario Open Veterans Mixed Doubles Finalists	-----	-John Boynton and Nancy Bowden
Ontario Open Seniors Mixed Doubles Champions	-----	-Molson Robertson and Sue Darracott
Ontario Open Seniors Mixed Doubles Finalists	-----	-Cass Quinn and Jennifer Brown
Ontario Open B Mixed Doubles Champions	-----	-James Mallon and Kelly Ann Zander
Ontario Open B Mixed Doubles Finalists	-----	-Cindy Hazel and Richard Hazell
Ontario Open Doubles Men's Champions	-----	-Jay Gillespie and Richard Thomson
Ontario Open Doubles Men's Finalists	-----	-Paul Zander and John Hall
Ontario Open Doubles Women's Champions	-----	-Stephanie Hewitt and Karen Jerome
Ontario Open Doubles Women's Finalists	-----	-Lindsay Hermer-Bell and Jessica Di Mauro
Ontario Men's B Doubles Champions	-----	-Dave Fullerton and Brad Pielsticker
Ontario Men's B Doubles Finalists	-----	-Drew Abbott and John Cocomile
Ontario Men's 40+ Doubles Champions	-----	-Jay Gillespie and Mike Costigan
Ontario Men's 40+ Doubles Finalists	-----	-Rob Paskulin and Dave Fullerton
Ontario Women's 40+ Doubles Champions	-----	-Anne Brayley and Cathy Covernton
Ontario Women's 40+ Doubles Finalists	-----	-Jane Mitchell and Lindsay Hermer-Bell
Ontario Men's 50+ Doubles Champions	-----	-Victor Harding and Sean McDonough
Ontario Men's 50+ Doubles Finalists	-----	-George Miller and Doug Burns
Ontario Men's 55+ Doubles Champions	-----	-Dave Bogert and Tony Swift
Ontario Men's 55+ Doubles Finalists	-----	-Molson Robertson and Cass Quinn
Ontario Men's 60+ Doubles Champions	-----	-Richard Perren and Larry Hall
Ontario Men's 60+ Doubles Finalists	-----	-Dennis Brown and Gault McTaggart
Ontario Men's 65+ Doubles Champions	-----	-Eddie Bracht and Norm Lee
Ontario Men's 65+ Doubles Finalists	-----	-Harold Hempstad and Bill Jenkins
Ontario Men's 70+ Doubles Champions All	-----	-Dave Brown, Frank Creaghan, Taki Doucas, Irv Herman, Bob Mason, Jack Mollenhauer, Sam Nisenboim, Howie Rober, William Slater and Richard Willemsen
Canadian Women's Open Champions	-----	-Karen Jerome and Jessie Chai
Canadian Women's 40+ Champions	-----	-Lolly Gillen and Ruth Castellino
Canadian Women's 45+ Champions	-----	-Sue Kaffka and Jean DeMarco
Canadian Men's Open Champions	-----	-Eric Vicek and Tyler Millard
Canadian Men's 40+ Champions	-----	-Fred Reid and Alan Hunt
Canadian Men's 45+ Champions	-----	-Bob Smart and Steve Lawson
Canadian Men's 50+ Champions	-----	-Brian Murray and Aziz Khan
Canadian Men's 55+ Champions	-----	-Tom Nederpel and Mike Downer
Canadian Men's 60+ Champions	-----	-Tony Swift and David Bogert
Canadian Men's 65+ Champions	-----	-Gene Perle and Fred Bracher
Canadian Men's 70+ Champions	-----	-Robin Loger and Howie Rober



From left: Paul Alarie, Jessica DiMauro, Lindsey Hermer-Bell, Karen Jerome, Stephanie Richardson and Tammie Sangster from Head



Bill Jenkins & Harold Hernstad (men's 65+ finalists), Sam & Bob, Ed Bracht & Norm Lee (Winners)



Leslie Slater & Anita Saunders (consolation finalists), Jennifer Smith & Nancy Bowden (winners)



John Hall & Paul Zander (finalists), Richard Thomson & Jay Gillespie (winners)

and a perfect end  
to a perfect season  
**Toronto Lawn Tennis  
to host the  
Head Canadian  
Mixed**

by Jane Mitchell

In the 127 year history of the Toronto Lawn Tennis Club, it has hosted many international and national tennis championships and several national hardball championships. However, this championship marks the first time that the Lawn will host a national doubles championship. As part of a recent \$10 million expansion at the Lawn, the club now boasts a first class doubles squash court and looks forward to welcoming visitors and players alike to the 2003 Canadian Mixed Doubles Championships.

The tournament will run from Thursday, April 10th through to Sunday, April 13th. The Badminton & Racquet Club, the Toronto Racquet Club and the Royal Canadian Yacht Club are kindly offering the use of their doubles courts for this event.

With an entry fee below \$100.00 (for the first time in years!), we anticipate full draws in each of the events - the Open, Veterans (40+), Seniors (50+) and the B.

The entry fee includes a terrific weekend of socials at the Lawn. There will be a beer bash on Thursday night; a buffet on Friday night; lunch on Saturday and brunch on Sunday, all complete with complimentary beer and wine.

No event like this would be possible without the support of our sponsors. We would like to thank them ahead of time, Creemore for supplying the beer, Caliterra for the wine and our supporting sponsors, Lerner and Associates, Perfection Rug, Royal LePage, Ridley Windows and Doors, Anita Lorelli and Loblaw Companies Ltd. A special thanks to Don Park Inc., and our title sponsor, Head.

For more information, contact Tony Swift at the Toronto Lawn Tennis Club at 416-922-1105 or to enter, go to [squashontario.com](http://squashontario.com)



# Squash...It's Our Racquet!



## NEW COACHES

bottom row (l to r)  
Sue Neilsen, Eva Lidstone,  
Kathy Lewis and  
Khaled el Seweify

top row (l to r)  
Cindy Kempny, Grant Lewis,  
Erik Bukowicki,  
Mike Watters  
and Allan Den Otter

## NEW COACHES IN ESPANOLA AND THE SOO

Sue Nielsen of the Espanola Regional Complex wrote to say that the level 1 coaching clinic was a terrific success. Espanola wanted very much to get some of their members certified; however, travelling to Toronto was a bit of a trek. So, we brought the mountain to them in the form of one of our

coaching course conductors, Khaled el Seweify.

Any smaller region or area of the province which is interested in hosting a level 1 coaching clinic, please contact Jim Mattice at 416-426-7201. The host community must guarantee a minimum of 8 participants and Squash Ontario will do the rest.



## SQUASH ONTARIO COACHING SYMPOSIUM

It has been many years since Squash Ontario held a coaching symposium - 2003 is the year! It is being hosted by White Oaks Resort and Conference Centre on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, August 22, 23 and 24.

We invite all levels of coaches to gather for a weekend of very informative workshops, and an opportunity to meet with other coaches from across the province and across the country. This symposium will appeal to coaches of all levels - whether you are coaching full time or volunteering your time at your local club.

Registrations and social are scheduled for Friday evening; workshops will on Saturday will be from 9 am to 5:30 pm. There will be two sessions on Sunday, beginning at 9 am and concluding at noon. Breakfast on Saturday and Sunday and dinner on Saturday are included in the registration fee.

The symposium will feature a wide range of international, national and local coaching expertise.

Details on cost, sessions and presenters will be posted on the Squash Ontario website in April. Go to [squashontario.com](http://squashontario.com)

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# Ontario's quest for gold

BY JEFF LURIE

As I proudly walked into Pearson International Airport on a brisk Saturday February 20th, I knew I was about to embark on one of the most amazing and inspiring weeks of my life.

I calmly strolled into the Air Canada check-in area to see approximately 170+ athletes and coaches all wearing their Team Ontario jackets and uniforms. I found my fellow squash players and noticed immediately there was an energy of excitement and anticipation for our departure and a week of quality squash at the 2003 Canada Winter Games that were being held in Bathurst-Campbellton, New Brunswick. Like the Olympic Games, this event is held every four years and is a multi-sport event that runs for two electrifying weeks.

The squash team that was representing Ontario was as follows: On the men's side, Dane Sharp, Ryan Osbourne, and Robert Hong and myself. A truly talented team and believe me when I say it, we were hunting for the gold. On the women's side was another group of gifted athletes in Neha Kumar, Radhika Ahluwalia, Alicia Turner and Steph Edmison; another group of hopefuls for the prestigious gold medal. We were all accompanied by a great coaching staff of Bob Bowers and Melanie Jans.

As we boarded the Air Canada flight direct to Moncton, NB, we were all immediately hit with another jolt of enthusiasm. The plane was chartered by Team Ontario which meant that all passengers on the plane were either athletes or coaches. On this short

plane ride we were able to meet other players from sports ranging from Ringette, Freestyle Skiing, Hockey, Fencing, Badminton, Curling, and Speed Skating. While we were crammed in the economy section, Mel and Bob were relaxing in their spacious first class seats at the front of the plane. Lucky them!

We arrived in Moncton after the usual delays from Pearson to an audience of volunteers who were handing out pins and congratulating us on being a part of these special games. We were handed a somewhat inadequate dinner consisting of granola bars, pudding, and handi-snacks, and were rushed off onto a bus that would take us to Dalhousie, NB where the athletes village had been erected for us (basically in the middle of nowhere). After a dangerous turn off the road which left us stuck in the snow at a precarious tilt sideways, we successfully made it to the athletes village at a very uncomfortable time of 3 AM in the morning. We were given the keys to our trailer-park styled rooms that painfully crammed six grown men into one room no larger than a squash court. And believe me, at some points we felt like chickens cooped up in a cage. The girls were all put in the same room, but the guys were not that lucky. We were disappointed at first because we weren't rooming together but it turned out to be a neat experience to meet guys from other sports.

After a short and uncomfortable sleep, we awoke to the brisk New Brunswick air and were rushed off to Bathurst, the town where the Opening Ceremonies were to take place. Team Ontario had a pep rally, where each team had to do a lip synch. After hours of practicing and intense choreography, Team Ontario Squash put together an accurate and enthralling reenactment of Grease. There aren't words to describe how embarrassed we were singing and dancing in front of close to 200 people. After all we are just squash players. After the rally, we

were off in our recently coloured red hair, to the Opening Ceremonies. I had never been so excited in my life! Marching into a packed hockey arena with distinguished guests like the Premier of New Brunswick, our Prime Minister, and past athletes from the games who had pursued a career in their sports was incredible. We were going crazy and so was the crowd. I had heard stories about how special these ceremonies were and I never really believed them. But the energy that was buzzing around KC Irving Regional Centre, in Bathurst was electrifying. When the National Anthem was sung and we were reminded how lucky and special we were to be attending these games, I think it sent a chill through each and everyone's spine.

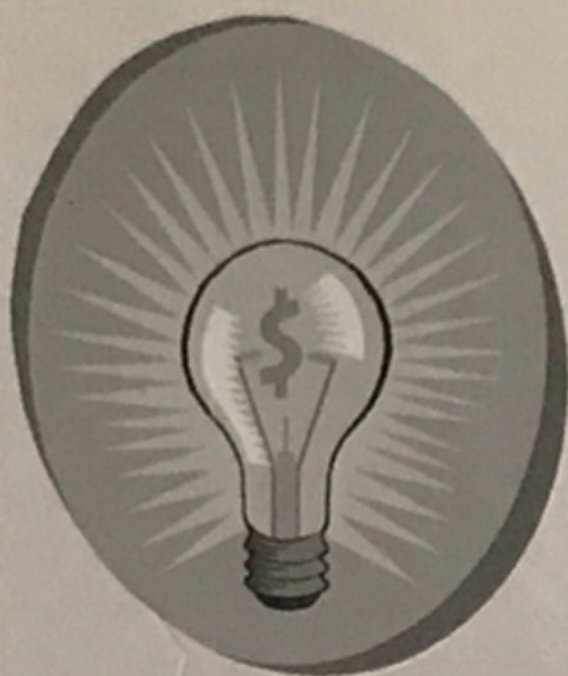
The squash event began on Sunday the 23rd and after the opening ceremonies for squash, we were ready to pounce on our opponents. The girls didn't have a match until the next day so they sat around waiting to cheer us on. But, unfortunately, due to the increasingly bad weather that had brought along numerous inches of snow, the Canada Games Executives cancelled all events that were to take place late in the afternoon because of the poor road conditions. That left our matches re-scheduled for Tuesday.

Both men's and women's teams steam-rolled the competition in the preliminary rounds. Seeded second on both sides, both guys and girls were confident that we could not only make it to the final, but upset the top seeds; BC for the women, and Alberta for the men. Team Ontario was easily able to qualify as the top seed in Pool B in both the men's and women's event. This left the girls playing a tough Manitoba team, while we were matched up against an unproblematic opponent in Saskatchewan. We were able to handle the Saskatchewan team easily, while the girls had a tougher time with Manitoba. The girls won a tight 3-1 battle against the skilled Man-

itobans with the help of clutch play from our number four Steph Edmison who clinched the victory. This successful day was one for the record books as it sent both teams to the finals to play on the PSA Perspex court, the four-walled glass court with seating capability for up to 500 spectators. We were certainly excited but in an unfortunate turn of events, the girl's Neha Kumar, the heavy-hitting number one, who had been coming up big in the tournament, injured her leg which left her on crutches and unable to play in the finals. This meant that for the girls to win gold, the other three would have to pick up their games to defeat the much talked about BC girls.

The finals were scheduled for Friday the 28th. The girls were on first and after defaulting at position number 4, Alicia Turner was up to face a tough, gritty opponent in Kristie Tyrell. Alicia stepped up her game but was unable to faze her older opponent. With the girls down 2-0 they needed to win the next two matches convincingly in order to take the gold. This left our number two Radhika Ahluwalia to face one of Canada's top players and Scottish Junior Open Champion, Jen Blumburg. Certainly a difficult feat. After a tough battle, Radhika was unable to overtake Blumburg and that left the gold medal match with a meaningless final meeting between Steph Edmison and Ashley Clackson in which the BC girl prevailed to give them the 4-0 victory and the gold medal. Needless to say though, we were all proud of the girl's accomplishment and the tough matches they had sustained in order to get this far.

Next was the men's final, a four hour period that will likely haunt our ego's for the rest of our lives. Facing team Alberta, we certainly had a chance to win, in fact, with the illegal bookkeeping that was taking place at the squash centre, we were coming in as the favourites despite our second seed. After a pep talk from our coaches and a unanimous decision that we were all determined to bring home the gold, the finals were off and running. Ryan Osbourne, our number four started off the day against Patrick Bedore from Grande Prairie, AB. After taking the first game, he then lost the next three games in what was one of the most exciting and nerve racking matches I have ever watched. Two of the three games that Bedore won came down to extra points. After being



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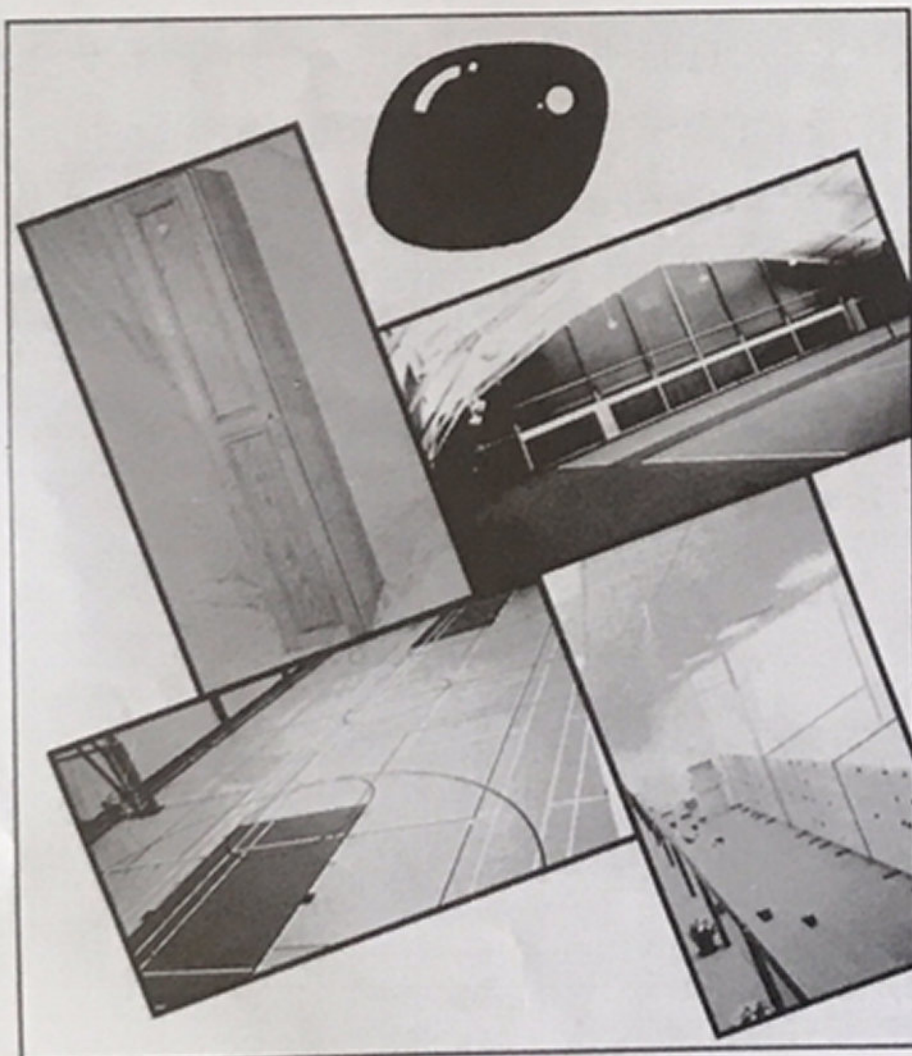


On the men's side (from l to r):

Ryan Osbourne, Jeff Lurie, Robert Hong and Dane Sharp

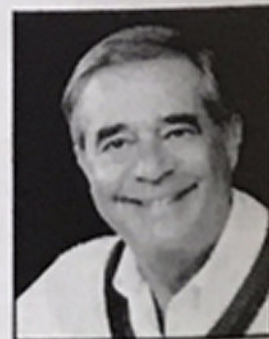
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The Ontario women and the coaches (from l to r): Coach Bob Bowers, Alicia Turner, Neha Kumar, Radhika Ahluwalia, Stephanie Edmison and coach Melanie Jans.



down 1-0 we were still not that worried and felt confident that we could still take gold. Dane Shape entered the transparent walls of the Perspex court to take on Michael Auer, a past National Champion. Dane was on top of Auer although at times it seemed that Auer was successfully clawing his way back into the match. When it came down to the fifth game I couldn't watch any longer and felt my heart racing as I hurriedly stepped into the Physio room with a great deal of anxiety. I finally heard the crowd cheer and I ran to the court to see Dane waiving his hand after a close battle that brought us back to even ground at 1-1. I was then scheduled to play AJ Janzic a fitness machine from Calgary. We were 2-2 lifetime against each other so I knew I had my hands full. The match started off slowly for me and I quickly saw myself down 2-0 facing defeat and knowing full well that if I didn't win the next game, it would be impossible for us to win gold. After being smoked in the leg by one of Janzic's shots which left a stinging bruise, I motored through that game taking it 9-1 all but to lose the next one and to put us down 2-1. This left Robert Hong our number three to try

to salvage this hard fought war. The magic number for Alberta was 15. Seeing that we were tied in games and that Robert was likely going to beat his opponent 3-0 we knew it was going to come down to points. 14 would be a tie, 15 would give Alberta the win. After a tight game in the first Robert prevailed 9-5 and in the second 9-7. This meant that Alberta only needed two points to tie, and three to win. We were going crazy! The crowd was electric and the TV cameras were recording as Robert and his opponent went back and forth in the third game. Each rally that Alberta would win would create an explosion from the crowd. Once Alberta got their 2nd point we knew it was going to be tough for Robert to win the game without giving up one more point. Unfortunately, that 3rd point came which left us sulking and in a state of disappointment while the Albertans were running around with their flag, screaming and yelling. The match ended quickly after that as the Albertan just wanted to get off the court to celebrate with his teammates. Although we were disappointed we realized that you can't win everyday. We had played good squash and to be realistic, it just wasn't our

day.

We congratulated team Alberta and went on with the medal ceremony where we were handed our silver medals. It seems egotistical to say that we weren't happy with our silver but who would be after losing by two points. We felt let down and deflated but at the same time we realized that we had just completed what is likely going to be one of the most special weeks of our lives. We were on a great team, with a great women's team to back us up, representing a great province, and pushed by the most excellent coaching staff in Mel and Bob. We were honoured to have been given this opportunity and although both teams came up short of the wanted result, we felt that we had still accomplished something great. ©

*"It's the journey, not the destination." If these 8 young athletes came back from the Canada Games with their lives enriched, then their experience has been a success. The teams played to their seeding and competed with heart - no one could ask more of them. Squash Ontario is enormously proud of our Ontario Team and the coaches, Melanie Jans and Bob Bowers. Congratulations and well done!*



new era beckons for

## British Open

England Squash, the country's governing body for the sport, recently announced that it has entered into an agreement to license the rights to the British Open Squash Championships to a partnership formed by John Beddington of Beddington Sports Management Ltd and John Nimick of Event Engine, Inc.

The British Open has long been regarded as the sport's most prestigious championship, but inconsistent management and sponsorship woes have plagued the tournament in recent years. The new license agreement covers a three year period commencing 2003 and includes an option period for a further three years.

Nick Rider, Chief Executive of England Squash, said, "The British Open has a long and distinguished history - it is intrinsically linked with the great names of the sport. This is the way forward - I am very excited by the prospect of this agreement with a partnership comprising two of the most experienced and successful practitioners in event management today."

The partnership of Beddington and Nimick brings together possibly the two most successful commercial squash promoters to have worked in the sport.

"John and I are delighted with England Squash's decision to offer us the opportunity to be involved with the British Open and we are confident that we can rebuild this wonderful championship. We have no magic up our sleeves, but we both have a deep passion for this great sport. We have created a long term agreement with England Squash precisely because we feel it may take several years before we can rebuild the tournament's value and generate the kind of sponsorship support that will allow the Open to regain the respect of the players and the international community," said Beddington.

Nimick added, "We are at work on a few scenarios for a potential presentation of the event in late 2003, but our priority is to set the right wheels in motion for the future so that each year builds successfully upon the last. We look forward to coordinating with both PSA and WISPA to ensure that both sets of professional players are kept informed of our progress and to listen to any ideas either association may have about the event in the short term."

## Power loses some ground

Victory in last week's Harrisdirect Tournament of Champions in New York has strengthened Englishman Peter Nicol's grip on the No1 position in the new March Dunlop PSA Men's World Rankings, announced today (03 March) by the Professional Squash Association (PSA).

The 29-year-old former Scot survived four-game battles in the final three rounds of the first PSA Super Series event of the year to lift the prestigious title for the second time at Grand Central Station. In moving into his 15th consecutive month as

world No1, Nicol has extended the gap ahead of arch rival Jonathon Power, the Canadian who failed to reach his sixth successive final in New York when beaten 3-1 in the semi-finals by France's Thierry Lincou.

Australia's David Palmer, who suffered his first loss since winning the World Open title in December when he went down to Nicol in the New York semi-finals, holds onto the world No3 slot, while compatriot Stewart Boswell

rises to a career-high-equalling No4, pushing Scotland's John White down to five, ahead of Frenchman Thierry Lincou, Tournament of Champions runner-up, who stays at No 6.

## squash unaffected

by **Pan Am Games** delays

Despite reports that certain events at this summer's Pan American Games in the Dominican Republic may be cancelled due to construction delays, the staging of the Squash events will continue as planned, say the World Squash Federation.

"Luckily, squash will not be affected by the reported delays as the events will be staged at the established 'Body Shop' club in Santo Domingo," reports Ted Wallbuton, the WSF's Executive Director.

Squash was included for the first time in the Pan American Games in Argentina in 1995. In the 1999 Games in Winnipeg, hosts Canada claimed all four Gold medals. Graham Ryding and Melanie Jans secured gold in the individual events, and in the team championships Canada beat USA in the women's final and triumphed over Brazil in the men's.

The 2003 Pan American Games will take place in Santo Domingo from 10-17 August.

## Windsor lad takes under 19 title

Congratulations to Windsor Squash & Fitness Club's, Mark Porter who recently won the Under 19 title at the Deroy Junior Squash Tournament in Birmingham, Michigan. This tournament traditionally attracts some of the best junior squash players in the U.S. Mark, at just 16, took the championship with scores of 9-3, 3-9, 9-6, 9-3.

## Lindsay Auld leads Blues to OUA title, earns OUA honour

The University of Toronto's Lindsay Auld was named the Ontario University Athletics (OUA) Female Athlete of the Week for the period ending February 9, 2003. Auld becomes the sixth Varsity Blue to earn the OUA athlete of the week honour in 2002-03.

Auld capped off an undefeated season on Saturday by leading the Varsity Blues to their first OUA Women's Squash Championship in three seasons.

The Burlington, Ontario native skipped the OUA Individual Championship two weeks ago, but showed at the team event that she was one of the conference's best this season. In UofT's semifinal match, the Varsity Blues swept the two-time defending

champion Western Mustangs 6-0, with Auld dumping the 2003 individual fifth-place finisher Vanessa Steinwall 3-0.

In the championship final, the fourth-year standout cruised past the OUA individual fourth place finisher Lindsay Wiseman 3-0 to lead the Varsity Blues past Queen's 6-0 to claim the 2003 team crown. Auld finished the 2003 women's squash season with a perfect 13-0 record and earned her third-straight 1st Team OUA All-Star honour.

## fore the kids

Mark your calendars now for the 2nd Annual Squash Ontario Charity Golf Challenge. It will be held on Friday, September 12th at the beautiful Bushwood Golf Club in Markham.

Watch the Squash Ontario website ([squashontario.com](http://squashontario.com)) for more details. All proceeds to the Lee Hanebury Junior Squash Fund.

## silver medals

for Ontario teams

Congratulations to the three Ontario teams who represented the province at the Canadian Teams Championships. The women's team of Helen Kay, Tara Mullins and Izumi Matsuda finished ahead of their no. 3 seedling, losing to Quebec.

The men's # 1 team of David and Ian Sly and Scott Mikalachki also grabbed a silver medal, losing in the final to a very strong Quebec team.

The men's # 2 team, Chad Dommasch, Syed Raza and Andrew Thompson finished 4th, losing a very tight battle for 3/4 to Manitoba.

## supporting cancer research

With the enormous help and assistance of Barb Cooper and Mayfair Lakeshore Racquet & Fitness Club, the first annual "help squash cancer" tournament is being hosted on Saturday, March 29th. Proceeds will benefit the Advanced Therapeutics Programme at the Toronto-Sunnybrook Regional Cancer Centre through the Elayne Kopman Hope for Health foundation.

The entry fee is \$75.00 which includes your pledge sheet, event t-shirt, lunch and beverages, prizes and the knowledge that you are contributing to a great cause.

For information on entering, call 416-485-8407 or email: [richard@elaynekopman-h4h.org](mailto:richard@elaynekopman-h4h.org).

## Ontario juniors shine at OUA Championships

Does the junior squash system work in Ontario? Absolutely. Here is the University Individual Women's Championship order of finish: 2. Kim Milne; 3. Nadia Rashid; 4. Lindsay Wiseman; 5. Vanessa Steinwall; 6. Carly Thompson; 8. Karlene Headly-Cooper. In the men's Individual Championship, again Ontario juniors came through with flying colours: 3. Robert Nigro; 4. Andrew Jones; 5. Jamie Martel; 6. Dale Beasley