

Markus Gaebel · Apr 4

Innovations and Strategies for Growing US Squash



In a wide-ranging interview, Kevin Klipstein—CEO and President of US Squash—sat down with Markus Gaebel of the Squash Facilities Network (SFN) to discuss the current state of squash in the United States and the roadmap for its future. The conversation covered everything from grassroots development and public school initiatives to court construction strategies and squash’s Olympic prospects. Below is a comprehensive look at the key insights and plans Kevin shared.

Enhancing Grassroots Participation



Kevin began by underscoring that national sports governing bodies like US Squash are committed first and foremost to grassroots growth. Contrary to the common assumption that such organizations focus only on top-tier

athletes, Kevin explained that around 90% of US Squash’s work involves broadening the base of young participants.

“If kids aren’t even aware of squash, much less have access to it, then those top athletes aren’t going to be entered into our pipeline. That’s fundamentally how we build toward elite performance—by growing participation from the ground up.”

By focusing on children between four and twelve years old, US Squash hopes to ensure that top athletic talent is introduced to squash early. Kevin sees this as critical to elevating the sport’s overall performance level, as a robust grassroots pipeline consistently feeds into high-performance programs.

Targeting Public Schools and Community Facilities

A significant part of this grassroots push involves public middle and high schools, which Kevin identified as the largest untapped resource for junior players. While many existing courts in the United States are located at private schools and universities, Kevin sees public education as the real key to scaling participation.

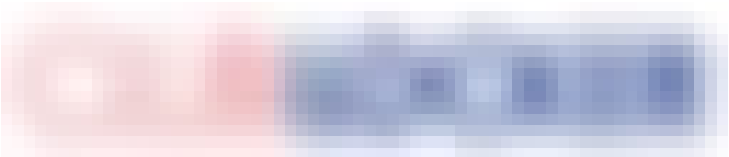
“The majority of our junior activity now happens at the scholastic level rather than individual junior events, which marks a significant shift over the past decade.”

At the same time, community-focused programs also play a major role in building awareness. Kevin cited Access Youth Academy and its work in Los Angeles—where kids are introduced to the concept of squash through one-wall squash in local parks. Though one-wall squash differs from the traditional game, it offers a fun, low-barrier entry point for beginners. As students progress, they can transition to more robust three-wall courts built on school campuses, further expanding their exposure and skills.

In conjunction with LA28, there is an effort to create a continuum of squash facilities—from outdoor and open-air courts up to full-fledged indoor modular installations. Over time, these assets aim to raise the sport’s profile and leave behind a sustainable squash infrastructure in the region.

Breaking the Infrastructure Barrier for US Squash

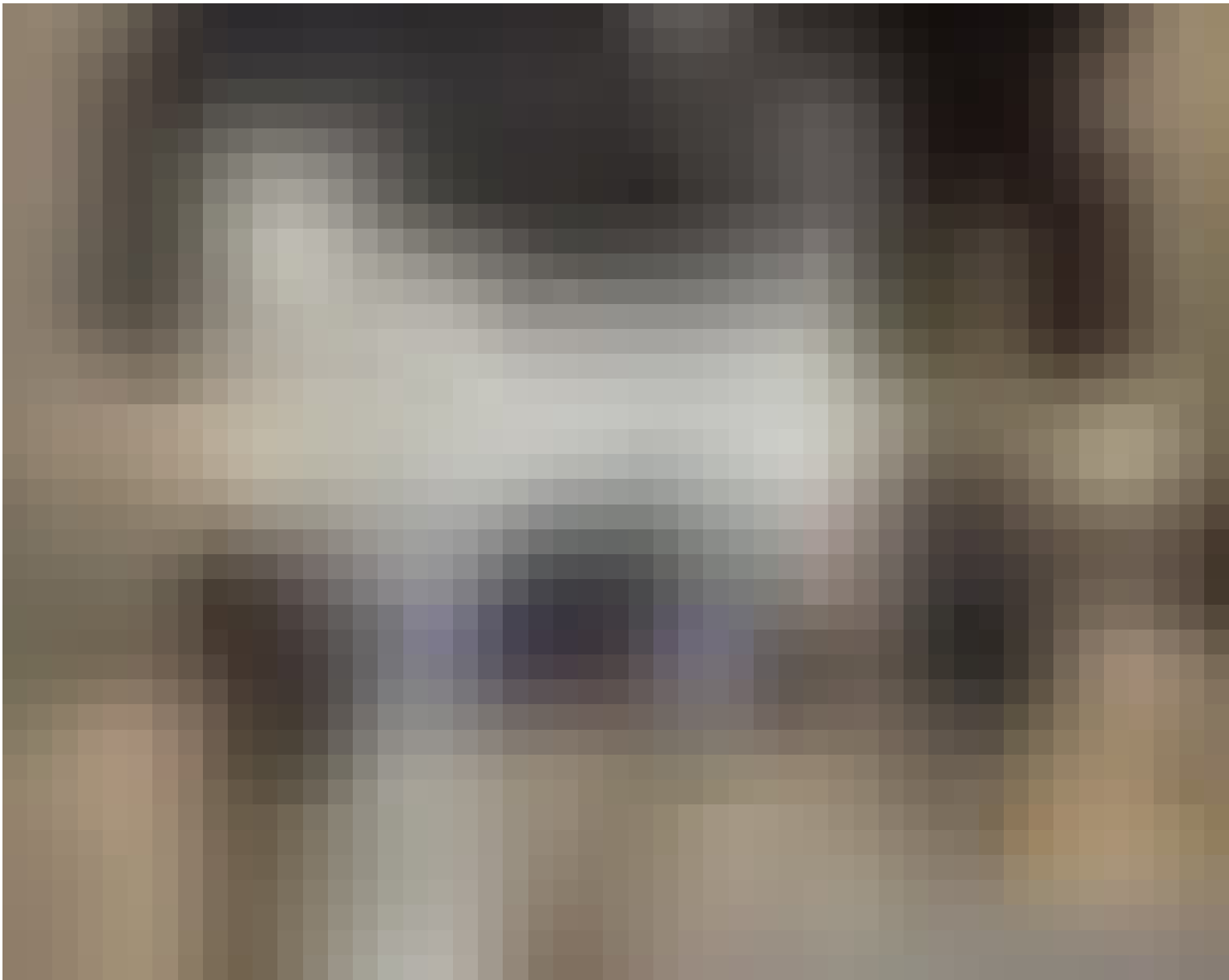
Kevin emphasized that one of US Squash’s core strategies is “breaking the infrastructure barrier.” Because access to courts remains a significant challenge for many prospective players. US Squash developed Club Locker, a system that streamlines administration for both facilities and players:



“Club Locker is a reservation system for courts that also handles tournaments, leagues, ladders, results, ratings, rankings, and match streaming. It not only facilitates our programs but also drives revenue.”

By integrating these functionalities into one platform, US Squash aims to eliminate logistical hurdles that often deter players from getting involved. Club Locker effectively connects the entire squash ecosystem, providing opportunities for improved communication, data analytics, and long-term planning.

Supporting Court Construction



Glass Court at RacquetX in cooperation with US Squash

Kevin stressed that alongside technological solutions like Club Locker, squash requires more flexible and financially accessible physical infrastructure. To address this, US Squash has collaborated with manufacturers to develop modular courts that can be assembled and disassembled quickly—often in a single day—at a cost of under \$50,000. This lower-cost, lower-risk model lets schools and community groups install courts in a range of venues, then remove or relocate them as needed without large financial losses. The design’s adaptability—particularly in covered or open-air settings—makes these modular courts appealing in warm climates like Los Angeles, and ensures regions are no longer limited by prohibitive construction expenses. By balancing affordability with an easy, streamlined setup, US Squash hopes these innovations will bring squash to a broader audience and fuel the sport’s continued growth.

Technical Improvements: Innovating Squash Court Design

Kevin also addressed questions about technical enhancements to squash courts, especially glass-court innovations needed for televised events. While glass courts have raised the profile of squash in major tournaments, he agreed there is room to improve on visual clarity and acoustics. “Continuing to enhance the viewing experience is paramount to showcasing squash at its best.”

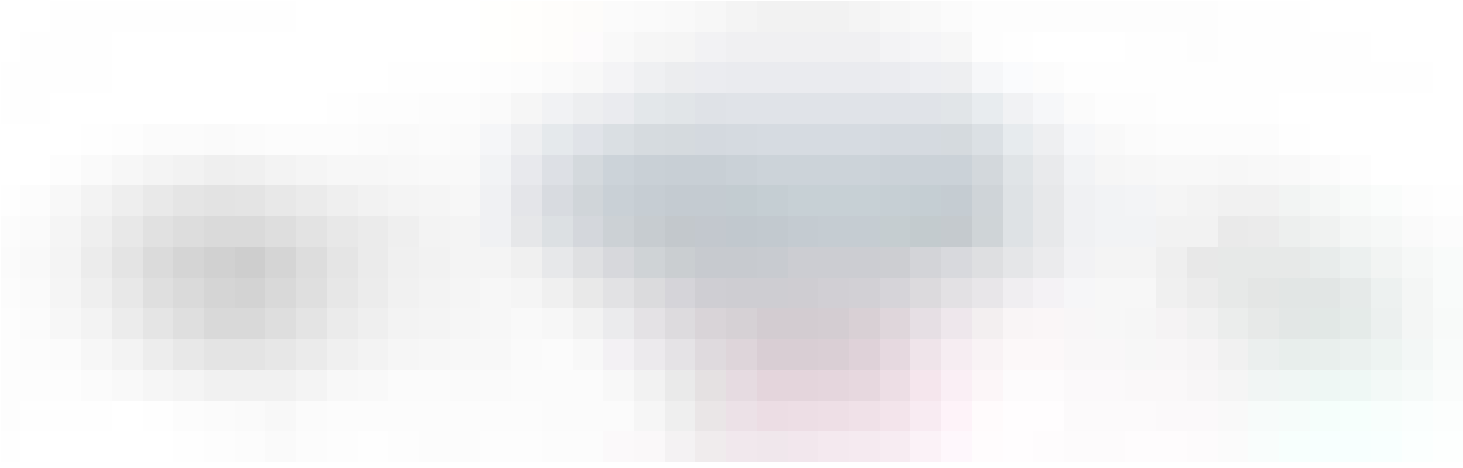
He acknowledged that ongoing discussions with the Professional Squash Association (PSA), World Squash, and potential technology partners aim to refine lighting, camera angles, materials, and acoustics. These improvements will benefit not only the live audience but also the broadcast experience, which is crucial to expanding squash’s global reach.

Squash at the Olympics: A Historic Opportunity

Kevin expressed particular excitement about squash’s planned inclusion in the LA28 Olympics, describing how temporary glass courts will be constructed for the Games with the idea that they are then relocated to permanent sites in Los Angeles—ensuring a meaningful, long-term community legacy. US Squash has worked hand in hand with the WSF and PSA to bring the sport to LA28, while World Squash leads direct

engagement with all Olympic-related parties including the IOC, Olympic Broadcasting Services and the LA28 Organizing Committee. Although US Squash is not at the forefront of broadcast innovations, Kevin confirmed they fully support ongoing efforts to enhance the viewing experience, including upgrades in camera technology, data analytics, commentary, and overall presentation. With the Olympic spotlight poised to introduce squash to millions of new fans, this partnership seeks to leverage a global platform for the sport, build excitement around its unique appeal, and leave behind a vibrant, sustainable infrastructure that continues to benefit Los Angeles well after the Games.

Prospects for the Brisbane Games 2032



SFN



Looking beyond 2028, Kevin discussed the importance of retaining Olympic status for the Brisbane Games. He emphasized that international collaboration is key, with US Squash, Squash Australia, the World Squash Federation, and the PSA all contributing to a cohesive strategy: “Knowing our roles, being clear on strategy and thoughtful communication will help ensure squash remains a vibrant contender.”

Strengthening relationships with host committees and others in the process will be critical, as will demonstrating continued progress on the broadcast product and event presentation. The more squash can build on the momentum going into LA28, the better chance it stands of maintaining a place on the Olympic stage well into the future.

A Vision for the Future

Concluding his remarks, Kevin painted a hopeful picture of squash’s trajectory in the United States. By focusing on robust grassroots development, innovative court technologies, and global showcases like the Olympics, US Squash aims to elevate the sport’s profile significantly. The push for modular, cost-effective courts will not only tackle accessibility challenges but also lay the groundwork for a thriving and sustainable squash culture nationwide.

This comprehensive strategy—encompassing grassroots participation, public school engagement, infrastructure innovation, and high-profile events—is designed to inspire a new generation of players, fans, and investors. With ongoing collaboration among all stakeholders in the squash community, the future looks bright for the sport in the United States and beyond.