

9TH WORLD MASTERS SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIPS, CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND

Thanks for the memories and travel well

From Barry Gardiner, Championship Director

As the curtain comes down on the 9th HEAD World Masters Squash Championship, it is time to reflect on what has been a truly wonderful week.

The international parade through the streets of Christchurch followed by a traditional Maori welcome set the tone for the tournament. I believe this is the first time such an opening ceremony has been undertaken and the feedback we have received certainly vindicated the time and planning that went into the event.

As always you expect a few hiccups on the first day, and had we anticipated the number of withdrawals and "no shows" we would not have printed the draw booklet. The necessary changes may have led to some confusion, but we as a committee appreciate the way that most dealt with these changes.

Masters games are about competition and friendship and while a 9-0, 9-0, 9-0 scoreline in the plate might be considered a bit "too competitive", the overall sportsmanship was exemplary. This was reinforced by the referees commenting collectively that this was the best tournament for court behaviour that they have been involved in. Well done to all.

We mentioned the great part played by the volunteers in an earlier newsletter, but I would still like to reinforce that earlier thanks. The

transport system, the food, the courts, everything was tremendous.

New Zealand squash clubs are used to running tournament of up to about 150 players, and while this was on a much bigger scale, they rose to the challenge brilliantly.

As I said, the Masters philosophy involves competition and friendship and the enthusiasm with which the social events were attacked showed the importance of this aspect. There were people watching who have not played for many years and they all remarked how much they miss this social aspect.

I would like to finish with a big thank you to two groups. Firstly, you the players. Many of you have travelled a long way to take part and we appreciate the efforts made and the expense incurred. My last thanks is to the committee. Four years of extremely hard work culminating in seven days of very long hours, but everyone of you can take great credit in the tournament that we have hosted.

Good luck to all, travel safely and we look forward to seeing many of you in two years time.

Barry



Squash player also targets cancer awareness

Englishman Julian Bidlake is raising funds for the Royal Marsden Cancer Trust campaign in memory of his mother who died 40 years ago of cancer, and his younger brother Jonathan, who died earlier this year.

"I've also been a patient at hospital for a number of years but I'm one of the lucky ones. I want to thank The Marsden for the wonderful job they do each year helping to save the lives of thousands of people.

"I have taken part in many squash events over the last year and so far have managed to raise about £13,000 with a target of £20,000. I have been fortunate in having had many people support this worthy cause.

"I have had a great time here at the World Masters Squash. If anyone is interested in making a donation, I would greatly appreciate it," Julian said.

If you are interested in making a donation, go to: www.justgiving.co.uk/julianbidlake1

Gala dinner sold out - still seats to be allocated

There are still about 20 players who have not booked a specific table for the dinner. You need to do so at Event Headquarters, Christchurch Squash Club. Each seat is allocated, it is not a first-in first served. You cannot just sit where you want.

Transport to Gala dinner

This leaves Victoria Square at 6.30pm and buses will start to return from about 10.30pm onwards.

Tournament squash rackets still available

There is still a good selection of HEAD 145 MICROGEL rackets available. Specially designed for this tournament, the rackets can be purchased at the Christchurch Squash Club, only \$170 or \$300 for two.

Photos available

Photos from this week's events can be purchased on disk today at the ground floor reception at the Christchurch Squash Club.



Event HQ phone number is 374 6536.

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