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# Squash and the Road to Brisbane 2032: A Comprehensive Look at a Sport on the Rise



Pic: PSA Squash Tour

Squash has long fought for a place in the Olympic spotlight. With confirmation that squash will debut at Los Angeles 2028 and a positive meeting recently held between World Squash officials and the Brisbane 2032 Organising Committee, the sport’s momentum towards the Games seems stronger than ever. This article explores how squash fits into the evolving Olympic program, highlights the significance of the sport’s rich Australian heritage, and showcases the latest developments around the Australian Squash Open in Brisbane.

## Squash in the Evolving Olympic Landscape

The Summer Olympics include a set of mandatory 'core' sports, complemented by up to six additional sports chosen by each host city. These “optional” sports are proposed with the aim of boosting local interest and encouraging new audiences.

Several international sports federations have expressed interest in having their disciplines included in the Brisbane 2032 Summer Olympics. Baseball and softball, supported by strong past performances and viewership in Australia, are being championed by Softball Australia, Baseball Australia, and the WBSC. Rugby league nines and wheelchair rugby league are being proposed by the International Rugby League. The ICC is pushing for cricket, a highly popular sport in Australia, while World Netball is advocating for netball despite challenges related to gender parity. Squash, flag football, and breakdancing have already been selected for LA 2028 and are now being pursued for Brisbane 2032 as well. Additional bids include flying disc sports, trail running, beach lifesaving events, touch football, and karate, reflecting a diverse range of sporting ambitions for inclusion in the Olympic programme.

## A Historic Meeting with Brisbane 2032

In October 2023, the World Squash Federation (WSF) confirmed its own plan to pursue a place for squash at Brisbane 2032. With squash now officially on the program for Los Angeles 2028, the WSF hopes to use this momentum to secure squash as part of Australia's Games four years later.

On 16 March 2025, representatives from World Squash, Squash Australia, and the Professional Squash Association (PSA) met with Brisbane 2032 CEO Cindy Hook and Sports Director Brendan Keane. In attendance were:

- **Zena Wooldridge** – President of World Squash
- **Matt Schmidt** – President of Squash Australia
- **Rob Donaghue** – CEO of Squash Australia
- **Lee Beachill** – COO of the Professional Squash Association
- **Sarah Fitz-Gerald** – Five-time Australian World Open Champion



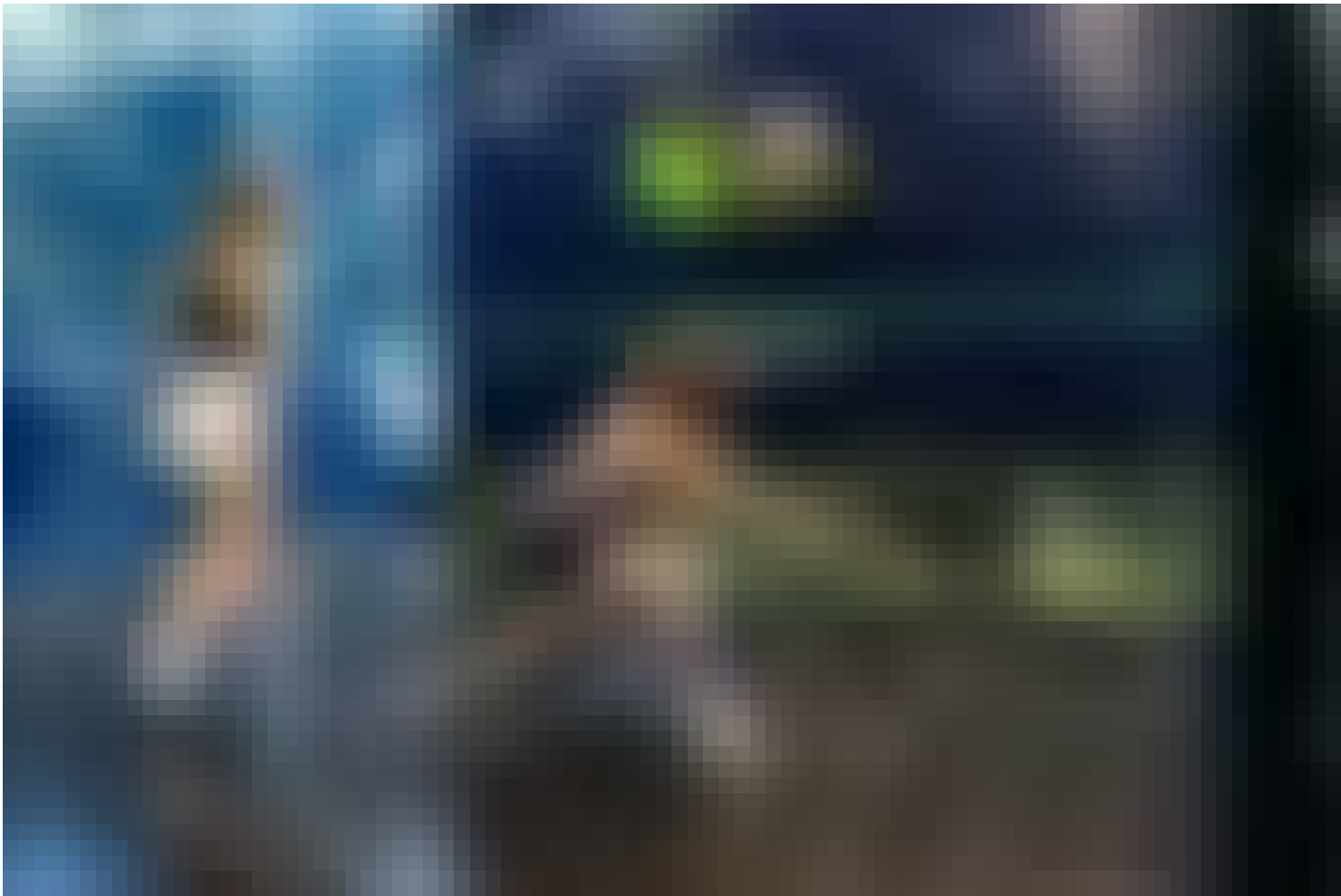
During this “positive and constructive” conversation, the group explored how squash could bring added value to Brisbane 2032. WSF President Wooldridge expressed gratitude for the “warm welcome and hospitality,” highlighting how squash’s fast-paced nature, relatively low cost of implementation, and growing global appeal could enrich the Games. She also noted that LA28’s decision to include squash has already driven innovation in the sport and shone a spotlight on its athletes.

## Australia’s Squash Legacy

Australia boasts one of the richest squash traditions in the world. The country holds the record for the most World Team Championship titles in history and has produced iconic legends such as Geoff Hunt, Heather McKay, Chris Dittmar, and Sarah Fitz-Gerald. Squash is also part of Australia’s broader sporting identity – admired for its intensity, requiring skill, speed, and strategic thinking.

With squash now part of the program for LA28 and a solid bid for Brisbane 2032, Squash Australia has obtained new high-performance funding to nurture the next generation of athletes. This financial boost will cover the next two Olympic cycles, helping Australian players fully prepare for LA28 and potentially shine on home soil at Brisbane 2032.

## Insights from the 2025 Australian Squash Open



Pic: PSA Squash Tour

The Australian Squash Open was currently underway in Brisbane, upgraded this year to PSA Gold status. According to a **recent article published by ABC News (15 March 2025)**, the event is not only attracting elite players from around the world but also garnering considerable local attention. Here are the key takeaways from that coverage:

1. **Increased Public Engagement:** Large crowds have turned out at Brisbane’s South Bank Piazza to watch the action on a state-of-the-art glass court. Fans are thrilled by the fast rallies and high athleticism on display.
2. **Local and National Support:** The ABC piece highlights how the Brisbane community views the event as a possible preview of what squash could look like at a home Olympics in 2032. Public officials and sponsors have shown strong support, citing squash’s strong historical footprint in Australia and the readiness to host high-level events.
3. **Athlete Perspectives:** Both domestic and international players spoke about the excitement of competing in a potential future Olympic venue. Australian talents, in particular, are motivated by the idea of playing for gold on home soil, further fueling the hopes for inclusion in Brisbane 2032.
4. **A Boost for Squash Development:** Beyond the immediate competition, the tournament’s success reflects broader growth. Enhanced media exposure and robust attendance are creating a powerful platform for Squash Australia to showcase why the sport deserves its Olympic status.

## Looking Ahead: Challenges and Opportunities

While squash’s Olympic ambitions are stronger than ever, challenges remain. Inclusion is not guaranteed, and squash will need to continue proving its audience appeal, manage logistical demands, and engage younger generations – all of which the WSF, Squash Australia, and the PSA are addressing head-on. While squash’s Olympic ambitions are stronger than ever, challenges remain. Inclusion is not guaranteed, and squash will need to continue proving its audience appeal, manage logistical demands, and engage younger generations – all of which the WSF, Squash Australia, and the PSA are addressing head-on.

Additionally, 11 other sports have submitted official bids for inclusion in Brisbane 2032, including baseball/softball, rugby league nines, cricket, netball, flag football, breakdancing, flying disc sports, trail running, lifesaving sports, touch football, and karate. Each of these contenders similarly seeks to leverage Australia’s love of sport and the opportunity to captivate new audiences

However, the combination of:

- A proven track record of Australian hosting success
- Existing squash infrastructure (like South Bank Piazza)
- A thriving national program with fresh investment

...makes a compelling argument for squash’s place at Brisbane 2032. By continuing to raise the sport’s profile and highlighting its global reach, squash hopes to secure a permanent position in the Olympic movement.

## The Olympic Programme Timeline for Brisbane 2032

According to Rule 45 of the Olympic Charter, the sports programme for a specific edition of the Olympic Games is typically decided by the IOC Session about seven years before the Games, unless the IOC Executive Board decides otherwise. However, following discussions between the Brisbane 2032 Organising Committee and the IOC, it was agreed that finalising the initial sports programme next year—around six years prior to Brisbane 2032—would be advantageous. This approach provides:

- **More time to review and validate sporting infrastructure**, ensuring venues align with Games requirements.
- **An opportunity for collaboration** with the IOC to refine the sports programme, focusing on strategic partnerships and cost-effective planning with various International Federations.

For squash, this timeline means there is still work to be done to secure a place in the Brisbane 2032 line-up, but it also allows more time to demonstrate strong domestic support, infrastructure readiness, and global appeal—further boosting the sport’s already solid momentum following its LA28 inclusion.

## Conclusion

Squash’s journey to the Olympic stage has been long and marked by persistence. With an official place at LA28 already secured, and a warmly received meeting with the Brisbane 2032 Organising Committee, it feels more real than ever that we’ll see players battling for an Olympic medal on Australian soil.

Events like the Australian Squash Open in Brisbane not only boost the sport’s visibility but also demonstrate the enduring passion and competitive spirit of the squash community. If recent momentum is any indication, squash could be poised to make a lasting impression at Brisbane 2032, honouring Australia’s proud heritage in the sport and showcasing world-class talent in front of a global audience.