

OREGON OPEN SURVEY RESULTS

From Anders Giltvedt, 2017 Organizer

Hi Oregon Squash Community –

I would like to thank all of you who completed the recent Oregon Open survey; the response rate was very good. And your feedback was informative and provides a clear picture of your view of and preferences for the Oregon Open, a PSA event. I apologize for a lengthy note, the distribution of the survey generated a number of comments.

First off, and prior to addressing the survey results, I would like to let you know I can no longer volunteer as PSA Promoter for PSA events at the Mac. As noted in my introductory email to the survey in mid-August, MAC management indicated they want MAC dedicated squash staff to be much more active in leading, planning and executing future squash tournaments hosted at the MAC, whether professional or amateur events, which I support. After thoroughly assessing implications along with reviewing the responsibilities for a Promoter in PSA's guidebook, I believe it is not realistic to split the role of tournament leader from that of a PSA tournament promoter.

I wish the MAC success in its future PSA endeavors, and I'll offer my assistance where needed. MAC has a perfect structure for a successful PSA event; Ashley Read, MAC Head Pro, has run more PSA events than undersigned, and, in contrast to vast majority of U.S. for-profit clubs hosting PSA events, MAC designated squash staff has ample and able support in Mac's Squash Committee structure, including member coaches/athletic members, and also by Portland City League.

Onto the just completed survey. The vast majority of respondents stated they had a very positive overall experience at the OO 2017 tournament. (This survey result mirrors the pro players' excellent evaluation of the OO and MAC facilities). The respondents cogently value and embrace the PSA OO event week at the MAC noting it is the annual event which brings the whole Oregon community together.

The survey also says that families with squash juniors in a program believe hosting a professional player from the internationally flavored group over the week-long PSA event is important. Understandable, families also expressed that a OO PSA event at the MAC is strongly preferred over such an event at a non-MAC location; logistical challenges were noted for being more reserved hosting during an OO PSA event not held at the MAC. As many of you well know, providing our juniors exposure to and an opportunity to build friendships with the visiting pros have always been a driving force for my efforts. Consequently, at this juncture, I don't see a PSA event in a non-MAC location as viable option. This is reinforced by 25 plus visiting players wishing to be billeted. On the other hand, responses clearly indicate support for hosting 6-8 invitational pros.

With respect to the future of the Oregon Open, an independent entity from the MAC, the survey also helped assess what a conceivable OO Invitational professional squash event might look like. From a funding perspective, longtime patrons and also many of our sponsors expressed they would continue to support bringing professional squash to Portland, no matter location. Also important, a number of past volunteers expressed the same sentiment. After further discussions with key constituencies, I plan to be in touch with respect to a prospective OO Invitational event in the spring of 2018.

Finally, I would like to thank all those having supported MAC tournaments and events where I've served as a chair/promotor over the past 22 years. I would especially like to express my gratitude to the many loyal patrons, sponsors (nearly 150 discrete over the years) and business service partners. Without them, many great OO memories and live experiences would have been missed. Moreover, each and every year, OO was financially in the black and able donate to non-profits such as Association for Retarded Citizens (close to my heart) and the MAF, and assist US Squash with wildcard/local slots in the draw. Also, I would be remised to not recognize the countless volunteers and MAC support staff for making the 30 plus events run smoothly.

It's been a rewarding ride at the MAC beginning with re-building the Oregon Squash Championships for adults in 1995 as a member coach, bringing in concurrent juniors draws in 1998, adding Oregon Open Invitational events in 2001, evolving into the larger dollar, formal Oregon Open PSA events starting in 2007 (in part to support MAC's own Julian Illingworth's pro carrier with our tournament wildcard invitations), culminating in more modest \$15,000 Oregon Opens over the past four years in conjunction with the Rose City Classic.

Personally, I will continue to support US Squash and the PSA in their missions, the most important one being the efforts toward a successful bid for the 2024 Paris Olympics, which would rapidly elevate exposure and funding for squash and its well deserving professional players.

Enjoy the squash season! Very best, Anders.