



Firesport UK Firesquash UK Section

2024

Chairman's report

2023 was a better year overall culminating in the long overdue announcement that squash will become an Olympic event in 2028. The hope is that this will give squash a massive boost and the section will start to see an upturn in participation and interest.

Quadrangle

The 2022 Quadrangle which was postponed because of the Queen's passing was never rescheduled for early 2023 as had been hoped so the September event went ahead as normal with the Police hosting at Edgbaston for the second time. As in previous years, we struggled to field our strongest team due to availability and injury. We are hopeful that with good notice of the dates and a bit better luck this year we can be in contention.

Nationals

Numbers were disappointing after promising early interest, but for those that did attend, there were some great matches, great fellowship and memories made. Neil Cross retained his national champion title. A new tournament committee has been established and an early decision to change the venue to Leamington Spa Squash Club will hopefully generate interest. Software to run the tournament and allow online entries will be trialled this year. The dates are the 3rd to the 5th of May 2024. It is hoped that using better national communication of the event through 'FirePro' will raise awareness as well as promoting it as a 'Festival of Squash' for all standards, rather than just the National Competition. Thanks to Simon Jackson and his team for keeping the tournament going in previous years through some very challenging times.

Veterans Tournament

For the first time last year, we entered a team in the veterans' tournament against the Veterans Squash Club of Great Britain and the Civil Service. This is a 'friendly' competition with matches using squash levels rather than age to ensure everyone gets a competitive game. We sent 9 players, and everyone had great squash, fellowship and fun, we will certainly be going again in 2024.

Governance

At the AGM in May, a new treasurer and secretary were elected and a new organising committee for the 2024 Nationals was established. As always thanks go to those who have taken on the roles and those who have in the past and continue to serve the section.

Fire Sport UK

Nationally, in the latter part of 2023, Fire Sport UK underwent a much-needed rejuvenation with a new Chair and confirmation of the governance and association with the National Fire Chiefs Council following the demise of CFOA. The new Chair, himself a keen sportsman, has a vision for modernising the organisation and bringing the benefits of sport back to the Fire Service, for more details visit <https://www.firesportuk.com/>.

Paul Drakes Deputy Chairman on behalf of Wayne Bowcock Chairman