

Potential New Squash Facility In Sydney

By Judy Myrden

Bill MacGillivray is following his dream to build a new squash club in **Sydney, Cape Breton**.

MacGillivray and other members of the Sydney squash community are negotiating for space attached to the former **Centennial Arena**, which is undergoing a major retrofit and being turned into a multi-sport facility.

Securing space is one challenge, finding the \$120,000 to \$150,000 to design, install, and build floors for the courts is another, he added.

“It’s not cheap,” MacGillivray, who grew up in **South Bar** just outside of Sydney, told **In The Nick**.

The 56-year-old said there are some “funding opportunities” through **Sport Nova Scotia, Squash Canada**, and both the federal and provincial governments.

Tomorrow’s Legends, the Sydney non-profit organization responsible for converting the former hockey arena, recently received \$2.1 million from the federal government for the retrofit.



Measurements still have to be taken to see how many courts will fit in the arena, said MacGillivray, who returned to the island in 2020 after spending 25 years on the West Coast.

“We have to figure out what will work in the space; 2, 3, or 4 courts, we don’t know just yet.”

MacGillivray looks at a sport like squash and sees so much more.

“We have a small but strong core of squash players, (and) our dream is to have a squash club in Cape Breton,” he said.

“An actual venue where we could not just play squash, but a venue to develop squash players, including junior players, newcomers to Canada, and programs for disadvantaged and minority groups.”

After 25 years of playing on two squash courts at the

Upcoming Events

Apr 4-7: [Atlantics \(PEI\)](#)

Apr 6: [Community Squash Instructor Course](#)

Apr 8 & 15: [Para Squash 57](#)

Apr 14+: [Youth Squash with Sabeel Muslim Youth Centre](#)

Apr 26-27: [Kentville Junior Valley Bloom Tournament](#)

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

Ref Clinic Draws Interest

Squash N.S. player and Black Shirt Provincial Level referee **Lee Kirby** facilitated an introductory referee clinic on Monday, March 18th at SMUfit in Halifax.

The course served to prepare participants for the Squash Canada Club Level Referee online examination, and demonstrated common situations in an on-court format.

Fifteen players attended the 60 minute session, which was also supported by 3 other certified referees: **Thom Hori**, **Abdelrahman (Abdo) Abdallah**, and **Elvira Mitraka**.



From left: Abdallah, Kirby, and Hori provide instruction on the basics of refereeing the game of squash. Photo by Judy Myrden.

Sydney YMCA, they were forced into looking for new courts when the YMCA “expropriated” one of the courts into a permanent spin class studio last year, he said.

Last August, MacGillivray and three other local squash players bought four used “glass back” squash courts from **Toronto’s Mayfair Squash Club** after seeing the “For Sale” advertisement on the Squash Canada website.

Total costs for the glass backs and shipping were \$9,000.

“It took quite a bit of logistics to get them here from downtown Toronto,” he said. “The real costs and the real issue was the logistics of getting them here: packaging, crating them, and obviously putting them on a truck and delivering.”

The glass backs are currently being stored on the grounds of his cousin's business **Eskasoni Cold Logistics** at a “friends and family rate.”



The glass backs loaded up for the journey from Toronto to Sydney. Photo by Bill MacGillivray.

From The Squash Nova Scotia Board

2024 Strategic Plan: After several months in development, the Board has released their 3-year Strategic Plan. The plan can be read [here](#).

Annual General Meeting & Social: SNS will be holding their Annual General Meeting on Friday May 10, 7:00 PM, at the Duke Public House on Gottingen Street. The AGM will be immediately followed by a Social with DJs Steve Nurse and Jeff Stephenson. More details to follow.

Racquet-Science 2024 Nova Scotia Squash Open

By Heather MacElwee



Sukhpreet Singh Aujla prepares a forehand drive against Cordale Hann in their finals match. Photo by Heather MacElwee.

Sukhpreet Singh Aujla of Dalhousie Squash Club won his first squash tournament after playing for just over a year, clinching the Men's Division 4 title at the N.S. Open held recently at SMUfit in Halifax.

Seeded 2nd going in, Singh faced off against **Cordale Hann** of SMUfit in the Sunday afternoon finals, dropping the first game in overtime points, then coming back to win the thrilling match in four games.

Tournament name sponsor **Racquet-Science** of Kingston, ON, and **Squash N.S.** welcomed players from across Nova Scotia, PEI, New Brunswick, Alberta, and Ontario to the final major event on this season's N.S. squash calendar.

With 138 entrants, the courts saw four days of over 200 action-packed matches across 12 divisions, with all players getting 3 matches minimum, and many getting four or more.

It was an exciting weekend for the 40 Juniors who entered, 12 of them playing in two divisions.

12 year-old **Lilly Bishop** of Halifax was the winner of both Junior Girls 1 and Women's Division 3. Although pushed hard by **Hannah Hou** in her Junior Girls 1 finals on Sunday with two games going to overtime points, Lilly managed a perfect tournament, not dropping a single game all weekend. Congratulations Lilly!

An exciting semi-finals match was held in the Junior Mixed draw between **Zakareeah Hussein** and **Hudson Kinney**. After losing the second game 20-18, Hussein, down two games, came back to win the match in five, advancing himself to the Sunday finals. He took second place to Kentville's **Rylan Hale**, who dropped only one game all tournament in his march as top seed to first place in the division. Great squash guys!

For the second year in a row, Ottawa-based player **Lisa MacElwee** flew to Halifax to participate in the Nova Scotia Open. MacElwee had an exciting tournament weekend winning the Women's Division 2 final against Halifax's Darlene Acton.

For the first time ever, MacElwee got to play her youngest daughter in a tournament, and rumour has it that was her favourite match of the weekend. *For full transparency, Lisa is my mother (and the rumour was started by me).*

Full tournament results can be seen on [Club Locker](#).



Heather MacElwee faces her mother Lisa in their first-round matchup. Photo by John Arnold.

Ask The Ref!

By Thom Hori & the Black Shirt Ref Crew

Question:

“Can a stroke be awarded if the only remaining shot the striker has left is a back wall boast?”

Answer:

No, and here’s why.

Although there is no specific rule that specifically addresses interference from a back wall boast, Rule 8.11 could be applied to addressing this particular situation. The rule states:

Each month our local **Black Shirt Ref Crew** responds to questions from the readership about rules, specific situations, and officiating decisions in general.

Through this column, players will build knowledge into both their games and their own officiating skills.

Please submit your squash officiating questions by email to inthenick@nssquash.ca.

If the striker refrains from striking the ball because of front-wall interference, and requests a let, then:

- If the ball would first have hit a side wall and then the non-striker before reaching the front wall, a **Let** is allowed unless the return would have been a winning return, in which case a **Stroke** is awarded to the striker.

Turning to the referee’s line of thinking:

- (a) Did interference occur?
- (b) Could the striker have reached the ball and have made a good return, and were they making every effort to do so?
- (c) Did the opponent make every effort to clear?
- (d) Was the striker in a position to hit a winner?

Even if the answer is yes to (a), (b), and (c), hitting a winner with a back wall boast is highly improbable, so the best outcome in this scenario that the striker could hope for is a **Yes Let**.

In The Nick Welcomes New Reporter

Taryn Hanrahan is a writer based in Kijipuktuk (Halifax) and was raised by two squash players. She started playing squash two years ago and is now a reporter with **In The Nick**.

Don’t miss reading her debut story on the next page!



Photo by James MacLean.

Revival Of Friday Night Drop-in At SMUfit

By Taryn Hanrahan

The Friday night squash drop-in at SMUfit is back on the calendar.

Husband-and-wife duo **Greg Jones** and **Kate Swanson**, along with another avid squash player **Julia Pelton**, are behind the revival of Friday night squash.

The motivation to kick start the Friday night drop-in came from a conversation over pints the three had after playing in the Halifax Squash League on a Wednesday night.

“I knew that SMUfit had a drop-in on Friday nights but the few times I’d been there it was dead,” Jones, who recently started back playing the game, told **In The Nick**. “We decided we would try and get it going again.”

Several courts are booked off each Friday night starting at 6 p.m. until 9 p.m. at the four glass back SMUfit squash courts. It doesn’t matter if you’re a beginner player or high-level player - in shape or not - young or old - Friday night drop-in is a casual way to enjoy the game and meet new players.

It is free for SMUfit members; non-members have to pay for the usual day pass at the front desk.

So far, each Friday night has seen a steady stream of players turning out to play.

All player levels are welcome, and the atmosphere caught the attention of squash coach **Mahmoud Abouelleil**.

“I thought it would be fun,” he said after coming out of a cutthroat game.

For **Cordale Hann**, who took up squash last year and recently won the Mixed Division 4 Dalhousie Squash Tournament, it is a perfect way to start the weekend.

“I like playing other players and seeing different games,” Hann told **In The Nick**.

The Friday night drop-in had been on hiatus since COVID-19 and lockdowns. It was originally started in 2011 by squash players **Tim Roberts** and **Tom Calder**, and then continued by **Dave Malyk**.



Swanson and Jones at the busy SMUfit squash courts. Photo by Taryn Hanrahan.

Editor in Chief: Judy Myrden	Contributor: Craig Potts
Director: Emily Burke	Reporter: Taryn Hanrahan
Layout: John Arnold	Logo: Fei Gao
Communication Manager: Heather MacElwee	Sport NS: Adam Morris



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