

# LOOKING FORWARD

*Squash Player reports on tournament news and developments, and previews the major squash events coming up in the next few months*

The 2015-16 PSA World Series season comes to an end with the Dubai PSA World Series Finals in May and then attention switches to the next generation of players, at the WSF World Junior Championships in Poland in August.

The junior men's and women's individual events take place from August 6 to 11 in Bielsko-Biala, and the junior men's team tournament follows on at the same venue from August 12 to 17.

The same month – from August 15 to 18 – the WSF World Doubles Championships will be held in Australia in the Northern Territory capital of Darwin.

The 2016-17 PSA World Series campaign begins with the Cathay Pacific Sun Hung Kai Financial Hong Kong Open on August 23.

June and July are not totalling lacking in PSA Tour events, however. A series of \$5,000 to \$15,000 tournaments are held around the globe in that period.

## MAJOR PSA EVENT FOR ST GEORGE'S

**St George's Hill Club in Surrey is to stage the second biggest squash event in the UK in October. The \$100,000 ChannelVAS Championship, which will have a main draw of 16 men, will be held at the Weybridge club from October 19 to 23, with the qualifiers scheduled for October 17 and 18.**

Only the \$150,000 Allam British Open in Hull is bigger than the ChannelVAS Championship, which is sponsored by the premium developer of added value services for mobile operators.

"The aim is to provide a chance for squash fans in the South-East to see the top players in the world in action and to promote a fantastic squash event to a large local and global audience," said promoter Danny Lee.

All profits will go to CLIC Sargent, but as this is a bigger tournament than its predecessor, the \$25,000 CLIC Sargent Classic last October, ChannelVAS want to optimise their exposure.

Channel IT Group's founder and CEO, Bassim Haidar, said: "The ChannelVAS Championship will be a top-tier PSA tournament that will gather the biggest names in professional squash.

"Our plan is to establish the ChannelVAS Championship as a yearly staple in the PSA calendar, an event that all athletes and fans alike will be eagerly expecting."

### FACTFILE

Danny Lee, the man behind the \$100,000 ChannelVAS Championship, has been head squash professional at the St George's Hill Club for 27 years.

Formerly ranked in the world's top 30, he has coached several top players, including

former world no.12 Tom Richards, and many England junior squads.

He has also staged several squash tournaments, including the Daily Mail event in Jersey in 1988, when Jahangir Khan beat Ross Norman in front of 1500 people at Fort Regent and a BBC TV audience.

In addition, Lee worked for boxing promoter Frank Warren and ran both tennis and squash roadshows for Wilson in the late 1990s, having been a Surrey junior tennis champion and a tennis coach.



*Bassim Haidar*

## ENGLAND MISS OUT ON DOUBLES

England have opted not to send a team to the WSF World Doubles Championships taking place in Darwin, Australia, in August.

Although it is being seen by some countries as a good opportunity to warm up for the 2018 Commonwealth Games on the Australian Gold Coast, England Squash has a different view.

**“Doubles isn't a priority for the programme or the players at the moment.”**

*explained Tom Duggan, England Squash's performance director.*

"We felt a better use of resources is our own prep programme which starts next summer, when we can try different players and combinations.

"We also haven't yet given any in-depth consideration to partnerships. Other countries have a smaller pool of players and therefore limited options, so may be more certain on partnerships, although it will remain to be seen what resemblance they have to the pairs that play in Gold Coast."

Seven countries are scheduled to take part in the championships which will feature men's, women's and mixed events from August 15 to 18.

The hosts will defend both the men's and mixed titles – last competed for in 2006 – and seek to reclaim the women's crown lost to New Zealand in Melbourne 10 years ago.

Australia, who will field two pairings in all three events, are tipped to complete a clean sweep of the gold medals, as they won the men's and mixed events at the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Scotland. However, they have chosen different pairings for Darwin, with Cameron Pilley linking up with Ryan Cuskelly and David Palmer joined by Rex Hedrick in the men's, while Pilley partners Rachael Grinham and Palmer teams up with Donna Urquhart in the mixed.

Australia will be up against reigning Commonwealth women's doubles champions India, 2015 Pan American Games men's doubles gold medallists Colombia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Scotland and Wales.

The championships will be held at the Darwin Squash Centre, a 12-court facility with moveable walls, which was opened in 2012.