

**To: ALL WSF MEMBER NATIONAL FEDERATIONS**

cc: WSF Regional Vice-Presidents, WSF Committee Members, WSA, PSA, Accredited Companies

## FROM HEADQUARTERS



Perhaps the most striking facet of the London Olympic Games – if you set aside the constant hankering after squash to have been involved – was how instrumental the Games Makers were to the success of them. The volunteers, no less than

70,000 of them, enhanced the spectator experience, working behind the scenes, keeping the Games ticking along and uplifting everybody's spirits with their contagious enthusiasm.

They were a stark reminder, as if we even needed one, that without volunteers recreational as well as competitive sport simply could not operate.

So, in the squash world let's end the year by saluting the tens of thousands in our own sphere that keep squash thriving. At club level the committee members, the club event organisers, junior coaches, parents and the team captains. At local, regional national and international level so many serving the sport too; from committee through to coaches and referees, administrators and organisers, helpers and supporters.

They are all the lifeblood of the sport. If you are one, we thank you, and similar gratitude goes to everybody whom we rely upon to maintain our motors.

## BRING ON 2013

Internationally, 2013 promises to be a great year. Of course off the court we go forward with our effort to persuade the IOC that squash would be a great addition to the Olympic Games summer programme in 2020; and we don't have too long to wait to see how well the presentations, inspection and interaction have gone. The IOC Executive Board are due to recommend their preferred sport after we and the other shortlisted sports present to them at the end of May. While the final decision comes at the IOC Congress in September, the sport in the frame will have taken a great leap towards their goal.

On court the year starts with a real bang with the PSA & WSA World Series Finals at Queens Club in London, even before the Tours kick in with ranking events.

There are world championships too. Firstly, after very successfully hosting the Women's World Team Championship in Nimes, the French Federation will

be managing the men's equivalent, again on no less than three all glass show-courts, in the French city of Mulhouse in June.

The following month sees the World Junior Individuals followed by the Women's Junior Team event in the Polish city of Wroclaw. The growth of Polish squash is little short of phenomenal and competing players and officials will see Hasta la Vista Club, one of the great new facilities that are characterising the Polish scene. A further month later, in August, the World Games takes place in Cali, Colombia, featuring two 24 player singles draws.

That is all to come, but for now, on behalf of President Ramachandran, the WSF Board and my office colleagues may I wish everybody a very happy, healthy and safe 2013, and that everything you wish for comes true. On a general level it will doubtless include success for the Olympic bid, and personally perhaps a regular flow of rolling nicks and other screaming winners!

[andrew@worldsquash.org](mailto:andrew@worldsquash.org)

## WSF HAILS HONG KONG 'INSPECTION' SUCCESS

The WSF hailed the finale of the Cathay Pacific Sun Hung Kai Financial Hong Kong Open as a major success - which not only produced two sparkling finals featuring the world's number one players, but also hosted representatives of the International Olympic Committee who were 'inspecting' the event with a view to assessing the sport's credentials to join the 2020 Olympic Games programme.

After a rain-affected semi-finals session on the



Saturday, the two finals brought the 27th staging of the World Series championships to a glorious climax outdoors on an all-glass show court erected at the Cultural Centre Piazza on the Hong Kong waterfront at Tsim Sha Tsui.

Nicol David, the Malaysian superstar who has topped the world rankings since 2006, won her eighth successive Hong Kong title after beating surprise French opponent Camille Serme in the women's final, and Egypt's 2010 champion Ramy Ashour successfully regained the men's title after deposing defending champion James Willstrop, the world number one from England, in the other final.

"I could not be more happy with this weekend," said WSF President N Ramachandran. "The Hong Kong Open is an impressive event, superbly managed by the Hong Kong Squash Federation and we were honoured that the IOC Programme Commission chose to come and evaluate it."

"While it is not one of our largest events by capacity, it has been framed to bring squash to the public; and the placing of the all-glass show-court on the Avenue Of The Stars at the Harbour certainly did that."

"We hope that the inspectors were happy with the staging, presentation and broadcast of our sport, together with our fine Tour athletes, and that their positive impressions can be reinforced when we present to the Commission as a whole in Lausanne later this month."

#### POSITIVE REVIEW

Walter Sieber, one of the two IOC Programme Commission representatives, said: "We were able to make a very thorough inspection of the way the event was organised, taking into account the needs of the athletes and coaches. Naturally, we also wanted to assess how the glass court is helping to present the sport for broadcast purposes."

"We found that the competition arrangements were of a high level, and on court we were able to see the top players in action too. It has proven to be very informative."

After winning her 40th successive match in Hong Kong since 2003, Nicol David added: "I am so glad that the IOC inspectors could come to see such an amazing setup that is done here every year. For us players to play on the waterfront is wonderful - and they get to experience it too."

The Hong Kong Open, sponsored by the leading international airline Cathay Pacific since its launch in 1985, is one of the most popular championships on the world tour: "This venue shows how you can pick up and take the glass court to any great location in the world, wherever the Olympics is staged," said England's world champion Nick Matthew. "It is great that the IOC group have seen that for themselves."

#### SQUASH LEADS ON 'INNOVATION' IN BID PRESENTATION

Just before the New Year break the WSF presented its case for Squash to be included in the 2020 Olympic Games to the International Olympic Committee's Programme Commission. The WSF delegation was led by its President N Ramachandran, and featured men's world No1 James Willstrop, WSF Chief Executive Andrew Shelley, and junior player Reyna Pacheco.



*Pictured following the presentation, were: (L to R) Andrew Shelley, Reyna Pacheco, President Ramachandran and James Willstrop*

President Ramachandran said: "Our presentation set out to show that squash has been on a journey of innovation over recent years. Developments such as state-of-the-art all glass courts, under floor lighting, referee video review, side court entrances, and improved in-venue presentation have all led to a dramatic change in the broadcast and fan experience."

"We also stressed the global reach and appeal of the sport. All five continents have produced both male and female world champions, and the current women's top 20 features players from 12 countries spread across every continent. There can be no doubt that if squash were to be included in the Olympic Games Programme it would provide more countries with a chance to be on the medal podium."

"It was a great session," added Ramachandran. "The Programme Commission showed a real interest in the development of our sport."

The WSF also unveiled its Squash 2020 bid film today, which captures the excitement and recent innovations in the sport, and what Squash would bring to the Olympic Games. Featuring two of the game's most exciting players - Malaysia's Nicol David, currently bidding to win a record seventh world title, and Egypt's Ramy Ashour, the newly-crowned men's world champion - the film was one of three shown as part of the WSF presentation to the IOC Programme Commission.

James Willstrop said: "Squash represents the essence of Olympic sport. It's gladiatorial given that we are the only racket sport where players share the same space, and to excel requires a mix of mental strategy, skill, athleticism and fitness. In the past few seasons there has been a revolution in the way squash is presented to spectators. MCs, music and lighting have really helped to get the fans involved - and that's great for players."

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#### WSF APPROVED RACKETS



"I'm 29 years old so my dream to compete in the Olympic Games may never be realised, but if I can play a part in helping squash become part of the Olympic Programme, I could even retire a happy man."

One of the highlights of the presentation was the story of Reyna Pacheco and how squash has helped change her life.

Reyna Pacheco, who was born in Mexico, now lives in the United States and became the highest ranked Urban player in US Squash, added: "My mother brought my older brother and myself to the United States when I was four. We were illegal immigrants, I grew up with very little at home and I didn't believe there was much I could achieve. My life was completely transformed when Squash was introduced to me."

### SQUASH PROBABLY SAVED MY LIFE

"Squash hasn't just turned my life around - it probably saved my life. It inspired something in me that created a whole new path for me and recently led to me being awarded a scholarship from the Bill Gates Foundation to attend Columbia University. Perhaps one day I may even be able to realise my dream and share my story with the world as an Olympian in the 2020 Games."

Highlighting the technical qualities of squash, WSF Chief Executive Andrew Shelley said: "The format we have proposed to the IOC Programme Commission is Men's and Women's Singles Championships involving 32 male and 32 female players. Matches would take place on two state-of-the art all glass courts, each with a capacity of up to 4,000 spectators, utilising steep seating to create a really strong arena affect and great atmosphere. Squash would be easy and low cost to integrate into the Olympic Games, with just 64 athletes, two competition courts that can be built in a matter of days, and only 20 officials."

"Squash also has the advantage of sharing a venue if required, or being staged in an iconic, visually stunning environment and our sport has a track record of doing exactly this. For example, in front of the Pyramids, alongside Hong Kong Harbour and at Grand Central Station in New York."

*To view two of the WSF bid films - the main film 'Squash Olympic Bid', and a YouTube-style film 'Ends Of The Earth' that shows squash players from around the world backing the Squash2020 bid - visit:*

[http://www.worldsquash.org/ws/?page\\_id=10535](http://www.worldsquash.org/ws/?page_id=10535)

### WSF APPROVED BALLS



### RONNIE SINCLAIR



The WSF is saddened to report that former President Ronnie Sinclair has died in hospital on 3 December in his native Edinburgh, Scotland, aged 74 after contracting Legionnaires Disease whilst on a cycling holiday in Spain. Sinclair, who was President from 1985 – 1989, was a Scottish junior and senior squash international before becoming President of the Scottish Squash Association and subsequently a founder member of the European Squash Federation and its first treasurer before becoming a Vice president and then President of the ISRF (former name of World Squash Federation).

A popular and effective administrator, his profession was accountancy; and even after retirement from practice he specialised in forensic accounting on behalf of various bodies alongside his charity work.

An active orienteer, golfer and cyclist in addition to coaching squash; he will be greatly missed by his wife Careen, son and daughter, and five grandchildren.

### CAYMAN WOMEN'S WORLD OPEN 2012

Final: [1] Nicol David (Mas) bt [3] Laura Massaro (Eng) 11/6, 11/8, 11/6 (44m)

#### *Seventh Heaven for Nicol in Camana Bay*

Nicol David claimed her record seventh World Open title with a straight-games win over first-time finalist Laura Massaro in front of a packed crowd at Camana Bay on Grand Cayman two weeks ago.

The Malaysian went into the match as hot favourite, having long since avenged two rare defeats at the hands of the Englishwoman ranked three in the world, but the match, although over in three games, was one of David's toughest recent encounters.

The defending champion started solidly enough, opening up a 4-1 lead in the first game, extending it to 7-3 with the patient, accurate squash that is so effective. Massaro found her way into the game, started matched David in the rallies and got back to as close as 8-6, but David finished off the next three



rallies with lengths that were just too good to take the lead 11/6.

The second was tough, close and probably crucial. David again made the better start, but Massaro was well into the match now and soon pegged back that 3-1 deficit, levelling at 4-all. The game, the match, was all about long, patient rallies, working your opponent around and taking opportunities to increase the pressure rather than going for outright winners, until the pressure paid off.

Another part of Nicol's game is that she finishes games off well, and she did it again, taking four points in a row, reaching game ball with a lovely dropshot on the full stretch, and doubling her lead 11/8 at the end of another long rally.

That was crucial, and David zoomed into a quick 5-0 lead in the third. Massaro, as in the first, settled but couldn't get all the way back, 6-4, 7-5 and 8-6 were as close as she could get.

Nicol moved to 9-6 on a stroke, 10-6 as Laura's volley clipped the tin, and she gleefully put away the loose ball she'd worked hard to earn at the end of the next rally to claim an amazing seventh World Open title.



"I'm proud to make the final, but a bit disappointed that the games but I couldn't close any of them out. You have to work really hard to beat her, she doesn't lose very often but we're all working to get closer, but she steps up to the challenge too" said Massaro.

"I can't believe it," said Nicol. "I'm so pleased with my game tonight. Laura played so well she was pushing me on every point, I just couldn't relax at any time; she played a brilliant match today.

"I was focused for the match but I had to step up another gear to win today, I just wanted to win so much, to win again in Cayman, that seventh world title, I wanted it all!"

## **QATAR MEN'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP, DOHA, QATAR**

Final: [5] Ramy Ashour (EGY) bt [8] Mohamed El Shorbagy (EGY) 2-11, 11-6, 11-5, 9-11, 11-8 (90m)

### ***Ramy Ashour Wins Second World Title***

In a sensational all-Egyptian clash which went to the wire, Ramy Ashour triumphed over outsider Mohamed El Shorbagy in December's final of the Qatar PSA World Squash Championship at the Khalifa International Tennis & Squash Complex in Doha to

become world champion for the second time since 2008.

Ashour, who 24 hours earlier dethroned England's defending champion Nick Matthew to ensure his status as world number one next month, had to be at his best to see off his 21-year-old opponent, the youngest player in the PSA world top 25.

The final brought to a magnificent climax the premier PSA World Tour championship which boasted a \$325,000 prize-fund, the second biggest in the sport's history, and was being hosted by Qatar for the third time since 1998.



Eighth seed El Shorbagy, who upset England's world number James Willstrop in a 112-minute semi-final, got off to an excellent start - romping from 4-2 up to win the opening game in a single hand in just 10 minutes. It was the first game the youngster had taken off Ashour after two 3/0 defeats since 2009.

Ashour, who was clearly not yet in the match, stayed on court throughout the break before the second game - trying to refocus himself for the next stage. The tactic clearly worked as the fifth seed and 2008 champion recovered from the loss of the first two points in the game to build up an 8-4 lead. Underdog Shorbagy, the world number six from Alexandria, clawed back two more points - but Ashour drew level to forcefully mark his return to the match.

### **SHORBAGY REGROUPS**

Shorbagy's response was to demand a new ball and promptly returned to the court before his opponent to warm it up for the third game. It was he who took the early advantage, but Ashour again resumed control, reeling off seven points in a row en-route to taking the game and moving 2/1 ahead.

The effect of Shorbagy's near-two-hour-long semi looked to be taking its toll - but the world final debutant refused to surrender to his experienced fellow countryman. Shorbagy led 4-1 and 7-4 in the fourth - but from 5-8 down, Ashour pulled the game back to nine-all, just two points away from the title.

Shorbagy responded in fantastic style, surviving what PSA SquashTV commentators Joey Barrington and Paul Johnson called "an outrageous rally", to get to match-ball - which he duly converted to take the climax into a fifth game decider.

It was nip and tuck through the fifth - Ashour leading 4-1 and 7-5 before Shorbagy clawed back to eight-all. An unforced error by Shorbagy, followed by a

stroke against the underdog, took Ashour to his first match-ball.

Within seconds Ashour had converted his advantage - and the beaming 25-year-old from Cairo bent down to one of the camera positions in the court's front wall to kiss the TV camera lens!



"I am very, very, very glad I have won this title," said new world champion Ashour after his 2-11, 11-6, 11-5, 9-11, 11-8 victory in 90 minutes. "But what makes me most happy is that I have done this after coming back from injury."

## EGYPT SNATCH WOMEN'S WORLD TEAM TITLE IN NIMES

The dramatic final of the WSF Women's World Team Championship in Nimes in November which went to a nerve shredding ending, saw second seeds Egypt recovered from a match down to upset favourites England to win the event being held in France for the first time.

Boasting a record entry of 26 nations, the 2012 championship was superbly staged by the French Squash Federation at both the eight-court Club des Costières and La Parnasse Arena where, for the first time ever, action took place simultaneously on three all-glass show courts.

England got off to a good start when Alison Waters beat Nour El Sherbini in the first ever meeting between the two world top ten players. Londoner Waters, ranked four in the world, took the first game - but the Egyptian underdog, ranked four places lower, fought back to open a 2/1 lead.

Waters, 28, used her experience to recover the deficit, eventually overcoming her 17-year-old opponent 11-5, 8-11, 9-11, 11-3, 11-5 to put England ahead.

The top string duel which followed again saw England take the early lead when world No3 Laura Massaro won the opening game against Raneem El

Weleily, the world No2. Hoping to extend her 9/5 head to head record over the Egyptian, Massaro then dropped the next two games - and failed to convert a game-ball in the fourth as El Weleily powered through to win 3-11, 12-10, 11-4, 12-10 to level the tie.

The pattern of the first two matches was repeated in the decider when Jenny Duncalf again put England ahead by winning the first game against long-time rival Omneya Abdel Kawy. But the 27-year-old from Cairo - who has played in every championship since 1998 - moved ahead by taking the next two games.

Determined to reduce the deficit of her career-long head-to head record of 2/12 down to the Egyptian, Duncalf fought hard to draw level - and in the decider won five points in a row to move 7-4 up.

But Abdel Kawy confirmed that she is well and truly back to her best after a long period of poor results when she won back the service at 6-8 down, then took the next five points to clinch a remarkable 7-11, 11-8, 11-4, 6-11, 11-8 victory - and the title for Egypt for the second time since 2008.

Third seeds Malaysia beat Australia in the play-off for third place to win the bronze medal for the fourth time in a row.



Final:

[2] EGYPT bt [1] ENGLAND 2/1

3rd place play-off:

[3] MALAYSIA bt [6] AUSTRALIA 3/0

5th place play-off:

[10] INDIA bt [7] IRELAND 2/1

7th place play-off:

[5] NEW ZEALAND bt [4] HONG KONG CHINA 2/1

9th place play-off:

[9] FRANCE bt [8] NETHERLANDS 3/0

11th place play-off:

[14] SOUTH AFRICA bt [11] CANADA 2/0

13th place play-off:

[12] USA bt [13] CZECH REPUBLIC 2/0

15th place play-off:

[15] WALES bt [16] MEXICO 2/1

17th - 19th place play-offs:

17<sup>th</sup> Republic of Korea, 18<sup>th</sup> Japan, 19<sup>th</sup> Germany

20th - 22nd place play-offs:

20<sup>th</sup> Colombia, 21<sup>st</sup> Scotland, 22<sup>nd</sup> China

23rd place play-off:

[26] SPAIN bt [17] ARGENTINA 2/1

25th place play-off:

[18] AUSTRIA bt [25] NAMIBIA 3/0

## WORLD MASTERS 2014 – HONG KONG

Organiser Malcolm Kerr updating:



### HONG KONG 2014

As you will have seen on [www.worldmasterssquash.com](http://www.worldmasterssquash.com) the two championship venues have been confirmed. We have also just heard that the Hong Kong Squash Centre will reinstate 6 courts next year so we will have 18 glass backed courts available at the home of HK Squash for 2014.

Having talked to many of you in Birmingham, I know that everyone wants to play as much as possible while having the chance to mix and socialize at a convenient central location. With this in mind we are planning, wherever possible, to schedule a minimum of **four matches for every player**. Also, by keeping matches within two venues (just a mile or so apart) you can be sure of staying at the heart of all the action.

Hong Kong Football Club is the natural social hub for the Championships. In addition to hosting the opening cocktails and the prize-giving gala dinner at the club, we are arranging for all players to have full **access to HKFC's wonderful facilities** throughout the week.

We have had lots of questions about accommodation. Hotel occupancies are very high in HK so hotels are reluctant to commit to room rates for 2014 yet, however, we are in discussion with several properties near the venues and expect to confirm competitive rates and packages for participants by the middle of 2013. Overall Hong Kong offers great value for visitors – restaurants, transport, shopping and entertainment are generally significantly less expensive than other world cities.

Our major focus over the coming months is to firm up **commercial partners** for the Championships. We do have great support from the Hong Kong squash community, however, if you would like to introduce the opportunity of sponsorship to contacts and companies in your area let us know, and we will gladly tailor a sponsorship proposal as required.

The level of interest in WM'14 amongst players has been great so far. Please continue to **spread the word** around your clubs and national squash organizations and feel free to download and print our A4 advert to put up on your club notice board.

Tell us what you would like to hear about in the next newsletter. We have plans for player interviews, introductions to the organizing team plus lots about what to do in and around Hong Kong.

## WORLD GAMES



Every four years the World Games takes place. It is for sports not on the Olympic Games Programme and the next one takes place in Cali, Colombia 2 – 4 August.

There are 24 draws for men and

women, based upon finishing positions at the preceding World Team Championships.

The breakdown and the number of players eligible from each country are given below, and in the next week member nations will receive entry details and have the opportunity to enter players or apply for wild cards.

Squash is very much a showpiece event at the World Games and of course we are keen to reinforce that with a strong entry again this year and we look forward to receiving strong entries.

More information and entry forms to follow soon.

### BREAKDOWN

16 players - Up to 2 players from each of the top 8 placed teams in the WSF Men's World Team Championship 2011 and the WSF Women's World Team Championship 2012

2 x 1 player - from the 9 and 10 placed teams above\*

4 x WSF wild cards

2 x Host country representatives

\* 1 player from teams finishing 11 to 14 taken in order if the top 10 finishing teams do not take all their allocated spaces.

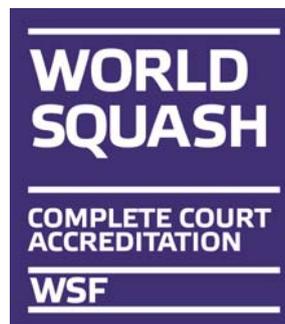
#### Women

1. Egypt – 2
2. England – 2
3. Malaysia – 2
4. Australia – 2
5. India – 2
6. Ireland – 2
7. New Zealand – 2
8. Hong Kong – 2
9. France – 1
10. Netherlands – 1
11. Colombia - 2 (hosts)
12. WSF - 4 (wild cards)

#### Men

1. Egypt - 2
2. England - 2
3. Australia - 2
4. France - 2
5. Malaysia - 2
6. USA - 2
7. India - 2
8. Germany - 2
9. Netherlands - 1
10. Hong Kong - 1
11. Colombia - 2 (hosts)
12. WSF - 4 (wild cards)

## COMPLETE COURT ACCREDITATION



As announced in 2011, new courts built after 1 January 2013 are required to register for Complete Court Accreditation (CCA) in order for them to be eligible for use at international events, such as PSA and WSA tournaments and WSF World Championships.

Regional and national federations have been altering their regulations so that they also only play their events on courts that are CCA registered, thus all competition on new courts will take place with a high standard of playing conditions assured.

Of course this regulation does not apply to courts that are already built.

Once registered, a certificate will be sent to the court operator and the courts listed in the worldwide directory.

Accredited Companies that manufacture all their major court components can become WSF Complete Court Accredited Companies (CCAC), and all new courts built by these companies using their components can be registered as CCA courts.

Accredited Companies that manufacture some of the major components can register the courts they build as CCA providing the remaining major components are separately accredited.

An installer that only uses WSF Accredited products can register the courts they build as CCA courts, they do not need their own accreditation.

Already completed courts can be registered too, and for all registrations please go to:

<http://www.worldsquashcourts.org/addAccredited.aspx>

## RANKINGS



### **Ramy Ashour Reclaims Top World Ranking**

After enjoying the most successful year of his career, Egypt's Ramy Ashour reclaimed the world number one ranking in the January 2013 Dunlop PSA Men's World Squash Rankings.

The 25-year-old from Cairo, whose unique style has made him the biggest draw on the international squash circuit, first topped the rankings three years ago - and held it for all but three months of 2010. But a series of injuries led Ashour to slip to No5 early last year - before setting off on a remarkable 2012 campaign which saw him reach the finals in seven Tour events, with title triumphs in five, including the Australian Open, US Open and Hong Kong Open.

Ashour became the first player since Pakistan's legendary Jansher Khan in the mid-nineties to make the final of every event in which he competed in a calendar year.

It was trophy success in December's Qatar PSA World Championship in Doha, where he was seeded five, that clinched the New Year's first world number one ranking for Ashour - ahead of Englishmen Nick Matthew, at No2, and James Willstrop, the world's top-ranked player for almost all of 2012, who drops to third place.

"I think the harder part starts now - which is trying to maintain injury-free, and the No1 position," Ashour continued. "My biggest aim this year is to get stay injury-free - and to see squash as an Olympic sport where it belongs."

While Frenchman Gregory Gaultier moves down to fourth position, further Egyptian success comes in the form of Mohamed El Shorbagy, the 21-year-old who rises to a career high No5. Already the youngest player in the world top 20, Alexandria-born El Shorbagy celebrated the biggest success of his young career by reaching the World Championship final for the first time - after upsetting top seed Willstrop in the semis.

## January 2013 top 20 (inc. points average):

1	[4]	Ramy Ashour	EGY	1,382
2	[2]	Nick Matthew	ENG	1,216
3	[1]	James Willstrop	ENG	1,108
4	[3]	Gregory Gaultier	FRA	908
5	[6]	Mohamed El Shorbagy	EGY	623
6	[7]	Karim Darwish	EGY	608
7	[5]	Peter Barker	ENG	539
8	[9]	Amr Shabana	EGY	532
9	[8]	Omar Mosaad	EGY	448
10	[13]	Borja Golan	ESP	410
11	[10]	Daryl Selby	ENG	409
12	[14]	Tarek Momen	EGY	372
13	[12]	Tom Richards	ENG	360
14	[11]	Laurens Jan Anjema	NED	330
15	[16]	Alister Walker	BOT	326
16	[15]	Simon Rosner	GER	321
17	[18]	Adrian Grant	ENG	290
18	[19]	Cameron Pilley	AUS	287
19	[17]	Hisham Mohd Ashour	EGY	284
20	[22]	Ong Beng Hee	MAS	275



### **David Stranglehold Continues**

Fresh from winning her unprecedented seventh World Open title, Malaysian Nicol David continues to top the WSA World Rankings, as she has done so unbroken since August 2006, while Egyptian Raneem El Weleily celebrated her 24th birthday on 1st January by taking slot again. Reward for World Open Laura Massaro has been strengthening her grip on the third berth while fellow Englishwoman Jenny Duncalf returns to the WSA World Rankings Top 10 following a strong World Open finish in December.

The Englishwoman, ranked at world No.2 for over two years, had slipped out of the WSA elite due to the 2012 World Open falling a month later than the previous year. Duncalf, the 2011 finalist, lost out on her ranking average in December's rankings but has bounced back to occupy No.8 this month after reaching the semi-finals in the Cayman Islands.

Hong Kong Open runner-up, Camille Serme also leapt 4 ranking places to No.9 after a positive end to the year, with Annie Au dropping two places to tenth, to comprise an otherwise unchanged Top 10.

1	[1]	Nicol David	MAS	27985
2	[2]	Raneem El Weleily	EGY	15510
3	[3]	Laura Massaro	ENG	15282
4	[4]	Alison Waters	ENG	11858
5	[5]	Joelle King	NZL	9811
6	[6]	Nour El Sherbini	EGY	8121
7	[7]	Low Wee Wern	MAS	9307
8	[12]	Jenny Duncalf	ENG	7662
9	[13]	Camille Serme	FRA	7960
10	[8]	Annie Au	HKG	8347
11	[9]	Madeline Perry	IRL	8510
12	[14]	Natalie Grinham	NED	7042
13	[11]	Kasey Brown	AUS	6706
14	[10]	Dipika Pallikal	IND	5558
15	[20]	Omneya Abdel Kawy	EGY	4747
16		Rachael Grinham	AUS	5494
17	[15]	Donna Urquhart	AUS	5801
18	[17]	Samantha Teran	MEX	4632
19	[18]	Amanda Sobhy	USA	3138
20	[21]	Joey Chan	HKG	3289

## SNIPPETS

### Honorary Doctorate for Devoy.



Dame Susan Devoy, former world squash champion and current Squash New Zealand Patron, is to receive an honorary doctorate from the University of Waikato.

Dame Susan was winner of the British Open Squash title eight times between 1984 and 1992 and was World

Champion four times - in the days when world championships were usually held every two years.

She was awarded an MBE at 21 and at 34 was made a Dame Companion of the New Zealand order of Merit.

### Shabana's Sixteen



Egypt's Amr Shabana set a new Tour record for the number of appearances in a single event when he celebrated his 16th successive year in the Cathay Pacific Sun Hung Kai Financial Hong Kong Squash Open. Shabana, a four-time world champion from Cairo, made his Hong Kong Open debut in 1996 - four years before any other player competing in the December 2012 championship.

### Blake Appointed



At the recent WSA AGM held during the World Open President Jaclyn Hawkes stood down after retiring due to her pregnancy. Current World No.23 Aisling Blake from Dublin, Ireland has been appointed the new WSA President.

A new WSA appointment sees former PSA World Tour player and American squash event

organiser Nathan Dugan elected to the board.

### Uganda's Win

Uganda's squad won an unusual prize at December's KenGen Parklands Open Squash tournament by being chosen as 'the best side' at the Nairobi, Kenya event.

None of their contingent made a final but Kenya Squash Rackets Association selected the Ugandan side the best side for the good competition that they showed during the tournament.

### Massaro Thwarts Wagih



Laura Massaro's five-game win over Egypt's No2 seed Raneem El Weleily in the semi-finals of the Women's World Open not only saw the Englishwoman reach the world final for the

first time but also denied Egypt's national coach Amir Wagih the dream of having all the world squash titles in Egyptian hands.

### World Tennis Day

To help promote tennis participation around the world, the International Tennis Federation (ITF) is launching World Tennis Day. The inaugural World Tennis Day will be held on March 4. Where could they have got the idea from?!

### Peter Nicol – President



England Squash elected Peter Nicol MBE as its new honorary President at its recent AGM. The former World Champion also spent a total of 60 months as World No 1 during his illustrious career.

### Another Squash Engagement

The long list of squash couples has been added to now that Egyptian players Tarek Momen and Raneem El Weleily have announced their engagement.

### Finally..... Sign of the Times

You can tell the age of a player by whether they spend more on elasticated bandages than playing gear!

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WSF

Executive Office: Maison du Sport International, Block B, 2nd Floor  
Avenue de Rhodanie 54, 1007 Lausanne, Switzerland

Administrative Office: 25 Russell Street, Hastings,  
East Sussex, UK TN34 1QU

Tel: +44 1424 447440 Fax: +44 1424 430737  
Website: worldsquash.org

Chief Executive – Andrew Shelley: [andrew@worldsquash.org](mailto:andrew@worldsquash.org)  
Operations Manager – Lorraine Harding: [lorraine@worldsquash.org](mailto:lorraine@worldsquash.org)  
Operations Assistant – Jasmine Gibson: [jasmine@worldsquash.org](mailto:jasmine@worldsquash.org)