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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A message from Paul Macari, President of Scottish Squash

Dear All,

Welcome to the 2023-24 Annual Report, where I am delighted to share the progress made across the sport and the outstanding contribution of players, clubs, coaches, referees and all who support the delivery of the sport across Scotland. Members of the Scottish Squash team have done a great job of highlighting the key successes and achievements aligned to the company vision, values and overarching objectives.

We have continued to deliver the 2023-27 Strategic Plan 'Together for Squash in Scotland', and we have also continued to listen to the sport as we implement key objectives in relation to inclusion, player pathway and leadership. I continue to urge the squash community in Scotland to work together and help the sport to thrive as we create a culture where everyone is working together for the good of the sport.

Once again, you will see many examples of this within the Annual Report. I am incredibly proud of the continued progress made by the performance athletes on the world stage. I am impressed by the coach development work taking place to underpin these impressive performances, and to grow the coaching teams of the future. The pathway programme delivery is ensuring the best possible support for talented players.

Event delivery remains strong with the continued delivery of the Springfield Scottish Squash Open, bringing international players to Scotland and providing an exciting and relevant competition experience for Scottish players.

I am delighted by the work being done to bring more women and girls, and more young people in general, into the sport as players, referees and leaders, breathing life into clubs and regions.

Well done for all that has been achieved in 2023-24 and we look forward to more success in the forthcoming season.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT (continued)

Once again, I am grateful to our lead investor, **sport**scotland, to our lead sponsor The Springfield Group and to other sponsors and donors who have supported generously throughout the season. This has enabled the delivery of goals across squash in Scotland, including players competing on the world stage. The associated costs are of course a challenge for the sport, and the hard work and support of sponsors, parents and colleagues is greatly appreciated.

Once again, so many fantastic achievements, and others, which will mean so much to so many, and for which we should all be extremely proud!

I would like to thank you all for your contribution to these successes. Thank you to everyone who coaches, referees, and administers the game, and to our CEO, Maggie Still, and the staff team, without whom we wouldn't be where we are. We appreciate all the time and effort you all give to the sport we love.

Maggie will be stepping down as CEO in October after nine years with Scottish Squash and we thank her for her service to the sport and wish her well in her new role. Garry McKay will take over as interim CEO as we start the search for a new long-term, full-time CEO.

With deep sadness in 2023-24 we have said goodbye to friends from the squash world, including people who have contributed heavily to the development of the sport; Paul Charlton and George Tierney from the Grampian Region and David Taylor from the Highlands and Islands will be greatly missed, and we pass on our condolences to family and friends.

We would like to thank **sport**scotland for their continuing support and guidance, as well as our amazing sponsor The Springfield Group, and the other organisations with whom we have built successful relationships in Scotland and across the world.

Thanks also to the Board of Directors, who give me fantastic support throughout the year and ensure that the governance of the organisation and the sports' needs are fulfilled.

taul Macos

OUR THANKS

Scottish Squash extend their sincere gratitude to investors, partners and suppliers for their ongoing support and contributions to squash in Scotland.

Lead Investor sportscotland



Title Sponsor *The Springfield Group*







Official Suppliers







SPORTSSHOES.COM



CLUBDEVELOPMENT

In 2023-24, club membership remained consistent with 87 member clubs engaged in the network across squash in Scotland.

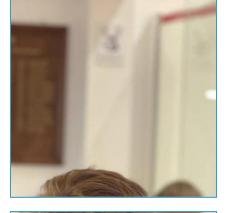
Considerable challenges remain across the club network as a result of the cost-of-living crisis and increasing energy costs. However, the network has risen to the challenge with optimism, innovation and resilience to continue to provide and develop the opportunities that exist at a club level.

We would like to recognise and thank each and every one of you who have served in a club committee role in 2023-24.

87

Member clubs engaged in the network across Scotland



















CLUB DEVELOPMENT (continued)

The Club Support Forum has continued throughout 2023-24 and provides both an education and networking opportunity for clubs to develop knowledge and share best practice. A range of topics, listed below, have featured and all of the recordings are available online via the <u>Club Toolkit</u>.

- Getting insurance right for squash clubs [with thanks to Marsh Insurance]
- Funding and grant applications for squash clubs [with thanks to Spirit of 2012]
- Making squash accessible to all [with thanks to Aron Harper-Robinson from Calder Community Squash]
- Creating a thriving junior section [with thanks to Frank MacCulloch from Dornoch Squash Club]

A new Regional Association Working Group, bringing together all regional associations on a quarterly basis, was set up in 2023-24. This group is continuing to be established to support the flow of communication from national to regional and on to a local/club level.

Thank you to those of you who have fulfilled a role as regional chair and to your extended regional committees.

YOUNG AMBASSADORS

The Young Ambassadors programme continued throughout 2023-24, providing an opportunity to grow the voice and connect young people to the development of squash in Scotland across a national, regional and local / club level.



An overarching goal of the programme is to develop values and behaviours throughout squash in Scotland that support more young people into leadership and delivery roles across the sport.

In 2023-24, a cohort of 10 young people took the opportunity and engaged in various initiatives including a Scottish Squash Board and Young Ambassadors residential, a professional player experience workshop and various training and development opportunities.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Scottish Squash continues to aspire for squash in Scotland to be reflective of the Scottish population.

In 2023-24, Scottish Squash embarked on the <u>Moving to Inclusion</u> framework, and we would like to thank **sport**scotland, <u>Plan4Sport</u>, and all our other equality partners for their support, advice and guidance across this important area of work. A particular thank you is also extended to all those who have volunteered their time to contribute to the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group.

The Scottish Squash Equality Action Plan continues to be informed and shaped by the results of the annual Equality Monitoring Survey, and we thank those who engaged with and completed the most recent survey. Women and girls and young people are significantly underrepresented across squash in Scotland. Scottish Squash also recognises that a wide range of communities experience barriers to taking part in squash, and we are committed to gaining a better understanding and to putting measures in place to ensure that everyone can enjoy being involved in the sport across Scotland.



In 2023-24, Scottish Squash embarked on the Moving to Inclusion framework.

Visit https://movingtoinclusion.co.uk to learn more.

SQUASH STARS

Scottish Squash have partnered with England Squash to pilot the introduction of their Squash Stars participation programme in two facilities in Scotland.

Oriam at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh and Scotstoun Sports Campus in Glasgow were both engaged in the pilot across 2023-24 and plans are continuing to be developed to support a national rollout of the Squash Stars programme.

Squash Stars is an action-packed six-week programme for children aged 5-9 years old, developing skills and confidence in a fun and safe setting.





For £42 every child gets six coaching sessions and a kit bag which includes a Squash Stars racket, t-shirt, bag, ball and pair of goggles delivered straight to their door



SCHOOL SQUASH

Schoolsquash and Squash Leaders Award delivery continued throughout 2023-2024 in a revamped format thanks to the development of a Squash Leaders online e-learning module aimed at introducing the rules and fundamentals of the game. The changes allowed for less in-person delivery, as feedback from schools was that it had become increasingly challenging to accommodate a 3-hour delivery block.

The academic year saw over 150 new Squash Leaders trained across 8 local authorities, many of whom used the knowledge gained to introduce squash to pupils at local primary schools or lead lunchtime clubs for peers in their own school.



A highlight this year was establishing school**squash** at Drummond in Inverness, an Additional Support Needs school where pupils became fully qualified Squash Leaders and now run their own weekly squash club.

In addition, a further 750+ young people were introduced to squash via school**squash** in Grampian as a result of the Direct Club Investment project which continues to thrive, with around 15% of those young people now attending regular weekly sessions at local clubs.

WOMEN AND GIRLS

The continued growth of women and girls' squash across Scotland is evident and we would like to take this opportunity to recognise those across the sport who are championing increased opportunities for more women and girls to take part and stay involved in the sport.

H//T SQUASH

In developing the H//T SQUASH programme, 2023-24 welcomed the introduction of the H//T SQUASH Award. This new award has been developed to grow and upskill a network of H//T ACT/VATORS who are trained to deliver opportunities for female beginner players to be welcomed on court, become more active and learn new skills in a fun, friendly and safe environment. Clubs are encouraged to apply, with each award only requiring three participants to register.

WISPS

The 'Women in Scotland Playing Squash' (WISPS) community-based initiative has also gone from strength to strength in its second full season across 2023-24. With regular tournaments throughout Scotland overseen by Edinburgh-based squash coach and coordinator, Elaine Inglis, WISPS has provided women and girls across Scotland the opportunity to compete socially in one-day competitions, while developing friendships and increasing the accessibility of squash for all age groups.











COACH EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

Scottish Squash has continued to support a national network of approximately 100 coaches through the Coach Licence. This support has included a range of CPD opportunities and regular communication and networking opportunities, and we are keen to continue to enhance and add to this offer moving forward.

Six Level 1 Courses Two Level 2 Courses

Delivered to over 70 candidates



Investment for coach education opportunities

OVER \$10,000

In 2023-24, six Level 1 coaching courses and two Level 2 coaching courses were delivered to over 70 candidates.

The courses were delivered across a range of online, inperson and hybrid learning styles to cater for as wide a variety of learners as possible.

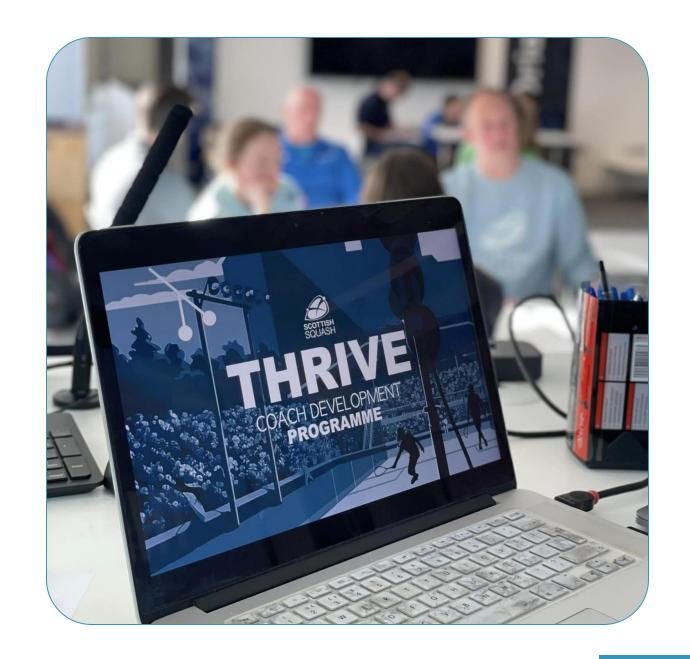
Two of the courses were targeted at women and girls and young people in an effort to address identified areas of underrepresentation. An application to **sport**scotland's coaching subsidy welcomed investment of over £10,000 to support candidates from both underrepresented and disadvantaged communities to receive financial assistance to attend coach education opportunities.

THRIVE

The THRIVE coach development programme continued in 2023-24, bringing together 14 head/lead coaches from clubs across Scotland.

The programme aims to collectively raise the awareness and desire for change, by sharing insight and research on coaching and up-to-date knowledge of community and athletes' needs. In addition to four in-person training days, the programme offers candidates bespoke support from a dedicated coach developer.

The coach developer provides on-site mentoring in a candidate's local environment across the duration of the programme and our thanks go to **sport**scotland for their continued investment to underpin this dedicated support.



REFEREING

A special thank you is once again extended to the volunteer referee workforce that underpins the competition calendar in Scotland. In 2023-24, Scottish Squash enrolled in the World Squash Officiating (WSO) framework and have been supporting the network of referees to transition existing qualifications on to the new framework. A CPD session, led by the Head of WSO, took place during The Edinburgh Open (March 2024) for all existing referees and the implementation of a calendar of learning and development opportunities will become a key focus moving forward.

A new initiative – Progression Reffin' – to encourage more young people to be introduced and engaged in refereeing, was launched in 2023-24. This new initiative will connect to WSO and with the aim of changing the stigma around refereeing by recruiting people between the age of 14-35 years old, equipping them with the necessary skills and giving them the opportunities to progress in the often unexplored realm of refereeing.





WELLBEING AND SAFE SPORT

We would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to the network of Child Wellbeing and Protection Officers that serve the squash clubs across Scotland. This is such an important role to ensure that the sport remains fully committed to safeguarding, promoting and supporting the protection and wellbeing of all participants.

A series of online workshops were delivered in 2023-24 as we continue to prepare for some changes to the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) legislation, and Scottish Squash are committed to growing closer to the club network of Child Wellbeing and Protection Officers moving forward. We also continue to support clubs through the provision of secure online storage for the safe protection of all child protection information. Clubs are reminded that they should reach out to the national governing body if they wish to make use of this service.



PERFORMANCE PATHWAY

ELITE PERFORMANCE

Another busy year for the senior squads saw Scotland's Men's and Women's teams compete in Finland and New Zealand.

The women's team continued their impressive run of form by winning Division 2 at the European Team Championships in Helsinki, Finland in April 2023. They beat the Czech Republic in the final to secure promotion back to Division 1. The men's team recovered from an under-par performance at the European Team Championships, unfortunately seeing them relegated to Division 2, to record an impressive 8th place finish at the Men's World Team Championships in New Zealand in December 2023.



A hard-fought win against Hong Kong, China in the round of 16, secured an opportunity to face the eventual World Champions, Egypt, allowing the team to go on and match the women's 8th place finish at the same event in the previous year.

Scottish Squash would like to express its sincere thanks to all the partners and donors who supported the cause to get the team to the 2023 championships.

ELITE **PERFORMANCE**

(continued)

Individually, it was a very positive 2023-24 season for many of the players within the Elite Performance Squad. Greg Lobban progressed to a **Professional Squash Association** (PSA) World Tour Platinum quarter final for this first time in his career, helping him to achieve his highest ranking to date and inside the top 20 in the World rankings. Georgia Adderley won a PSA Challenger Tour 20 in Canada and also achieved her highest World ranking to date at

number 32. Alasdair Prott and Alison Thomson both secured titles on the PSA Challenger Tour, and Robyn McAlpine on the PSA Satellite Tour.

As part of an ongoing partnership agreement, Scottish Squash would like to thank Oriam at Heriot-Watt University for continuing to offer a world-class training environment and to the **sport**scotland Institute of Sport for the athlete support services that underpin the Scottish Squash Elite Performance Squad.

Scotland's top ranked player, Greg Lobban













Reached the top 20 in the world in 2023

PERFORMANCE PATHWAY PROGRAMME

In addition to the Elite Performance Squad, the
Performance Pathway Programme was revamped in
2023-24 to include a new Under 23 Academy and
Development Squad. These two squads aim to support
young players to develop all areas of their game and to
assist the transition from the junior to senior game.

The Under 23 Academy has included the opportunity for players to train alongside the Elite Performance Squad at Oriam, Scotland's Sports Performance Centre and the Development Squad has featured squad sessions across the different regions in Scotland. A group of eight lead coaches were appointed to support the delivery of these squad sessions and we would like to thank each of those coaches for their contribution to the programme.



A regional girls day in the Highlands & Islands region formed part of the PPP Development Squad weekend sessions



Eight Scottish juniors took to the world stage in Melbourne at the World Junior Championships, July 2023

On a representative level, the highlight of the year came as a result of a hugely innovative and successful fundraising campaign led by a group of parents/carers and young people. The group and the squash community across Scotland rallied together to raise the funds required to send some of the sports' most promising young players to the World Junior Championships in Melbourne in July 2023.

The fundraising campaign was generously backed by individuals, regional associations, clubs and a donation from the official footwear supplier to Scottish Squash, sportsshoes.com. The 2023 event was the turn of the women's team championship, and this signalled the first time since 2005 that Scotland had entered a girls' team. Well done to all those selected and to the girls' team for their 10th place finish.

Earlier in the season, the Under 19 mixed team put in a strong performance to secure a 5th place finish at the European Team Championships. At the lower age groups, the Under 17 team finished in 15th place and the Under 15 team finished in 8th place. The Under 15 and Under 13 mixed teams also secured bronze at the 5 Nations Team Championships.

COMPETITIONS CALENDAR

The Springfield Scottish Squash Open returned in 2023 and we would like to extend our thanks to Inverness Tennis & Squash Club, as well as the event staff, volunteers, athletes, spectators and the numerous partners that ensured the event was delivered safely and successfully.





Staying on an international level, the JC Lindsay Scottish

Junior Open was again delivered in partnership with

Edinburgh Sports Club and Oriam at Heriot-Watt University,

attracting over 180 players from across 30 countries. In amongst a notably strong international entry were a number of excellent Scottish performances, with Robyn McAlpine finishing as runner-up in the Girls Under 19 draw and Kyle Penman securing the Boys Under 19 title.

Over 20 junior players travelled to the British Junior
Championships in October 2023, mostly part of a
Scottish Squash-led trip. Supported by a number of
coaches from regions across Scotland, there were
some strong performances, and notable achievements
for Thomas Myers who won the Boys Under 13 age
group, with Louisa Kaven third in the Girls Under 17s.



There was further Scottish talent on display at the 2024 British Junior Open in January, with rising star Murdo Mackenzie achieving an impressive 8th place finish in the Boys Under 15s.

The 2023-24 National League came down to the last round of fixtures with Heriot-Watt University prevailing in the women's league and Edinburgh Sports Club taking the title in the men's league. The Heriot-Watt University men's team also achieved notable success reaching the final of the BUCS National Championships in March 2024.





On a domestic level, 28 national champions were crowned in season 2023-24, with winners ranging in age from 9 to 75 years old, demonstrating once again the broad demographic that is a defining feature of the squash community in Scotland.

The ever-popular Racketball Around Scotland tour (organised by RASTA) continued with a new season beginning in January 2024. Amongst increased numbers of sanctioned competitions, several organisers found consistency in delivery of competitions over part or full-season length series, developing socially competitive opportunities particularly at the junior, beginner and intermediate levels of the game. Scottish Squash would like to thank all the competition organisers for their contribution to the successful delivery of the 2023-24 season.

79

Representative selections for Scottish Masters players

On the Masters circuit, 14 teams competed in the Masters Home Internationals age group series, with 79 selections for Scottish Masters players.

Congratulations to all selected to represent
Scotland and a special mention to the
Women's Over 50 team who secured the 2023
title. The strength and togetherness of the
Masters community was evident across the
age groups and a particular thank you is
extended to Edinburgh Sports Club for hosting
the Scotland edition of the series.





The Scottish Squash Board of Directors remain committed to our corporate governance and the Board is underpinned by two Board-appointed, non-executive-director-led sub-committees and two executive-appointed, staff-led advisory groups.



Scottish Squash is part of an early cohort for the Moving to Inclusion framework, an initiative by all UK sports councils to provide resources and support moving towards a more diverse, inclusive and socially responsible sport. Our Equality Action Plan will support priority areas of work to ensure we are welcoming and accessible to all.

Our annual awards were a great success, held at the Glasgow University Union and supported by <u>The Fitness Group</u> as the



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework

headline sponsor, we celebrated all that is great about squash and the achievements from across our sport, while recognising the people in our sport who make the squash in Scotland community what it is. Thank you to all those who contributed to and supported a fantastic evening, and congratulations to all the 2023 award winners and nominees.



Turnover for the year was £714,696 compared to £822,252 in the previous year. The reduction is primarily a result of the World Doubles Championships delivered in 2022 and included within 2022-23. Overall, the 2023-24 total continues to surpass all prepandemic levels of revenue, continuing to show a return to full delivery, an increase in the capacity of the sport and a greater ability to drive growth and development.



Income for the year includes the slightly increased investment award—aligned to the 2023-27 strategic cycle—from **sport**scotland and we remain grateful to the national agency for their continued support. We are also thankful for the ongoing support of our title sponsor, The Springfield Group, and all of our other partners whose contributions in 2023-24 have supported various programmes and projects across key strategic areas. Marc Hope continues to lead the commercial working group in his role as a Board Director and thank you to all others, from inside and outside the squash community, who have supported the work of this group and offered invaluable insight and expertise.



A special thanks goes out to all the sponsors and donations received to support both the men's team and the junior team to attend their respective World Championships in 2023-24.

A particular mention is reserved for the parents/carers and the junior team members for all of their fundraising efforts and the togetherness shown to reach their desired target.



Overall, the Scottish Squash accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 show a small deficit of £1,182. This position was approximately £10,000 ahead of budget and we would like to thank Framework Advisory for their ongoing support and advice as our contracted financial management partner.

The balance sheet as of 31 March 2024 shows a stable position with reserves of £124,320. The Board, in considering the reserves as part of their annual review, are satisfied that there are sufficient reserves and secured future investment in place to allow Scottish Squash to continue operating for the foreseeable future. The full set of Scottish Squash financial statements are available publicly from Companies House.



2023 AWARD WINNERS









Junior Player of the Year
Senior Player of the Year
Masters Player of the Year
Referee of the Year
Coach of the Year
Club of the Year

Robyn McAlpine Western & Scotstoun Squash Club
Greg Lobban
Senga Macfie Abercorn Squash Club
Steffan Gwyn Newlands Lawn Tennis Club
Matt Bedwell Newlands Lawn Tennis Club
Inverness Tennis & Squash Club



2023 AWARD WINNERS

Services to Squash

Paul Charlton

1956 - 2024 Grampian Region

Scottish Squash extend their condolences to Paul's family and friends and gratefully acknowledge his years of devoted service to the sport.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

A message from Maggie Still, Chief Executive Officer of Scottish Squash

Well done everyone for another outstanding year across Squash in Scotland.

I have enjoyed seeing the progress of the players across all age groups and have once again felt huge gratitude for those of you who make this happen; parents, coaches and volunteers. I hope that you have had an enjoyable and fulfilling season and that you are 'fired up' and ready for the season ahead.

I am sad to share that after nine years with Scottish Squash, I will be leaving in October to take up a new role as CEO of British Ice Skating, closer to home in Sheffield.

I am incredibly proud of all that has been achieved in my time with Scottish Squash, including athletes winning medals on the Commonwealth, European and world stage, delivering major championships, implementing a culture that enables women, girls and young people to thrive, and becoming one of the best regarded Scottish governing bodies of sport from a governance perspective. I have been privileged to watch the progress of players and see the skill, determination and resilience required to succeed on the world stage. Greg, Lisa, Georgia, Rory, Ali and all, well done for all you have achieved. Whilst the Commonwealth Games still experiences uncertainty, good luck on the PSA journey and on the run in to the Los Angeles Olympics in 2028. You are an inspiration to the young athletes transitioning through the pathway, and to their coaches and families. Pathway athletes... go well and go after them!

A huge thank you also goes to our network of regional committees, clubs, coaches, referees and volunteers, as without you, the sport could not continue. I highlight the work of the referees who give countless hours to enhance the quality of competitions across Scotland and applaud the work being done to bring new referees into the sport. I also highlight the work of Keith and Jason, through RASTA, delivering a fun and engaging calendar of racketball tournaments across the nation.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT (continued)

I am hugely grateful to Jim Hay, and the Board of Directors of 2015 for giving me the opportunity in the role, and to subsequent Chairs, Mark Addertey and Paul Macari, and Boards for your generous support. A few people spring to mind who have given so much and shaped the direction of the organisation over the past nine years; Alan Marshall, Stuart Tennant, Bob Easson, David Massey, Marc Hope, Paul Charlton and many others who have always been there to support and who have become great friends over the years. I would also like to mention Gordon Mavor and the team at Framework for their excellent work in financial management over the years.

I have been fortunate to have worked with an excellent team of staff and I would like to acknowledge the tremendous work of Garry McKay, whose focused and detailed work as Chief Operating Officer underpinned the organisation and enabled me to move to part – time CEO following the birth of my daughter Charlie in 2020. I am delighted that Garry will move to Interim CEO over the coming months as we recruit a full-time, long-term CEO and strengthen the leadership team.

I wish to acknowledge the contribution of Allan McKay, who left Scottish Squash earlier this year to join Scottish Cycling. Allan joined the organisation shortly after me in 2016, applying his squash and development knowledge to grow the sport and bring major commercial events and opportunity to the sport.

Paul Bell, again joining the organisation in 2016, used his coaching skills to support the athletes and achieve some outstanding performances over the years, including coaching Greg and Rory medal to a Commonwealth Games medal at Birmingham 2022. We have had an outstanding leadership team and whilst change can be difficult, we are in a strong position thanks to the efforts of the sport, and I am confident we will attract great people as we recruit a new team.

I am grateful for the continued support of **sport**scotland, who continue to lead, listen and support to help us to achieve our goals. In the Commonwealth Year and beyond, Jon Doig and the team at Team Scotland, continue to provide brilliant support and leadership.

Once again, I would like to personally thank Sandy and Anne Adam, the team at The Springfield Group, and the Adam Family Foundation, as their incredible support continues. What an amazing sponsor Sandy has been throughout my tenure as CEO. Thank you, Sandy and Anne, for all that you have done for Scottish Squash!

I have made many friends in squash in Scotland, I will miss you, and I have learned so much from you that I will take forward into my new role. Thank you all for my time in Scottish Squash and good luck in your future endeavours. I look forward to hearing about your future successes.

Masself





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