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Squash & Padel Nederland: How Squash can Thrive in the Netherlands



Cas and Job Richter, owner of Padel & Squash Nederland

With a significant presence in the Dutch squash landscape, **Squash & Padel Nederland** is not only the largest squash operator in the country but also a benchmark for sustainable and community-oriented facility management. Operating seven clubs (six own clubs and a seventh is affiliated through a franchise agreement) featuring a total of 84 indoor squash courts and one outdoor squash court, they demonstrate how squash can thrive in the Netherlands.

Recently, the Squash Facilities Network (SFN) had the opportunity to speak with **Job Richter** from Squash & Padel Nederland about their approach to managing facilities, attracting new members, and navigating the changing sports landscape in the Netherlands.



A Family Legacy Built on Squash

Originally founded in the 1980s by Job's, Frans Richter, father with a single club, the business has steadily grown over the decades. Today, Job and his brother (Cas Richter) own the company and have expanded it by acquiring additional clubs over time. They have also added a **Outdoor Squash** court to one of their facilities, embracing innovation and diversification to meet the evolving interests of their members.



Leveraging Experience for Industry Insight

Their extensive experience gives Squash & Padel Nederland a unique perspective on the challenges and opportunities within the squash industry. Similar to the insights shared in our recent interview with **Nicol Squash** on the Squash Facilities Network website, this example vividly illustrates how effective facility management contributes to success in the squash sector.

"You Need a Minimum of Eight Courts to Build a Sustainable Community"

Squash & Padel Nederland strategically focuses on larger facilities with at least eight courts, which they find crucial for long-term sustainability. Smaller clubs with fewer courts often struggle to remain viable, whereas larger clubs benefit from a stronger sense of community, which is key to member retention.

“We’ve found that you need a minimum of eight courts to build a sustainable community and engage members consistently,” explains Job Richter. This approach has allowed the organization to maintain a steady base of members while still fostering growth.

Activities as the Heart of a Lively Community



Attracting and retaining recreational players is a core focus for Squash Padel Nederland. Recognizing the importance of community, they offer group training sessions where players can improve their skills while enjoying a social environment. Additionally, the clubs implement ladder leagues for friendly competition, providing a structured way for members to engage with others of similar skill levels. Using software that matches players for internal tournaments ensures that everyone can participate at a competitive level.

“These activities are crucial for creating a lively community,” says Job. “By matching players of similar abilities, we help our members enjoy the game and stay engaged. The social aspect is essential to us; it lets members socialize after matches and builds community.”

Harnessing Social Media to Reach New Generations

The next generation of squash players is crucial for the sport’s future, and Squash & Padel Nederland has invested heavily in social media to connect with younger players. They partner with a dedicated marketing agency to enhance their online visibility, focusing on university towns to draw in young athletes.

“Social media is the most effective tool to reach new generations. In university cities especially, it helps us make squash accessible and appealing to younger players,” explains Job.

To further boost engagement, Squash & Padel Nederland participates in university events, offering introductory programs and exclusive discounts for students. These efforts help keep squash visible and relevant in a competitive sports landscape.

Creative Approaches to Junior Programs



The organization has also made strides in partnering with local schools to promote junior programs. However, bringing young players into squash comes with logistical challenges, especially for primary schools where students typically need transportation to reach squash facilities. For older students, who have more autonomy, the program is more viable, and Squash & Padel Nederland has seen success by inviting high school students for introductory sessions.

“We’ve had to be creative with our junior programs,” admits Job. **“It’s a logistical challenge, but we find ways to engage with students who are able to travel and are interested in learning squash.”**

Visibility Through Facility Diversification

Understanding the value of diversification, Squash & Padel Nederland has expanded their offerings beyond squash to include outdoor padel courts. This expansion allows them to make use of unused outdoor space, appealing to the growing interest in padel, particularly among younger players, and make their facilities weather independent. With colder weather and/or rainy days you can play Squash indoor and with hot summer days you can play Padel outside. This way you revenue stream will be more constant all year round.

In addition to the padel courts, they have also installed one outdoor squash court. Although the Dutch climate somewhat limits outdoor court use, the visibility of this court from the street provides free advertising and enhances awareness of squash.

“People can see the courts from the road, and it draws attention,” explains Job. **“It’s about making our facilities versatile and increasing our overall reach in the community.”**

Taking Advantage of the Olympic Spotlight on Squash

With squash making its debut in the 2028 Olympic Games, Squash & Padel Nederland anticipates increased interest in the sport. Although the Netherlands may not have a competitor this time around, the Olympics provide an invaluable platform to promote squash. By creating a national conversation and using the Olympics as a marketing opportunity, they aim to raise the profile of squash in the Netherlands and inspire the next generation of players.

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A Model for Sustainability and Growth in Squash

As they continue to expand and adapt, Squash & Padel Nederland stands out as a model for sustainable facility management. Through community-building activities, targeted marketing, youth engagement, and facility diversification, they set an example for other squash clubs in Europe. Their dedication to fostering community and their adaptability to trends in racket sports ensure that they will remain a vital part of the Dutch squash landscape for years to come.