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SMU Saves Halifax Squash League

By Judy Myrden

The number of venues available for the **Halifax Squash League** (HSL) will dwindle again this year, following a decision by **Dalhousie University** to no longer host matches.

Squash courts at **Saint Mary's University** will be the sole venue for the 2025-2026 season.

For the past forty years the participating facilities exchanged court times for their members on a reciprocal basis on Wednesday nights at no cost. Originally there were seven facilities.

Lindsay McFarlane, Fitness Co-Ordinator for Saint Mary's University, told **In The Nick** she was approached by league organizers in August after Dal was unwilling to offer "special rental pricing" for the courts.



HSL players Angelos Yiannou (left) and Meagan Nearing (right) on the courts at SMU.

(Photo by Heather MacElwee)

Upcoming Events

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

Oct 17-19: PEI Rust Remover

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

Nov 07-09: [902SquashEd Tournament for Education](#)

Nov 21-23: [Nova Scotia Junior Open](#)

SMU did not want to see the league fold and offered an extra night to hold matches, and league organizers offered \$1,000 for the court rentals which is double what they paid last year, she said.

"It's not much for an ongoing weekly rental but again we just want this league to have a place to play and we understand that the league serves many of our plus (squash) members

Players were informed on the new arrangement in an e-mail from **Cameron Reid, Director of Competitive Programming for Squash Nova Scotia** on September 16, 2025.

"After many successful years of running out of both Dalhousie and SMUfit, we were unfortunately unable to come to terms with Dalhousie for court access this season," he wrote.

According to people familiar with the negotiations, Dal wanted to charge court rental fees of about \$3,000 for the Fall session and again for the Winter session.

"While we understand the financial pressures of operating a facility, the rental fees Dal proposed would have significantly increased costs for league participants – making it unaffordable for many," Reid told **In The Nick**.

While the league matches will be held exclusively at SMUfit, the league remains open to players from all clubs.

Last year 60 players and 12 teams participated in the league. This year organizers are looking to accommodate 50 players and 10 teams, said Reid.

The cost of participating will increase to \$75 this year compared to \$50 for the 2024-2025 season.

A longtime member of the Dalplex squash club expressed dismay with Dal's decision.

"I'm disappointed by Dalplex's position on HSL," **Dan Hasselman**, who has been playing for 18 years, at the Dalplex told **In The Nick**.

"It's a valuable part of our community that bridges the SMU and Dal (squash) clubs, and it seems that there's some room to educate Dalplex staff on the value of HSL to our larger community," he added.

Hasselman is "grateful" to HSL organizers for negotiating a new deal but wonders "whether the stance taken by Dalplex will make some players consider joining SMU instead?"

The league will begin playing October 1.

Games will be played across two nights on Wednesday and Thursday, compared to one night in the past.

Justin Ching-Johnson is the new League Convener taking over from **Phil Jourdeuil**, who ran the league for many years.

Last year Cole Harbour Place (CHP) withdrew from the league after CHP, Dal and SMUfit wanted to charge HSL an estimated combined \$20,000 including court rental costs, which could have caused the league to default. (See In The Nick October 2024.)

HSL Convenors and Squash Nova Scotia Board of Directors met with SMUfit and Dal to reach a compromise.

Eventually both allowed HSL to continue to access courts under a new contract in 2024-2025 at a nominal fee of \$500 per season, as long as the league players were members of one of the participating facilities.

Dal Squash Club at the Dalhousie Clubs and Societies Expo

Members of the **Dalhousie Squash Club** from left to right **Rawan Abouelela**, **Anton Kredl**, and **Sukhpreet Singh Aujla** participated in the annual Clubs and Societies Expo held September 16 at the Dalhousie Student Union Building.

The event is a great opportunity for students to network and learn about the 300 societies on campus.



(Photo By Emily Burke)

Nova Scotia Junior Rust Remover

By Judy Myrden

SMUfit squash player **Monique Guilderson**, and mother of junior squash player Leo, played Tournament Director for the first time of the **Nova Scotia Junior Rust Remover**.

The one-day event was held September 13 at SMUfit squash courts with 17 juniors participating from **HRM**, the **Valley** and **New Brunswick**.

There was some scrambling at the beginning of the day as originally there were 20 registered for the draw but no shows meant organizers had to redo the draw.

Kentville squash player **Sophia Myers** was recruited to play up a division into Mixed 2. She was already in Mixed 3. Sophia won both divisions. In total she played eight matches during the tournament.

While Guilderson organized the event she said it would not have been possible without the the help of volunteers including; squash players **Sierra Cox** and **Sidaunte Smith**. Also **Craig Potts** for offering help on running a tournament and **James Wiseman** putting the draws together.



*Kentville junior squash player Marin Woo digs the ball out of the back corner while her opponent Sophia Myers watches closely.
(Photo by Heather MacElwee)*



*When not playing squash, juniors enjoyed playing board games off the court at the tournament.
(Photo by Monique Guilderson)*

Fellow squash mom Natalie Rosen ensured organizers had snacks and helped Guilderson keep things running smoothly.

Sponsors of the tournament were Halifax's District 7 Councillor **Laura White** donated \$500 from her discretionary funds to the junior event. **Back To Health Chiropractic and Wellness** in **Lower Sackville** provided food and drinks from Tim Horton's and participation gift cards.

Ask the Ref!

What To Expect From Referees During the 2025/26 Season

From the Black Shirt Team: Zal Davar, Thom Hori, Lee Kirby, Elvira Mitraka, and Abdo Abdelrahman

As we begin the 2025-2026 Squash season, here's what to expect from Officials, in line with the Rules of Squash 2025, which came into effect September 1, 2025.

Referees will:

- Apply changes to the Rules of Squash, including the key changes outlined below.
- Continue to take a consistent approach to misconduct, with respect for Officials now forming a key part of the Fair Play principle and **'attempting to influence the referee' being added as a specific Conduct Violation.**
- Maintain the continuous flow of matches, by utilizing updated rules around injury breaks and court conditions.

The key changes to the Rules of Squash 2025 are related to the areas below :

- Access
- Swing Interference
- Turning
- Conditions of Play
- Timing Changes
- Injury and Medical Provisions
- Pre-Existing Wounds
- Illness
- Conduct

A document providing details for the above, will be sent separately to **Squash Nova Scotia** Membership under dedicated cover.

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.

SMUfit Ladies Squash Night

A group of 26 ladies recently attended the first session of Monday Ladies Night Squash at SMUfit.

The program runs from September to April on Monday nights from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

[Registration](#) is now open for Monday Ladies Night Squash for **SMUfit Plus Members**.



(Photo by Leah Boody)

Born to Play Squash

SMUfit squash player Luke Poirier and wife, Lynn, announce the birth of their first child, Lily, weighing 7lbs and 4 oz, born on August 19, 2025.

Congratulations!



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

Editor in Chief: Judy Myrden	Contributor: Craig Potts
Director: Rawan Abouelela	Logo: Fei Gao
Layout: Justin Ching-Johnson	Sport NS: Veronica Todd
Communication Manager: Heather MacElwee	



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