

[902SQUASHED](#) | [CHRISTMAS CALCUTTA](#) | [COMMUNITY COACHES](#) | [N.S. JUNIOR OPEN](#)

New Squash N.S. President Leah Boody Takes Aim At Growth

By Judy Myrden

Leah Boody, a top ranking squash player and coach, is the newly-elected President of Squash Nova Scotia.

Her to-do list is daunting.

“I’m not sure if I was elected or (said) I’ll do this,” she says with a laugh while relaxing in the hallway of SMUfit after playing squash with her 12-year-old son **Luke**.

“I quite love leadership positions, I love inspiring a team to make change and I find it exciting. I feel honoured to be able to be that person for a sport that has been such a huge part of my life,” the 43-year-old Halifax resident told **In The Nick**.

Outside of squash, Boody is a professional accountant with a variety of experience in small to medium-sized businesses working in both financial and operational leadership roles.



Boody at the 2023 Pembroke Canadian Championships in Montreal. Photo by Craig Potts.

She was elected earlier this year (taking over from **Dave Thomson**) for a two-year term as president of Squash Nova Scotia, a non-profit organization with 696 members, according to the association’s 2022-2023 annual report.

Boody feels “incredibly lucky” to be president of Squash N.S. at a “pivotal time” for the sport, which was recently added to the Olympics for the 2028 games.

“We’re probably at the most exciting time that squash has ever been. I think we are at a big turn right now, and it’s going to be an exciting few years ahead with the Olympics.”

Boody has identified three priorities during her tenure: communications, squash programming, and creating a roadmap to implement a strategic plan for the future of the association.

Work has already begun on updating the website with current information about the sport and programs, and giving the public a better understanding about the sport.

“When I say that, I mean being able to walk up to a (sports) club

Upcoming Events

Dec 9-12: [Canadian Junior Open \(ON\)](#)

Jan 11-14: [Dalhousie Open](#)

Jan 19-21: [Mill River Open](#)

Jan 26-28: [Canadian Masters Teams Championships \(MB\)](#)

Feb 8-11: [Ray Souchereau Memorial Classic](#)

Feb 23-25: [NB Open](#)

Mar 21-24: [NS Open](#)

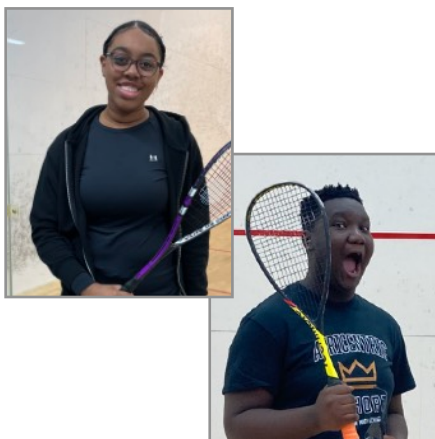
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902SquashEd Tourney

The 902SquashEd program held its annual Squash Tournament for Education on the weekend of Nov. 17-18 at the King's County Squash Club (KCSC) in Kentville. The non-profit program aims to empower students of African descent through the sport of squash.

The event raised approximately \$1,500 for a pair of Horton High School graduating students, **Sierra Cox** and **Dorian Palmer** (pictured below). Apart from a great vibe in the new space at KCSC, the club hosted 3 Junior divisions with a total of 25 junior players (including 24 from KCSC). Fourteen juniors at the event are part of the program and were playing in a tournament for the first time.



that has courts, and someone who has never played the sport before, and see squash next to swimming, rock climbing, basketball and volleyball and be able to sign up for the sport, without having to know the inner workings of squash.”

Secondly, making the sport more accessible to the general public will require targeted programming, including attracting a new generation of players with more children taking up the sport.

And finally, she aims to implement a three-year strategic plan or roadmap of how to turn the association's aspirations into action.

Squash N.S. is in a financially stable position, she adds, and credits the previous board and president with meeting the metrics to qualify for provincial and Sport Nova Scotia program funding.

“So, (we have) to be very diligent and very intentional in how we use those funds.”

In October, Boody was recognized by the University of Western Ontario for her commitment to the sport by being inducted to the Mustangs Alumni Sports Hall of Fame.

She played squash for four years at the London, Ontario university, graduating in 2002, and continues to play competitive squash.

Boody became interested in squash at an early age. Her parents, who both played, steered her towards the sport in the early 1980s at the age of 8, picking up the racquet at the former Burnside Tennis Club in Dartmouth which also had four squash courts.

The sport has “special meaning” to her right now as she and her older brother, **Matt Bishop**, of Halifax, who are both top players in their respective age divisions (40+, 45+) are training for the nationals and worlds.

“This is something I get to do with my brother, if we weren't doing this we wouldn't be spending as much time together,” she adds.

On the flip side, she also spends time playing squash with her son, 14-year-old daughter, **Zoe**, and husband, **Jon Boody**.

Over the years, playing competitive squash has meant making new friends across the country, enjoying the camaraderie and the “sheer determination and courage it takes playing the game.”

(Editor's Note: This is the first of a two-part interview with Squash N.S. president Leah Boody. The second story will run Jan. 1, 2024.)

SMUfit Christmas Calcutta Supports Parker Street

By Craig Potts

On Saturday Dec. 9 the annual SMUfit Christmas Calcutta Squash Tournament will be held with a 67% increase in participants compared to last year.

“This is the biggest Calcutta ever,” said **Dave Malyk**, SMUfit Squash Club Co-ordinator and tournament organizer.

Participation in the much anticipated event jumped to 45 players this year, each paying a \$50 entry fee to take part in the tournament, compared to 27 players in 2022.

Men’s squash player **Luke MacQuarrie** was the winner last year and is returning to defend his title.

This year marks the third year in a row proceeds from the Calcutta will support a family in the HRM area, partnering with the Parker Street Food & Furniture Bank, with gifts for the children, and a variety of gift cards for the whole family.

The idea to give back to the community was the brainchild of women’s squash player and 2023 N.S. Canada Winter Games Squash Manager **Ashley Cullis**.

Cullis and Malyk are proud their event delivers hundreds of dollars of gifts and support back to a family each year.

The “handicapped cutthroat” tournament gives everyone a chance to play anyone at any level. Through the point differential system Malyk attempts to even out the playing field.

While the top three finishers in the event each come away with prizes, Malyk and his team of nimble organizers do a great job seeing that no participant leaves empty-handed.

Prizes are drawn randomly throughout the four-hour long event, which begins at 1 p.m., and then in the evening at the Calcutta Social, the grand prize of a one-year SMUfit Plus membership, donated by SMUfit, is drawn.

“The support of the squash community from SMUfit is incredible, and this grand prize is just another example of it,” said Malyk.



Jack Foerster faces Greg Black in a rally in last year’s event. Photo by Craig Potts.



Community Instructor Course

Six new community squash instructors and two community squash instructor learning facilitators were welcomed after attending a one-day workshop in Kentville on Nov. 13, as part of a new Squash Canada Coaching program for community level coaches. From left to right: Learning Facilitator Josh Rudolph, Andre Aquino, Dorian Palmer, Orlando Ramirez, James Wiseman, Georgia Williams, Julia Akao, and Learning Facilitator Chris Lien.

SMUfit Welcomes Back N.S. Junior Open Tournament



*Garreth Beckles plays a backhand shot against Adele Workman.
Photo by Adam Morris.*

By Judy Myrden

The Nova Scotia Junior Open Squash Tournament is back!

This year 36 juniors from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island played in the two-day tournament held Nov. 24-25 at SMUfit's squash courts in Halifax.

"It's quite significant (the increase in players), especially after last year when it was cancelled because there wasn't enough interest," said **Josh Rudolph**, provincial squash coach, during a break coaching the young players courtside.

Rudolph said these junior tournaments are important for the development of the sport, with young players coming out to compete while making new friendships and having fun playing squash.

He credits the efforts of squash coaches around the province encouraging juniors to pick up a racquet, including **James Wiseman** and **Janet MacLeod** in Kentville, and **Melissa Shakespeare** and **Chris Lien** in Halifax. Rudolph runs a juniors program at SMUfit.

The event featured seven divisions with 17 girls and 19 boys taking to the courts. The glass-backed courts were busy with 70 matches played, along with a strong turnout from family and friends in the bleachers watching.

The Mixed U19 winner was **Garreth Beckles**, 18, Team Captain for the 2023 Nova Scotia Canada Games Squash team, who won the title in three straight matches, never dropping a game.

The combined BU17/U15 winner was **Rohan Gorman**, of Bonshaw, P.E.I.

Sophia Myers, of Kentville, won the GU11 in a very close final match against Halifax's **Victoria Bishop** winning in five games.

The GU17 was won by **Remy Stein** and GU13 **Lilly Bishop**, both of Halifax.

In the Junior 1 Division there were six players and competition was fierce with **Hugh Brady**, of Halifax, taking the title of 1st Place.

A special shout out to **Calum Webster**, 13, of Canning N.S., who also played in the Junior 1 Division. This was his second N.S. Junior Open and fourth career tournament, and he won his first two matches ever, finishing 4th of 6 in a tough Junior 1 Division.

The Junior 2 Division was non-competitive and there was no winner, as it was an opportunity for young players to gain competition experience, said Rudolph.

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*Micah Zhang of Halifax.
Photo by Adam Morris.*