



New SMU President's Game of Choice

By Judy Myrden

The new President and Vice-Chancellor of **Saint Mary's University** **Dr. Michael Khan** is a championship squash player and coach.

In addition to promoting the **Halifax** university, Khan, a former professional squash player, also wants to promote a game he loves.

"I have no interest in competing nowadays but my big interest is to get on court and help younger people improve," he told **In The Nick** court side at **SMUfit**.

"I fell in love with the game (i) like the physicality, strategic parts of the game and skill aspects. It's one of those games that has everything people say, "Once you start squash you just get hooked on it."



New SMU President Michael Khan at the squash courts. (Photo by Judy Myrden)

The 59-year-old started his new job on July 1 and has been going to the SMUfit squash courts after work each day to do solo practicing.

Previously, he was the Provost and Vice-President at **Trent University**, Peterborough, Ontario since 2020, his career includes his tenure as Dean of Human Kinetics at the **University of Windsor**, where he oversaw the Department of Kinesiology and Athletics & Recreational Services.

Prior to this, Khan was the Head of the School of Sport, Health and Exercise Sciences at **Bangor University** in **Wales, United Kingdom** from 1999 to 2011.

Throughout his career in academia he has always been involved with leading junior programs and in Wales he started a junior program that flourished.

He said there were as many as 50 participants in the program working towards advancing players to play in regional and national competitions.

"Coaching has always been my first love and I think I have a lot to offer given my background in coaching in Wales working with some of the best coaches in the

Upcoming Events

Sep 13: [NS Junior Rust Remover](#)

Sep 25-28: [KCSC Rust Remover](#)

Oct 10-12: [Lighthouse Junior Gold \(SMUfit\)](#)

Oct 17-19: PEI Rust Remover

Oct 23-26: [SMUfit Open](#)

world there.”

In the U.K. they're very good at talent identification and pathway development, he said.

“In sport it used to be thought that earlier you specialized a kid in a particular sport the better off it would be for them - research has clearly shown that's not the case,” he said.

“Research has clearly shown that it's better to have a diversity of sports up to the age of 14 or 15 and then specialize afterwards.”

He cites this example of sport as a corollary for education.

“It's the same thing for education we should not specialize students too early. We need to expose them to different areas because it enables us to think in different ways.”

Born and raised in **Trinidad**, he initially was passionate about cricket and soccer and then was introduced to squash at the age of 17.

“I just fell in love with the game dropped everything else and just concentrated on squash after that.”

He came to Canada for his education as his mother was from **Prince Albert, Saskatchewan** and met his father who came from Trinidad to attend the **University of Saskatchewan**.

He attended **McGill University** in **Montreal** for his undergraduate and then to **Western University, London, Ontario** for his master's degree and was coached by the legendary **Jack Fairs**.

While playing for Western the squash team won three intercollegiate championships and Khan won two of the single titles.

While at Western he coached squash at the Goodlife Fitness club where he met his future wife, Martha, who took a lesson from him.

He took two years off of university to play professional squash but unfortunately ran into injury problems repeatedly.

“Enough of this,” he said and returned to academia for his Ph.D. at the **University of British Columbia**.

The father of two daughters, **Michaela** and **Madison**, have followed in their father's footsteps also studying kinesiology.

“My first love was coaching and the only reason I really did my Ph.D. kinesiology was actually to go into coaching career. You know it's funny how things end up, ... you end up being a university president at the end of it,” he said with chuckle.



New SMU President Michael Khan takes time out of his busy schedule to play squash at the SMUfit courts. (Photo by Judy Myrden)

Dal Squash Player Joins In The Nick Team

By Judy Myrden

Justin Ching-Johnson is the new **Layout Editor** for **In The Nick**. The 29-year-old moved to Halifax in May 2024 and has been actively involved in the squash community since arriving, playing in and volunteering at tournaments. In The Nick **Editor in Chief Judy Myrden** introduces Ching-Johnson to the readers.

Q: Tell me about yourself?

A: *I was born and raised in **Mississauga, Ontario** before moving to **London, ON** for post-secondary studies.*

Q: When did you start playing squash?

A: *In high school and university I was a fairly competitive badminton player. Late during my second year of undergrad, a fellow badminton player brought me to a **Western University Squash Club** practice and I quickly put my badminton racquets into storage.*

Q: What do you do for a living?

A: *Currently, I work in medical writing within the clinical trials industry.*

Q: Where do you play squash and what is your ranking?

A: *I play out of **Dalhousie University Squash Club** at the **Dalplex**. I'm a Division 3 or 2 player depending on the event.*

Q: What squash activities have you been involved with in Halifax?

A: *I love participating in the **Halifax Squash League**. I love the friendly competition while also advocating for the progression of my teammates! It's also very reminiscent of the regional league in London, ON (**South Western Ontario Squash League**). During 2024-2025 tournament schedule I have played in the **SMUfit Open, Dalhousie Open, Ray Souchereau Memorial Classic and Atlantic Championships**.*

Q: What was your favourite squash tournament?

A: *I enjoyed my first tournament out here the most: the **SMUfit Open**. It was certainly daunting - being somewhat new to the community and getting back into competition mode after a break. But I was thankful for the supportive Dal squash crew. Additionally, seeing the cohesive, larger Nova Scotian and Maritime squash community come together was reassuring that there would be a lot of fun squash to come for the remainder of the season and beyond.*

Q: Besides now laying out ITN - what other volunteer activities have you done for squash?

A: *I ran the **Western University Squash Club** during my third and fourth year of university and supported the **South Western Ontario Squash League** wherever possible.*

Q: Why is squash important to you?

A: *It's a fantastic way to stay active. Despite being unbelievably frustrating at times, it's also a great way to relieve stress and socialize.*



Photo by Cordale Hann

Q: Best general squash advice?

A: *I think adaptability is incredibly important. Squash is so multi-dimensional - there's always a new skill or tactic to learn/practice when playing casually, and being able to shift to different skills/strategies in competitive play when something isn't working is invaluable.*

Squash Coach Josh Rudolph Goes To Battle

By Judy Myrden

Halifax Squash coach Josh Rudolph took part in the 19th annual Battle of the Border junior tournament, and despite Canada's loss on the courts he said the overall results were better than last year. This long-standing event brought together elite American and Canadian players in the U17, U15, and U13 categories.

He said this year the U.S. team won 15 matches and Canada won 10 matches, compared to 22-3 last year respectively. "There were a couple of five game tie break matches," said Rudolph who coached the Girls U15. Last year he coached the boys Under 13 at the event. Rudolph, who has been involved in squash for over 20 years and was the head coach of the 2023 Canada Games Winter Squash Team for Nova Scotia, and currently is the Head Coach of the Nova Scotia Junior Team.

"Battle of the Border is an extremely important athlete development opportunity for Canadian junior athletes," said Samantha Cornett, Squash Canada's Director of Athlete Development. "It is a great training and competition environment and is the epitome of the sport, where we compete and then come together to enjoy the camaraderie of squash. It is my personal favourite event, from when I was a player and now on the leadership side!"



From left to right: Eva Douglas (AB), Zayah Khambral (AB), Coach Josh Rudolph (NS), Yilin(Cindy) Wu (BC), Rayna Tejani (ON)

2025-2026 Nova Scotia Tournament Calendar

Details and dates subject to change. Be sure to check Club Locker for the latest information.

Dates	Tournament	Location
Sep 13	Nova Scotia Junior Rust Remover	SMUfit, Halifax
Sep 25-28	KCSC Rust Remover	Kings County Squash Club, Kentville
Oct 10-12	Nova Scotia Lighthouse Junior Gold	SMUfit, Halifax
Oct 17-19	PEI Rust Remover	Charlottetown, Halifax
Oct 23-26	SMUfit Open	SMUfit, Halifax
Nov 07-09	902SquashEd Tournament for Education	Kings County Squash Club, Kentville
Nov 14-16	Moncton Open	Moncton Squash Club, NB
Nov 21-23	Nova Scotia Junior Open	Kings County Squash Club, Kentville
Nov 28-30	PEI Fall Classic	Charlottetown, PEI
Dec 05-07	New Brunswick Closed	NB
Dec 13-16	Canadian Junior Nationals	St. Catharines, ON
Jan 09-11	KCSC Winter Thaw Junior Tournament	Kings County Squash Club, Kentville
Jan 16-18	Mill River Open	Mill River, PEI
Jan 29-Feb 01	Dalhousie Open	Dalplex, Halifax
Feb 19-22	Ray Souchereau Memorial Classic	SMUfit, Halifax
Feb 27-Mar 01	New Brunswick Open	NB
Mar 13-15	Prince Edward Island Open	Charlottetown, PEI
Mar 20-21	KCSC Valley Bloom Junior Tournament	Kings County Squash Club, Kentville
Mar 26-29	Nova Scotia Open	SMUfit, Halifax
Apr 09-12	2026 Atlantic Championships	Moncton Squash Club, NB
Apr 24-26	Atlantic Jesters Junior Squash Camp	Location TBD
May 29-31	KCSC Tournament for Education	Kings County Squash Club, Kentville

Check out the complete [2025-2026 Atlantic Squash Calendar](#):



Contributions to **In The Nick** are welcome! Send in your letters, stories, or feedback to us here:
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