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High Level Competition, Big Turnout, Mark SMUfit Black Knight Squash Open

By Judy Myrden

It was the appearance of **Halifax** squash legend **Matt Bishop's** family members that rallied him to victory after being down two games in the final of the **SMUfit Black Knight Squash Open** last weekend in Halifax.

SMUfit player Bishop won Mixed Division 1, adding to his 20 plus years of winning this tournament, in a thrilling five game battle with 21-year-old **Liam Jinks** of **Stratford, P.E.I.**

A tenacious Bishop, playing in his first tournament since the **Nova Scotia Squash Open** in March 2024, fought back from a two-game deficit to defeat Jinks in the five-game, 34-minute contest.

Bishop's immediate family had commitments on Sunday and couldn't make it but it was the arrival of his mother, **Liz Bishop**, sister, **Leah Boody** and niece, **Zoe Boody**, midway through the second game that was the game changer.

"...that mentally was a huge difference maker for me," he told **In The Nick**. "Even after all these years of playing having them behind the court is an invaluable booster!"

He said his former squash coach **Neil Harvey** - one of the top squash coaches in the world - told him years ago to get another 5 to 10% out in tough matches is to play for more than yourself.



Bishop talking strategy with Coach Neil Harvey at 2023 Ray Souchereau Memorial Classic Finals versus Jinks. File photo by Craig Potts

"And when you say it like that I put that weight on my shoulders and feel like I can run through walls," Bishop said.

The two players were scheduled to meet at the Nova Scotia Squash Open Finals in March 2024, but Bishop withdrew giving Jinks a Default Win (DF) in Division 1.

Bishop told In The Nick whether he's up two games or down two games in a match, "...the job is not finished."

"I was over aroused to begin the match and all credit to him (Jinks) the pressure he applies caused me to stray from playing point by point," he said. "Once down 2-0 the only option was to play more cautiously as I cannot give up any easy points. I tried to have more fun and enjoy the moment as it is pure joy to be there."

"This allowed for more relaxed play and with a little luck it went my way ... this time," added the 46-year-old and father

Upcoming Events

Nov 8-10: [Pita Pit Moncton Open](#)

Nov 15-16: [NS Junior Open](#)

Nov 18: [Referee Clinic- Basics](#)

Nov 22-24: [KCSC 902SquashEd Tournament For Education](#)

Dec 7: SMUfit Xmas Calcutta
([Email to sign up!](#))

Dec 7-10: [2024 Forthlane Partners Canadian Junior Open](#)

of three girls.

There were several other SMUfit squash players who had stand out showings at the largest fall squash tournament held October 24 to October 27 at the SMUfit glass backed courts, and generously sponsored for the third year in a row by **Black Knight** providing \$2,500 in prizes to the 112 players in 10 divisions.

SMUfit squash player **Cordale Hann** produced a top performance to applause from the home crowd to win his third squash tournament in 10 months, clinching the Mixed Division 4 title last weekend at the SMUfit Black Knight Squash Open in Halifax.

Seeded third going in, the 29-year-old Hann, **Enfield**, faced unseeded **Kevin Cosgrove** of **Dalhousie Squash Club** in the Sunday afternoon finals.

Cosgrove made the finals after defeating 4th seed SMUfit player **Darlene Acton** in the first round of play to begin his impressive march to finals, with 3-0 wins in Main Draw Quarters and Semis on Saturday over first **Judy Myrden**, and then **Victor Onyebuchi**, only to be shut down by Hann in Finals with a 3-0 loss.

"I've been working hard to advance my game, so it's amazing to see that hard work pay off," Hann told In The Nick.

Hann won Division 3 in September at **Kentville** in the **King's County Rust Remover Squash Tournament** and earlier in the year won Division 4 title at the **Dalhousie Squash Tournament**.

Taking home the prize of the Mixed Division 2 was SMUfit squash player **Patrick Grant** after dropping the first two games against **Samuel Gallant** of **Kingston, N.S.**, he went on to win the match in five games taking the next three straight games.

SMUfit junior player **Zakareeah Hussein** won his first tournament taking the title of Junior Division 2 champion. Zakareeah faced his older brother, **Hamza Hussein**, in the Junior Division 2 main draw semi-final on Saturday night and won to advance to the finals. He won in five games, hard fought against **Alemnesh Sanche-Spencer**.



Adele Workman plays a forehand drive against opponent Justin Ching-Johnson in their Div 3 Finals Match on Sunday. Photo by Judy Myrden



Bishop walking off court past supporting fans at his 2021 SMUfit Open Finals match up with Jinks. File photo by Craig Potts

While his younger brother won the title champion, Hamza won the draw prize for juniors for a new BlackKnight Squash racquet donated by **David Wesley** of BlackKnight in support of junior development.

Meanwhile, SMUfit player **Brooklyn Boudreau**, of Halifax, who took up squash last year and entered her first tournament, playing in Women's Division 2, rose to the challenge and made it to the finals. She lost to **Jen Wiseman**, of the **Valley**, in four games after winning the first game.

The big upset of the tournament was 9th ranked SMUfit player **Adele Workman**, of Halifax, beating the top seed **Ian Kelly** in round one of the tournament on Thursday evening, and then advancing to the Finals against the number 2 seed **Justin Ching-Johnson** to lose in a fierce battle in five games.

Full tournament results can be found on **Club Locker**.

“In The Nick” - Turns One

By Judy Myrden

Welcome back to **In The Nick** (ITN), a monthly Nova Scotia squash newsletter, that aims to connect everyone playing squash in the province.

This issue is full of squash news from tournament results and photos, to the who's, who of players, Calendar of events, and the regular feature of Ask The Ref.

But also to mark the occasion of the **first anniversary** of the newsletter's launch to reflect a bit on what we hoped to accomplish - and to ask your support heading into year two.

SMUfit squash player and Squash Nova Scotia Vice-President **Craig Potts** said the aim was to connect everyone playing squash in the province, “mainly as another element to grow the sport in the province by keeping players and readers connected to what's happening and what's coming up for squash.”

The concept of a newsletter was discussed at a **Squash Nova Scotia** (SNS) board meeting in the summer of 2023 as part of the Board's goal to improve communication with members, he said.

From there Potts, along with SNS Director of Communications **Emily Burke** assembled the ITN team, community squash players **Judy Myrden**, a retired journalist as the Editor-In-Chief, **John Arnold**, a video game developer and IT expert for layout, and **Heather MacElwee**, as communications manager. **Mike Cook** joined the team in September 2024 with Arnold moving to Vancouver. (see October 2024 ITN issue.)

Shortly after we started we wondered whether we would have enough stories to even produce summer issues.

Well, the sport of squash and the many interesting and committed people who play, coach, referee and volunteer has certainly helped.

“I'm amazed every single month how less than a handful of volunteers each investing hours of their time, with zero budget, deliver a great newsletter month over month,” said Potts.

If anything, events of the past 12 months have only reinforced why it's so important to broaden the reach of the newsletter beyond a distribution list of 300 SNS members.

We are reaching out to new players all the time including; juniors, women, girls, university students, squash league players, newcomers to Canada, wheelchair players, instructors, referees across the province.



In The Nick staff include from left to right: Craig Potts, Emily Burke, Judy Myrden, and Michael Cook. Missing from the photo is Heather MacElwee.

Our rough estimate is that we've published over 40 stories, 80 photographs - of that number 32 photos of juniors - and an additional two wedding photos of squash players.

And there's little reason to think that this content is going to dry up.

This fall is shaping up to be another important season for squash with the King's Junior Valley Tournament, Black Knight SMUfit Tournament, Nova Scotia Junior Open, and King's County 902SquashEd Tournament for Education.

And it's hard to imagine the interest will diminish with the sport of squash - as the sport is expanding recently being added to the Olympics for the first time in Los Angeles in 2028.

As volunteers we are trying to cover as many events and people as possible. All of this to say, we've been heartened by the interest in, and support for this enterprise.

And we'd love to keep doing it. That's where you come in. If you have any story ideas please let us know, and also we are including a QR code hoping you'll share the newsletter with friends, colleagues and other squash fans.



Valley Junior Squash Tournament

The **Kings County Squash Club** hosted the **Valley Junior Squash Tournament** on Oct. 18 to 20 with 47 players participating in the three-day event. Tournament organizer **Greg Myers** congratulates **Jase Wiseman**, on the right, the winner of Division 5, and runner-up **Marin Woo**.

Eight players competed in Division 1 with **Kayin Burrell**, centre, coming in first place, **Andrew Klein**, on the left, in second and **Julia Akao** in third place. (Photos By James Wiseman.)



*Tournament Organizer: Greg Myers
Winner Division 5: Jase Wiseman
Runner-up: Marin Woo*



*Andrew Klein: Runner-up Division 1
Kayin Burrell: Winner Division 1
Julia Akao: Third Place Division 1*

Ask The Ref!

Free Flowing Squash - Officiating Considerations for Player Movement

By Lee Kirby, Abdo Abdallah, Zal Davar, Elvira Mitraka, Thomas Hori

The primary criteria to establish interference:

1. Did the Non-striker make every effort to clear?
2. Did the Striker make every effort to get to, and play the ball (without making contact with the opponent)?
3. Was the Striker in position to make a winning shot?

Following are all areas where making every effort to clear and get to and play the ball, will contribute to free flowing squash:

1. The Corners

- At the front corners, the Non-Striker must be able to clear their shot, providing the opponent a direct path to the ball, full swing, and direct shot to the front wall.
- The Striker is entitled to a direct line to the ball. Free flowing squash holds that the Striker makes the effort to go around the opponent's clearing effort.
- When clearing from the back corners (or the side walls), the non-Striker should arc away from the opponent's path to the ball.

2. Created Interference

- In both the front and back corners, the Striker must make an honest attempt to play the ball. Players who move directly toward their opponent when the ball is ungettable is "Created Interference" and is a No Let
- On tight hard rail shots deep down the walls, players may try to go directly across toward their opponent rather than toward the ball at the back, thereby creating interference; No Let.
- When Player A has played a loose ball (e.g. to the center of the court) and becomes "stuck" behind their opponent Player B, Player A must go around Player B to make their next return, and not move into Player B in search of a Let. This scenario is Created Interference: No Let.

3. The T

- When moving to the T after striking the ball players may not encroach on their opponent's path to the ball. Denying a direct path to the ball can be penalized by a Stroke. Making "every effort to clear" is achieved by arcing around the opponent's path from the corners to the T.
- A player does not "own the T". If the Striker is in the back court the opponent must clear the T to allow a direct shot to the entire front wall.

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.

4. Minimal Interference

- A key component of Free Flowing Squash is playing through minimal interference. Players are expected to go around the opponent when there is only slight obstruction. Minimal Interference typically results in a No Let, or possibly a caution to play through such situations.

5. Playing Through The Interference -

- Playing through genuine interference, making an effort to make the shot, and then asking for a let results in No Let. Lets must be requested at the point interference occurs, not after additional efforts have been made to get to the ball or make (and miss) a shot.

Double Daddy Duties For Squash Player Michael Howard

With joy and hopes of being future squash players, **SMUfit** squash player **Michael Howard**, and his wife, **Tajia**, along with toddler son, **Anthony**, introduce their newest family members - twins **Olivia**, weighing 5lbs and 9 ounces and **Conor**, weighing 6lbs and 1 oz, born on September 22, 2024. Congratulations on the new additions to your family.



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

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