

# REPORT TO THE 30<sup>th</sup> A.G.M OF THE BARBADOS SQUASH RACKETS ASSOCIATION (BSRA) - FOR THE PERIOD MAY 21, 2009 TO MAY 25, 2010.

This report is submitted on behalf of the Council of the BSRA to the membership and covers a period of twelve months since the last Annual General Meeting.

## ADMINISTRATION

### **Affiliation**

The BSRA is recognized as a National Sports Federation by the Barbados Olympic Association Inc. (BOA) and the National Sports Council (NSC). The BSRA is also affiliated to the World Squash Federation (WSF), the *Federacion Panamericana de Squash* (FPS) and the Caribbean Area Squash Association (CASA).

### **BSRA Council**

At the 29<sup>th</sup> AGM the following members were elected: Mr. Craig Archer – President; Mr. Orson Simpson - Senior Vice President; Mr. Sanjay Amin - Junior Vice President; Mr. Shawn Simpson - Treasurer; Ms. Jeannette Cullen - Secretary; as well as the following four Council Members: Mr. Tony Mackenzie, Mrs. Yvonne Parris; Mr. Norman Rice and Mr. Dean Straker. The position of Assistant (Recording) Secretary was not filled at the A.G.M. Mr. Mackenzie resigned from Council in September 2009 and the vacancy this created was not filled. The Council met on eight occasions during the period under review. All Council meetings were held at the Barbados Olympic Centre.

### **Sub-Committees**

The seven appointed BSRA sub-committees and their conveners were as follows: Disciplinary (Norman Rice), Fund Raising (Dean Straker), Junior Development (Tony Mackenzie and then Marlon White), Public Relations and Marketing (Craig Archer), Selection and Ranking (Craig Archer), Squash Development (Craig Archer), Tournament (Tony Mackenzie and then Craig Archer). All sub-committee members are thanked for their various contributions to the performance of these committees.

### **Membership**

There has been no significant change in the BSRA's membership base. There are three affiliated clubs: Barbados Defence Force (BDF), Barbados Squash Club (BSC) and Pleasant Place Squash Club (PP), and approximately 75 ordinary and 50 junior (i.e. under-19) paid up members. There are approximately 200 – 250 persons who play socially. Mr. Rudy Goodridge remains the only Honorary Life Member of the Association.

## SPORTS POSITIONS HELD, AWARDS AND APPOINTMENTS

### **Squash Hall of Fame**

Prior to the staging of the XXVII Junior Caribbean Squash (Junior CASA) Championships here in July 2009 the BSRA Council agreed to launch a **Squash Hall of Fame** for Barbados. Four persons who had made significant contributions to squash since its introduction to Barbados in the early 1970's were chosen by Council to be the inaugural inductees. **Mrs. Angela Webber** and **Messrs. Mickey Armstrong; Ralph Johnson and Rudy Goodridge** were inducted during the closing ceremony of the Junior CASA Championships on July 18, 2009. These four squash stalwarts were all present for the ceremony and were both delighted and moved to be honoured by their peers at such an event. Council has agreed in principle that future induction ceremonies will be held every other year, when a maximum of two persons will be inducted.

### **Director of Squash**

After an extensive search and recruitment process that took over five months, **Mr. Jonathan Gallacher**, a Level 4 certified squash coach from England, accepted the BSRA's offer to fill the newly created position of Director of Squash. The BSRA is deeply grateful to both the Barbados Olympic Association and the National Sports Council for their financial support and funding that has enabled the BSRA to fill this position. We expect to achieve significant gains; improve our regional performances and raise the profile of squash in Barbados as a result of this appointment.

### **Barbados Olympic Association Inc. (BOA)**

Craig Archer is currently a Director of the BOA. His third four-year term of office will end in 2012, after the summer Olympic Games in London, England.

### **World Squash Federation (WSF)**

Craig Archer is a member of the Technical Committee of the WSF which is chaired by Chris Herridge of England. Most of the work of this committee is carried out via e-mail. The current term of this committee will end in October 2010.

**Caribbean Area Squash Association (CASA)**

Craig Archer was elected to the position of President of CASA in October 2009. This is his sixth consecutive two-year term on the CASA Executive which will end in August 2011. The other CASA Officers are as follows:

Vice President – Ms. Karen Anderson [Jamaica]; Secretary – Mr. Ronald Burch-Smith [Guyana]; Treasurer – Mr. Ian Patrick [Cayman]; Officers – Mr. Adrian Burrows [Bahamas]; Mr. Patrick Foster [Bermuda]; Dr. Sherian Slater [OECS - St. Vincent]; Mr. Francisco Paradisi [Venezuela].

**National Sports Council (NSC)**

At the NSC Awards ceremony held on January 30, 2010 both Craig Archer and Orson Simpson were recognized in the category “Official Achieving International Recognition” for 2009. Danny Chesham was also nominated in the Youth Award category.

**INTERNATIONAL OR MAJOR MEETINGS ATTENDED****Caribbean Area Squash Association (CASA)**

Orson Simpson represented Barbados at the General Meeting of CASA held in Grand Cayman in August, 2009 during the Senior Caribbean Squash Championships held there. Craig Archer attended this meeting in his position of 7<sup>th</sup> Officer of CASA and was subsequently elected President. At that meeting the structure of CASA was fundamentally changed so now each of the nine members has a seat on the Executive. The four CASA Officers are then selected from those nine persons. The next CASA AGM will be held in St. Vincent on August 19, 2010.

**Federación Panamericana de Squash (FPS)**

Barbados was represented by Mark Sealy at the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting of the FPS held in Ambato, Ecuador in October 2009 during the senior Pan American Squash Championships. The next FPS AGM will be held during the Senior Pan American Squash Championships in Guatemala City in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of November 2010.

**World Squash Federation (WSF)**

Barbados was represented by Chris Herridge at the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting and Conference of the WSF held in Subang Jaya, Malaysia from November 13 -14, 2009. Mr. Herridge travelled to Malaysia in his capacity as the Director of the WSF's Technical Committee and represented Barbados at no cost to the BSRA.

**World Refereeing Conference**

Craig Archer attended the 10<sup>th</sup> biennial World Refereeing Conference in Odense, Denmark (September 25 & 26, 2009).

**Barbados Olympic Association (BOA)**

Orson Simpson and Jeannette Cullen represented the BSRA at the Annual General Meeting of the BOA held at the Sherbourne Conference Centre on June 12, 2009. Craig Archer also attended in his own right as a BOA Director.

**FINANCE****Sponsorship**

The lifeblood of this Association continues to be the generous support of our loyal sponsors. Sponsorship and grants from the **Barbados Olympic Association Inc.** were in excess of \$44,000 in 2009 and enabled our continued staging of domestic competitions and events, as well as overseas tours and the other work of this Association. The BSRA continues to be exceedingly grateful for all the assistance, both financial and logistical, given to us by the BOA. Other sponsors such as: **Powerade, Sagicor General Insurance Company, Guardian General Insurance Co., Barbados Shipping & Trading (BS&T)** and especially the **National Sports Council** are all thanked for their continued and loyal support of the tournaments on the local squash calendar. All of these competitions were held at the **Barbados Squash Club** and the management of the BSC is once again thanked for its continuing support of squash over the years. As usual our gratitude is also extended to **Mr. Tony Roach**, the long serving Club attendant, who is always so helpful during our events there.

**Fund Raising**

As you will see from the Treasurer's report which will be presented shortly, we made a small profit in 2009 of just over \$4,300 - a major improvement on the large deficit we sustained in 2008 – which was achieved even though our travel costs in 2009 were much higher than our original budget because the senior CASA Championships had to be relocated at short notice from Trinidad to Grand Cayman due to the swine flu outbreak in the twin island republic. Despite that challenge our financial position improved partially as a result of a healthy profit arising from successfully hosting the 27<sup>th</sup> Junior CASA Championships in July 2009, as well as some other fund raising events, including the “In the Nick of Time” function held last October at the home of Mandy and Ricardo Garcia. The Fund Raising Committee, the Garcia family and Jeannette Cullen in particular, are warmly thanked for the drive and energy displayed during the period under review.

It is hoped that the incoming Council will ensure that the new Fund Raising Committee comprises persons with the commitment and the time to energetically take up the challenge of raising funds to help pay for the BSRA's various projects in the year ahead.

The cost of the BSRA's planned tours this year will be very high since the 28<sup>th</sup> annual **Junior Caribbean Squash Championships** will be held from July 9 – 16<sup>th</sup> in Grand Cayman which is an expensive destination to travel to. The **Senior Caribbean Squash Championships** will be held from August 14 – 22<sup>nd</sup> in St. Vincent and will be held annually from this year onwards. The BSRA has already taken a decision not to attend the annual **Pan American Junior Squash Championships** will be held in El Salvador from June 16-24<sup>th</sup>. Hopefully we will be better equipped to attend this U-19 event in July next year when it will be held once again in El Salvador. However, the BSRA does intend to send a senior team to Guatemala in November 2010 to attend the **Pan American Senior Squash Championships** since this event is the only qualification tournament for the **2011 Pan American Games** in Guadalajara, Mexico. For this event we hope to be able to once again rely upon the BOA for financial support. For the two Major Games later this year (i.e. the **Central American & Caribbean Games in Bogota, Colombia** July 18-25<sup>th</sup> and the **Commonwealth Games in Delhi, India** – October 3-14<sup>th</sup>) the BSRA has already indicated to the BOA (who underwrites the full cost) that we wish to participate.

## COMPETITIONS / TOURNAMENTS

### **Regional Competitions**

In October 2009, **Shawn Simpson, Gavin Cumberbatch, Bryant Cumberbatch and Mark Sealy, as well as Karen Meakins** represented Barbados in the Men's & Ladies Individuals, Mixed Doubles, Men's Doubles and Men's Team events at the **Senior Pan American Championships** in Ambato, Ecuador. Our mixed doubles pair of Shawn and Karen played very well to reach the finals where they lost to a Mexican pair but claimed a **silver medal** which is a fantastic achievement, given that we play hardly any doubles of any kind here in Barbados. Well done players!!

### **Caribbean Competitions**

The highlight of the year in review was our successful hosting of the 27<sup>th</sup> **Junior Caribbean Squash Championships** in July 2009. Under the guidance of team manager, **Karen Meakins** and junior coach, **Marlon White**, the Barbados junior team placed fifth in the girl's and sixth in the boy's team events. In the individuals, Barbados came away with one gold medal when in the GU-19 final **Cheri-Ann Parris** turned the tables on the Trinidadian who defeated her in the year before. **Gylla Mackenzie** also played very well and won a silver medal in the GU-13 final, losing to a Jamaican.

At the senior level we travelled to Cayman in August and performed creditably in every category. In the individuals **Shawn Simpson** placed third, whereas in the ladies section the #2 seed, **Karen Meakins**, was defeated in *straight* games by Nicolette Fernandes (Guyana) in the ladies final. **Cheri-Ann Parris** defeated the Bermudian #1 by default to finish third. In the team competition that followed, the Barbados Men and Veteran's teams both lost (2-3) in the team finals, to Trinidad and Cayman respectively – with **Sonia Perkins (L+40)** and **Errol Pilgrim (M+60)** claiming their individual Caribbean age group titles, while a depleted Ladies' team played very well to defeat Guyana (3-2) for third place, with Karen finally getting the better of Nicolette Fernandes in five pulsating games. [N.B. Karen (#2); Cheri-Ann (#5); Shawn (#3); Gavin (#7) and Bryant (#10) are all now ranked in the top ten in the Caribbean]. The entire team placed third overall and all of our sixteen players and the Manager, Orson Simpson, are congratulated for the above excellent performances. Our goal for senior CASA this year is to do even better and reclaim the overall Caribbean Team title we last held in 2005!

### **Domestic Competitions**

In the period under review there were seven tournaments held in Barbados, most of which were BSRA organized. Details of these tournaments can be found on our website ([www.squashbarbados.org](http://www.squashbarbados.org))

Thus far this year, the **National Squash League** was re-launched in March 2010 and was a great success. The **Sagicor General Junior National Championships** were then held in April with the BSRA receiving the same sponsorship as in 2008 from our loyal sponsor who has sponsored this event since 1979! Tournament details are on the BSRA's web-site.

Earlier this month our 36<sup>th</sup> annual **National Squash Championships** were sponsored for the thirteenth year by the BOA via its Domestic Competition Grant. The age group champions were: Ladies: Julie Simpson (+35 & +40); Men: Andy Gill (+35); Mark Sealy (+40); Stuart Tippleston (+45); Nigel Griffith (+50); Errol Pilgrim (+55). The Closed Individual Championships were played from May 10<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> and in the very entertaining finals, Karen Meakins defeated Cheri-Ann Parris (3-1) to claim her tenth straight ladies national title, while Shawn Simpson defeated Bryant Cumberbatch (3-1) to claim his sixth title in his record eighth straight appearance in the men's final. Sincere thanks go out to the members of the Tournament Committee, and all the other volunteers, who helped run these various tournaments throughout the year.

### SQUASH DEVELOPMENT

**Elite/Emerging Athlete Funding** - The BSRA wishes to express its gratitude to the **National Sports Council (NSC)** for the generous grant funding that has been received over the past two years on behalf of four named "Elite Athletes" as well as a smaller group of "Emerging Athletes". In a meeting held earlier this month the BSRA reported to the NSC on the status of the commitments made from this Fund over the past 18 months. The NSC was so pleased with the performance of our athletes over the past two years at the Caribbean and Regional level that it has agreed to increase the funds committed in the current year for this purpose to the BSRA by 33%.

**Junior Development** - The BSRA is pleased to advise that our new Squash Director has already begun to oversee the administration and direction of our **Junior Development Programme (JDP)** which is now taking place from noon until 4:30 p.m. on Saturday (or Sunday) afternoons at the BSC. An immediate improvement in the quality and scope of coaching is anticipated. All National level and former National level players are urged to offer to assist with a few sessions of the JDP, which will run for between eight and ten consecutive weeks, three times a year. Between 20 and 30 juniors are being coached at present.

**Officiating Programme (Refereeing)** - The fifth certification clinic under the **Caribbean Officiating Programme for Squash (COPS)** was held in Grand Cayman during the period under review. It is planned that during the Barbados Open in June 2010 another referee certification course as well as referee assessments will be carried out by the two local certified assessors: Craig Archer and Orson Simpson, who are the only two local B-1 referees who can certify and evaluate up to and including Level B. Four levels of certification are available in this programme at Levels D, C, B and A. In total, 58 persons from seven countries have been certified over the past five years in this programme, including 11 at the B level, 13 at the C level and 34 at the D level. This initiative is endorsed by CASA and has been hailed as a tremendous success at the Caribbean, Pan American and World levels. A sixth COPS certification course is planned for 4:00 – 8:00 p.m. on August 14<sup>th</sup> in St. Vincent to coincide with the start of the senior CASA Championships there. It is also pleasing to report that both Orson and Craig were once again joined by Karen Anderson (Jamaica) and Alwyn Callender (Guyana) to form the referee team at the prestigious 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Cayman Squash Open, which was held from April 11 - 17<sup>th</sup> this year.

**Coaching** - The BSRA is currently liaising with CASA and Squash Canada to try to establish and launch a Caribbean-wide certification programme for squash coaches, hopefully utilizing the currently available Caribbean Coaching Certification Programme (CCCP) as the theoretical component.

**Facilities** - The BSRA does not own any squash courts and continues to rely on the BSC to provide courts at a reasonable price in order to host all of its tournaments and events. The building of new squash courts should occupy the attention of the incoming Council as a matter of urgency since our lack of courts is a constraint to the future development of our sport.

### END OF YEAR RANKINGS

As a result of all the above activity the top ten ranked players for 2009 are as follows:

**Men:** (1) Shawn Simpson (2) Gavin Cumberbatch (3) Mark Sealy (4) Bryant Cumberbatch (5) Nigel Griffith (6) Marlon White (7) Fabian Goodridge (8) Rhett Cumberbatch (9) Mark Gilkes (10) Leon Truss.

**Ladies:** (1) Karen Meakins (2) Cheri-Ann Parris (3) Sonia Perkins (4) Lilianna White (5) Jenny Armstrong (6) Carla Jackson (7) Natalie Chesham (8) Ayoni Bradshaw (9) Lea Solomon (10) Cilla Seale.

### PUBLIC RELATIONS

Over the past year we have continued to receive reasonable coverage for local tournaments in both the print and electronic media. This coverage, however, is usually conditional on press releases being written and sent to the media houses since very few sports journalists in Barbados understand our sport. The new P.R. and Marketing Committee will need to work harder to make the game of squash more newsworthy, since that is one way that the image of squash will improve. Members are once again reminded that much information about the Association, as well as full results of most local tournaments, can be found on our website at: <http://www.squashbarbados.org>

### THE ROAD AHEAD

It is anticipated that the arrival of the Director of Squash will result in immediate improvements in player performances at the senior and junior levels as well as a higher profile for squash locally. He is only one person, however, so the support and cooperation of the existing local clubs, coaches, players and parents will make his life easier and help him to help our players strive for excellence. The BSRA Council looks forward to the challenges of the year ahead with great expectation!