



Home	Ecosystem	Facilities	Management	Architecture	Marketplace	About us
------	-----------	------------	------------	--------------	-------------	----------

SFN Team · Jun 25, 2024

# Jahanzeb Khan on Houston’s Squash Boom and Fulfilling World Juniors Dream

*This article originally appeared on the WSF World Junior Squash Championships 2024's official website, covering event in Houston, Texas. Visit [www.wsfworldjuniors.com](http://www.wsfworldjuniors.com) for more details.*

When Houston Squash Club hosts the WSF World Junior Squash Championships next month, it will represent the achievement of a childhood dream for more than just the 248 players travelling to the Lone Star State.

Jahanzeb Khan, coach and part owner of the club, has been a key part in the squash explosion in Houston over the last decade that has seen the squash club go from zero junior programmes to hosting hundreds, as well as the world’s top professionals during the prestigious Houston Open and South Western Open championships.



*"I wanted to grow squash, which is why I'd moved to Houston, to start something from scratch as there was nothing here."*

Khan, born in Pakistan, arrived in Houston in 2011 after a spell in England and reflects with a grin the contrast in squash scenes that greeted him.

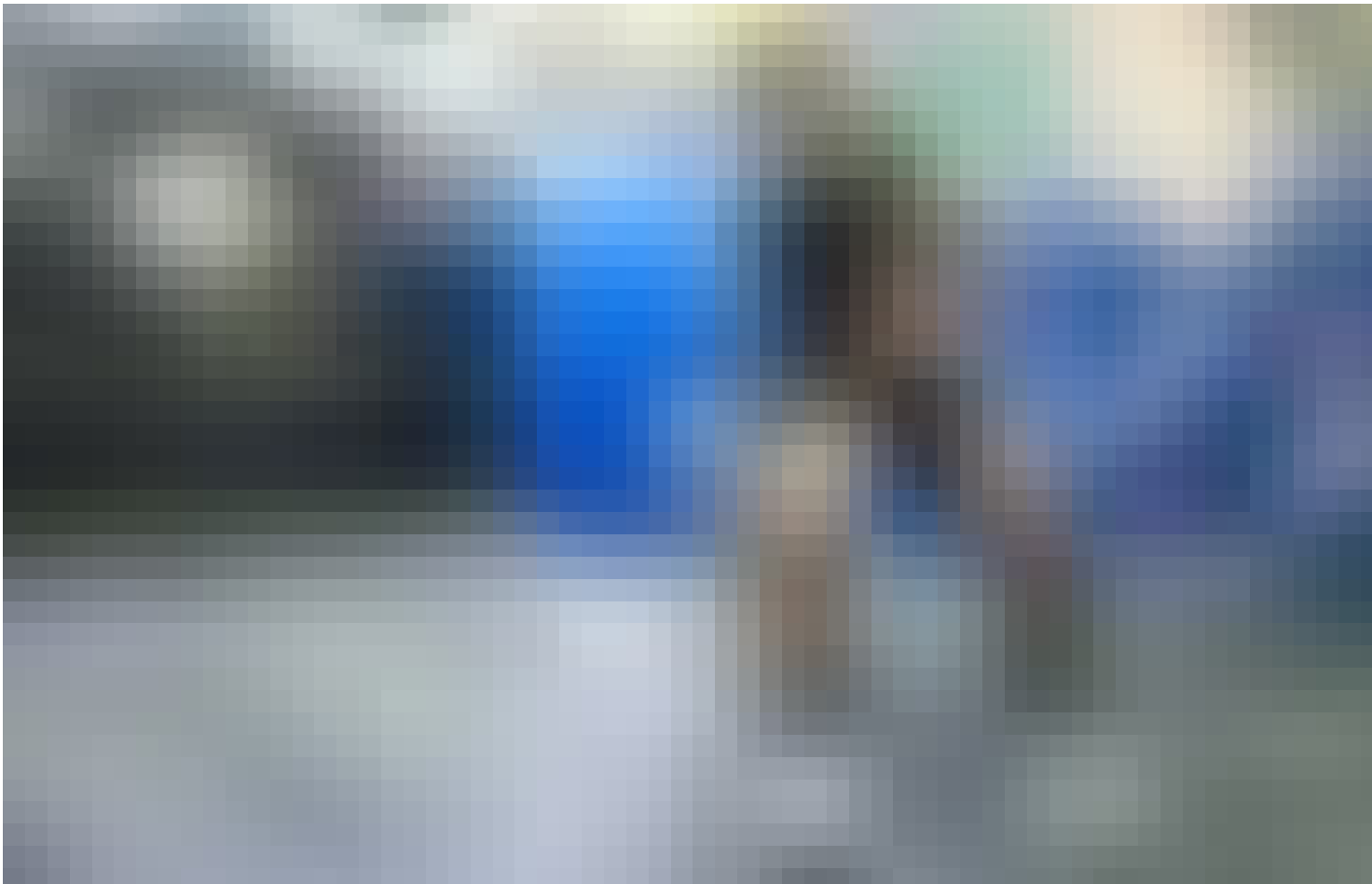
"I had been working with Ben Ford in London and it was so busy because we were working across eight different clubs. Then, I came to Houston and on the first day, there was no one. On the second day, no one. Finally, just four kids started coming and I said to myself 'Well, this is where I have to start from.'

A mechanical engineer by schooling and an "okay former squash pro" by his own admission, Khan explains how the support of the local community was crucial as he looked to construct an asset to benefit all of Houston.

"I wanted to grow squash, which is why I'd moved to Houston, to start something from scratch as there was nothing here."

"But, finally, people started coming in. There's a very big Pakistani community here who helped me a lot because they all knew about squash. In particular, my partners Dr. Asif Cochinwala, Dr. Khurram Siddiqui and Syed Sher Shah who invested so much into making Houston a success.

"They they got to know me and that I was from Pakistan, and I invited them to social sessions. From there, it was like a little rain coming in."



*World No.5 Mazen Hesham and World No.1 Ali Farag in action in the final of the 2024 Houston Open*

That initial trickle soon turned to a downpour, with Khan tireless and unabashed in his ambition to carve out a squash dynasty in a state where American football reigns supreme.

“When you have a passion for something, you have no problems. When I sleep, I dream about squash. When I wake up, I think about squash. And I have people behind me who also have this passion, so I have no problem with anything. Funding: no problem, bringing the kids now: no problem, hosting events: no problem, hosting players or the organisers: no problem!

“Squash started to boom and just five months into my first year, I hosted my first \$10,000 tournament. And it continued to go from there getting bigger and better. Now, we’re hosting lots of events, have hundreds of kids here for coaching and Houston Squash Club is massive. And it’s such a community sport here.”

“The goal is to keep growing and have at least 10 branches of Houston Squash Club, with four courts in every five to ten mile radius. Over the next three years, I’m trying to build another 40-60 courts here.”

Now, Houston Squash Club is a modern and still rapidly expanding club, with the addition of a brand new all-glass court – built for the World Juniors but set to benefit the local community for years after as a permanent feature – a welcome boost to the three-wall glass court and the 13 traditional courts.



As he points out where the new court is being built, Khan is justifiably proud of the progress made and what it will mean to host a world championship in his home club.

"I wanted to bring the biggest tournament to my club. World Juniors is such a huge thing and the best thing is that this is the first time in history that they're hosting boys and girls together in the team championship. That's never happened before and is another great reason for us to host.

"This city has gone from never hosting any events to hosting Gold-level men's and women's tournaments and a World Championship.

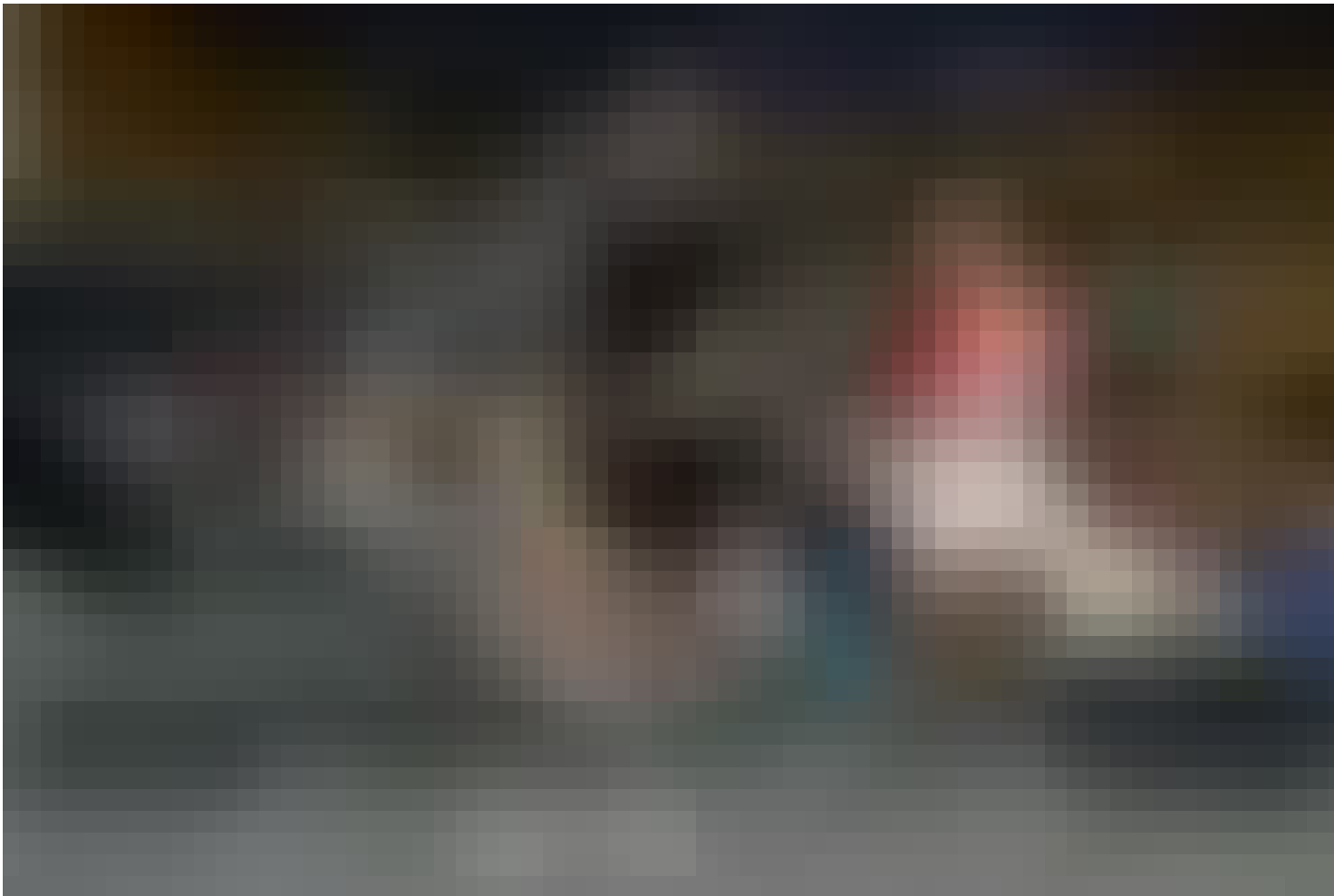
"My dream was playing World Juniors, but I never got to play it. So if you can't play it, host it! Because this feels like winning it! People will always remember that this year Houston hosted the World Juniors and Jahanzeb was the organiser."

"And then if you see the banners here, all these are team championships won by my juniors over the last three years. I have lots of juniors here and this is the World Juniors, it's for them, right?

"It's a dream for the juniors. The juniors who I'm teaching right now are eight years old, nine years old. They have something to look to be a part of in eight years. I think one of my juniors will be a part of the World Juniors in 10 years."

SFN

©2025 SFN (Squash Facilities Network) / [Privacy Policy](#) / [Accessibility Statement](#)



*16-year-old Amina Orfi of Egypt will be heading to Houston hoping to make it a hat trick of World Junior Championship wins after victories in France in 2022 and Australia in 2023.*

The incredible work being done by Khan and his team in Houston has not gone unnoticed, with Khan set to be announced as the US Squash nominee for USOPC Developmental Coach of the Year during the World Juniors for his achievements at the grassroots level, including the organising of a hybrid high school squash team that competed in and won the National Interscholastic Team Championships.

The growth of squash in educational settings is something Khan is keen to build upon, and he points to how the World Juniors is impacting the squash scene beyond his own courts.

"After this, we're going to see lots of local schools getting involved in squash, just because of this. A lot of universities are already getting more involved; I've been talking with Rice University, the University of Houston, Texas A&M about club teams, just because of World Juniors being here."

That reflects a trend seen across the United States, which in four years will play host to squash's long-awaited Olympic debut at the LA28 Olympic Games.

Over the last decade, efforts by US Squash and partners has more than tripled the number of junior squash players competing nationally and increased participation at schools, colleges and among adults, with further growth predicted ahead of LA28.

Reflecting on this growth, Khan is typically optimistic for the future of the sport and his own role in it.

"I love challenges. People ask 'how are you going to hold multiple events together' and I just say 'I'm going to host even more!'

"I think the wave in the city is squash, it's a huge thing now."

*The 2024 WSF World Junior Squash Championships are taking place at Houston Squash Club, Texas, from 12-23 July. Keep up with all the action at [wsfworldjuniors.com](https://www.wsfworldjuniors.com).*