

BATTLE OF THE BORDER | TOURNAMENT CALENDAR UPDATE

“Silent Soldier” John Arnold Heads West

By Judy Myrden

For the past decade, SMUfit squash player **John Arnold** has dedicated a lot of time as a volunteer for Nova Scotia’s squash community, but he has now left for the West Coast.

The 43-year-old video game developer recently packed up and moved to Vancouver with his wife, **Nasim (Mahlegha Ghavami Nodeh)** who has accepted a research position at British Columbia Children’s Hospital starting in September.

Besides playing in every tournament he could get to across the province, he has been a stalwart helper behind the scenes organizing squash events.

Arnold has also been responsible for the layout of the monthly squash newsletter since its inception in November 2023.

He says he was “happy” to volunteer at the desk of tournaments, and took a more direct role in helping organize the **Black Knight SMUfit 2023 Squash Tournament** with **Craig Potts, Heather MacElwee, Alex Sio, and Vishesh Bhat.**



John Arnold playing a farewell match with Steve Hart on the SMUfit squash courts. Photo by Heather MacElwee.

Upcoming Events

Sep 10: [Halifax Premier League](#)

Registration Deadline

Sep 14: [NS Junior Rust Remover](#)

Sep 27-29: [KCSC Rust Remover](#)

Oct 11-13: PEI Rust Remover

Oct 18-20: [KCSC Junior Valley Tournament](#)

Oct 24-27: [Black Knight SMUfit Tournament](#)

“Over the last few years I’ve helped out with ‘squash tech support’ relating to tablets, Club Locker and other tech-related things,” he told In The Nick.

Potts, Squash Nova Scotia Vice-President, said Arnold’s countless hours of volunteerism will be missed.

“The consummate silent soldier, John’s attitude towards driving squash forward is embodied in the reply I got from him every time I asked for help (and it was often): ‘I’m happy to help.’”

Born and raised in Charlottetown, P.E.I., he moved away to go to the University of Waterloo, Ontario, for a B.Math., and then did a Master’s degree at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. It was there that he first picked up a squash

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racquet.

“It started off as it often does, running aimlessly around the court with friends with no training or guidance whatsoever,” he said.

He went on to take lessons and play regularly. In 2010, he moved to Halifax and took a break from squash, then came roaring back in 2014 playing tournaments, Halifax Squash League, ladders and club nights.

In late 2015, he embarked on a series of travels around the world, living in different countries and working remotely.

“I would look for squash clubs everywhere I went, and played in quite a number of places from France to Japan to Colombia,” he said.

Arnold reflected on the importance of squash in his life besides the health benefits.

“It’s fun. I like to stay fit, and having an enjoyable way to do that is key to actually getting out and being active,” he added. “Squash is also a great social connector, and that’s pretty important when you’re moving from place to place.”



John and Nasim on the Halifax waterfront in Winter 2024.

Tournament Calendar Update

Incorrect information was provided to **In The Nick** in the August issue for tournament dates. Please note the following corrections:

The **Dalhousie Open** will be held from **Jan. 16-19, 2025**.

The **Mill River Open** will be held from **Jan. 31-Feb. 2, 2025**.

Canadian Juniors Gain Integral Training

By Judy Myrden

Squash coach **Janet MacLeod**, of Kentville, recently took part in her fourth **Battle of the Border** junior tournament, and despite Canada’s loss on the courts she said it’s a great event for up-and-coming junior squash athletes.

“Although Canada did not win it this year, all the athletes showed true sportsmanship, grit, and determination to make their country proud as well as gaining new friends along the way,” MacLeod said in a **Squash Canada** news release.

The United States defeated Canada 23-75-7-75, winning 18 of 24 matches, to lift a seventh straight Battle of the Border trophy on Aug. 3-4, at **White Oaks Resort** in **Niagara-on-the-Lake**.



From left: Rayna Tejani, Shirley Chen, Mabelle Sy,, Hannah Popatia, and Coach Janet MacLeod.



From left: Ethan Chan, Chase Facchin, Obie Ryding, Yianni Theodoropoulos, and Coach Josh Rudolph

MacLeod coached the Girls Under 13 this year at the tournament and was joined by Squash Coach **Josh Rudolph**, who has been involved in squash for 20 years and was the head coach of the 2023 Canada Games Winter Squash Team for Nova Scotia, coached the boys Under 13.

“Every battle has its own flavour but each no less a fantastic experience for and with great juniors and coaches,” said MacLeod.

The Battle of the Border, created in 2004, provides opportunities for Canadian and American top junior players to compete internationally and gain experience representing their countries.

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