

## 2017 Awards Dinner Success

The Annual Squash Central Awards/Dinner was held at the Whanganui Squash Club on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December, saw a bumper crowd attend to see out the year by acknowledging the winners throughout the district for 2017. With 90+ attendees, it was fantastic to see people together to congratulate the talent there is around the Central District and this was evident in the number of nominees which were up from 35 (2016) to 47 this year.

A couple of other awards that are the heart of Squash in the region were the Volunteer Contributor to Squash and the Club of the Year awards.

Mike and TeArani Davie from the Waitara Squash Club took out the Volunteer Contributor to Squash trophy. They were a couple that came to the club never having played the game before and got themselves involved by both joining the committee at a time when the club was unsure of its future. They brought buckets loads of enthusiasm and in this past year they both took the roles of club captains. Along with doing a host of other jobs whether it's on the court or off the court, winning or losing the pair were always positive and giving it their all. Not only have they been awesome volunteers, but they are great role models for excellent sportsmanship. Their positivity and enthusiasm for the club and for squash, rubs off on everyone and people can't help but feel motivated by these two. The Waitara club conceded it would be lost without their positive energy and can-do attitudes.



The Club of the Year award went to the Inglewood Squash Club. The proud North Taranaki Club has continued to increase its membership through the year. During the year many club activities have been organised, involving all grades and ages. Two club nights a week, two sponsored interclub type team challenges, two 'B Grade and below tournaments' and a Sunday Junior Prince Tournament just to name a few. They helped out fellow New Plymouth club, Kawaroa Park during the NZ Masters which they hosted and also held the Squash Central Champion of Champions tournament which saw them host about 60+ players from around the Central areas. This year to improve their facilities a grant of approx. \$20,000.00 was received with the club adding approximately \$6000.00 to the amount to complete the job of removing old pinex. They also held on May 6<sup>th</sup> their 40 years celebrations with 141 visitors

from all around NZ enjoying a buffet meal, speeches, drinks and lots of reminiscing.

Special mention goes to a couple of Central's Juniors that won awards. The young Reece Holmes (Hawera) who took out the Most Improved Junior award. Holmes who is just 10 yrs of age, is the Central U11 Champ and U13 Runner Up, North and South Island U11 winner but more impressively the NZ U11 champ. He has shown he has got the commitment, determination and self-drive of someone many years older. In the past 12 months he has moved from E2 to D1.



Also impressive was SquashGym Palmerston North's Kaitlyn Watts who took out the Player of the Year award and continues her rise in the sport. This year she got to her A1 grading at the age of just 16. She was selected to represent NZ in the 2017 World Junior Champs in Tauranga and played #1 in the team which placed 8<sup>th</sup> overall. At the same event in the individual competition she finished in the top 16. She won the Australasian Junior tournament, the Australian Junior Open title and as mentioned the NZ Doubles Mixed Champs. Watts was #1 for the Central Senior Women's team in the NZ Teams event where they were placed 3<sup>rd</sup> and in the NZ Individual champs she kept her seeding of 4<sup>th</sup> in NZ at Senior level. Watts will be busy over the Christmas break as she heads overseas for a month to the USA and British Junior Opens to test herself against the worlds best.

# Awards continued

Winners on the Night were:

<b>Coach of the Year</b>	<b>Donna Wilson Trophy</b>
Doug Croukamp	Ashhurst-Pohangina Squash Club

<b>Personality of the Year</b>	<b>Barb &amp; Mike Jack Trophy</b>
Melville Homes	Hawera Squash Club

<b>Team of the Year</b>	<b>Central Squash Trophy</b>
Hawera D Grade Ladies	

<b>Most Improved Junior</b>	<b>Sansom Family Trophy</b>
Reece Holmes	Hawera Squash Club

<b>Most Improved Senior Player</b>	<b>Paula &amp; Kent Darlington Trophy</b>
Josh Hooper	Taihape Squash Club

<b>Services to Womens Masters</b>	<b>Lois Mills Tray</b>
Marilyn Dolan	Foxton Squash Club

<b>Services to Mens Masters</b>	<b>Merv &amp; Jean Tapp Trophy</b>
Kashif Shuja	SquashGym Palmerston North

<b>Player of the Year</b>	<b>Central Squash Trophy</b>
Kaitlyn Watts	SquashGym Palmerston North

<b>Administrator of the Year</b>	<b>Sharon &amp; Warren Patterson Trophy</b>
Sheryl Hooper	Taihape Squash Club

<b>Volunteer Contributor to Squash</b>	<b>Central Squash Trophy</b>
Mike & TeArani Davie	Waitara Squash Club

<b>Club of the Year</b>	<b>Carson Family Trophy</b>
Inglewood Squash Club	



Congratulations to all nominees, keep up the hard work and training. Special Thanks to Kent Darlington who was MC for the night and a huge part of the organisation of this wonderful celebration of our district.

## Life Membership Awarded



At the Award Dinner a special Award was granted. Life Membership to Grant Smith, currently the Palmerston North Mayor, for his dedication he has given to Squash Central over a span of 30 odd years. Smith was a decent Junior back in his day playing for Central in the 80's and was part of the impressive 84' Central Junior team that won the NZ Teams title beating Wellington in the process. In 83' and 84' he was in National Development Squads and made the NZ Development Selection team that played the Australian Junior Mens team in 85'. He got as high as No.2 in the District Senior Rankings, was part of the Central Triangular teams that battled Wellington and Hawkes Bay/Gisborne for 8yrs and played for the Central Senior Mens team at the NZ Nationals for 7yrs. Smith is well known for his roles in Administration and held the Marketing Director and President Roles at Central for a total of 7yrs. He has been Event Director at the 2006 World Junior Boys Champs and the 2010 World Women's Teams Champs, both held at Palmerston North. Smith has won the Sport Manawatu Administrator of the Year 4 times 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007 and was awarded a Special award for Long Service to Sport in 2011. In 2004 and 2013 he won the NZ Squash Chairman's Award which was in recognition of outstanding contribution to Squash. Smith is still on the NZ Squash Hall of Fame board and was one of the founding committee members which started it in 2009. A man who did a lot of roles outside of Squash Central but with the Central colours underneath his shirt and the Squash District has certainly reaped the benefits. Congratulations Grant and thank you.



(Pictured above Life members Marilyn Dolan, Joss Urbahn, Lois Mills and Grant Smith)

## Coaching Spot – A view from the inside

I'm stoked and grateful that the Squash Central committee has the confidence in me by appointing me as the District Coach for the forthcoming season, I'm a born and bred Squash Central lad and will be doing my utmost with my time / resources to ensure the game is heading in the right direction from a coaching perspective within our District.

I plan to be in touch with as many key people in the near future at our Clubs to get on with what needs to be done for the season.

### A few things that will be coming your way include:

- **Club programs** (I'm here to assist in any way I can with club programs e.g. juniors, ladies, beginners, team / squad training so you are not isolated and guessing what works and what doesn't, if I do not have all the answers then I will ensure that I get them for you from other sources)
- **Junior / Senior rep teams** (ensuring that we are well planned with squad rep training & that players / parents are being communicated with regarding the upcoming rep season including local, district, national and 1 day rep fixtures and expectations around this group as well as having rep selectors, managers and coaches of these squads all communicating with each other)
- **Coachforce module delivery** (we have 2 great facilitators in Kaye Carter in KP and Jason Fletcher in Palmerston North that will be delivering Squash NZ specific modules around the District throughout the year. I'm waiting on the Squash NZ courses prior to being able to deliver these)
- **Zone Squads** (looking at the viability of reviving and continuing these, these 1 day squad training days are for the players that are a tier below our regular rep players)
- **9 to 13 year old squad days** (continuing on from where Grant Watts and I finished last year, these catered for our J - E grade players to prepare them for district and national level camps going forward and bring them into a fun and semi formal training day)
- **13 to 18 year old squad days** (as above but provided an opportunity for juniors that might not get picked up in the District/national system)
- **District Coaching Conference** (we will hold this event at the Whanganui Squash Club some time this year. The plan is to bring ALL levels of coaches or budding coaches together to share information and listen to the great presenters we will have on the day).

## Coaching spot continued

As opposed to visiting every single club individually I plan to use certain clubs in certain areas to deliver the above initiatives, for example; club programs in Taranaki could be delivered one day at the Hawera Squash Club, and in the Manawatu it could be delivered at Tararua where all other clubs in these areas come to a central base to partake in the day.

If there is anything you need to know or questions you have for me around coaching please do not hesitate to contact me on 027 5552021.

I'm looking forward to seeing you all around the District as the year progresses!

Rod Bannister

## Squash and Education open doorways



One of Centrals top Junior Girls Courtney Trail (SquashGym PN) updates us on the great opportunity she has through Education, Squash and a lot of hard work.

In 2015 I had the opportunity to travel to the states to play in the US and Canadian Opens. Whilst playing the US Open I came away with a win against the US U17 #1 and was approached by the head coach of Princeton University. At this point I realized that my studies and squash could be incorporated together. I came back to NZ and worked really hard academically while keeping my squash at a high level. All this hard work presented opportunities and I have been rewarded with a scholarship to attend Dickinson College in Pennsylvania class of 2022, studying Neuroscience. I am excited to be part of an up and coming college squash team supported by a coach that has had an accolade of achievements. Being situated on the eastern side of America I have the benefit of training and competing with some of the top

athletes in college. I am privileged to have had the support of Fletch, Teresa, Jo and my family to balance and guide me to achieving a major goal.

Thanks Courtney

## Player Profile

Name Glenn Blay      Age 34      Club Ohakea      Grade C1

**When and how did you get introduced to squash?** Back in 1997. As a child I had always played tennis until one day a friend invited me to play in a local squash tournament. Having never played squash before I was given an F grade and ended up winning my Div.

**What was the highlight of your squash career to date?** My highlight would be our Ohakea men's div 1 team taking out the 2017 Interclub Comp. Ohakea courts had been closed for nearly 4 years so to come back and not only win after 4 years out but the first ever win for an Ohakea Men's team made this a pretty special moment.

**Favourite person you have ever played and why?** I don't have a favourite person to play. Any time on the court is fantastic whether you are playing a competitive comp game, a mate or even helping to train someone else.

**Most embarrassing squash moment?** Being skunked twice in one match

**Top tip for other players?** Never give up. No matter what the score is, never give up. It shows tenacity and determination and if you can show those attributes on the court then they will continue through into your everyday life.

**Do you have a Favourite or Signature shot?** Off their serve from the left box, right hand, cross-court, kill shot into the nick. Nothing better than seeing that ball rolling back to the center of the court especially after you may have just lost an epic point.

**What have you found most difficult?** A good drop shot.

**What are your Squash goals for 2018 and onwards?** As the new President of Central Squash my main goal this year is to ensure that we as a squash fraternity provide a safe and inviting environment for our members. This will allow them to continue to build and develop their own game. Whether it is as a junior new to the game or a senior looking to maintain a sense of health and wellbeing. Whatever their desire I want everyone to feel included, welcomed and encouraged to pick up a racket and give it a go.



# Upcoming District Events

18 <sup>th</sup> March	Central V Eastern Juniors	SquashGym PN
15 <sup>th</sup> April	Junior Prince Series start	Kawaroa Park
28 <sup>th</sup> April	Central v Waikato	Taumararui
18 – 20 May	Central Junior	Hawera
22 – 23 June	Central Doubles	Whanganui
29 <sup>th</sup> July	Prince Series Final	Whanganui
10 – 12 Aug	District Super Champs	B = Kawaroa Park, C = Hawera, D= Waitara, E =Dannevirke, F/J = Tararua
24 – 26 Aug	Central Open	SquashGym PN
31 Aug – 1 Sep	Central Masters	Inglewood
7 – 8 Sep	District COC	Levin
9 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Central v Eastern	Hawkes Bay
20 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Interclub Play-offs	TBA

Please note the grading list cut off dates for Super Champs is 15<sup>th</sup> June and Champion of Champions is 1st September.

# Squash Central Contacts

## Squash Central

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