

22 February 2019

OLYMPIC GAMES, PARIS 2024

Dear Colleague,

As you will have seen, squash was not proposed as an additional sport for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games programme; with Paris 2024 choosing to put forward breakdancing, sport climbing, skateboarding and surfing.

Naturally, we are hugely disappointed with this decision and believe that our campaign - which was run in partnership with PSA - respected both the timeline and criteria that was set out by the Paris 2024 Organising Committee and the IOC.

A delegation from WSF and PSA - which included French players Camille Serme and Victor Crouin - presented the reasons for squash's inclusion to the Paris 2024 Organising Committee in early January, where we received positive feedback from the Paris 2024 leadership.

During a presentation and discussion which lasted for nearly two hours our team presented the case for squash, backed by an impressive PowerPoint featuring the reasons why squash offers exciting options for the hosts and their city.

We focused on the great staging opportunities that squash would bring to the host of any Games. These included:

- Our glass court can be placed in an iconic or historic location, brilliantly showcasing the city.
- Showcourts can be built in as little as 25 hours and taken down in half that time – leaving no footprint on the environment.
- The showcourt would have been provided at no cost by the French Squash Federation.
- A venue could host 5,000 spectators in an area of less than 6,000 square meters.
- That squash is superbly creative, innovative and youth oriented. The interactive front wall used at the Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires, attracting more than 25,000 spectators of all ages was a great example of this that we put forward.

Some of the other features of the presentation were:

- We are a strong unified sport. Our partnership with PSA and our regional / national structure with squash played in on 50,000 courts in 185 countries on all continents exemplifies this.
- Squash is gender equal, as is the prize money at major events.
- We would ensure the participation of the top world players at a spectacular event.
- Current elite French young players would be medal prospects for France in 2024.
- The quality of our broadcast via SquashTV has been recognised by broadcasters worldwide, including Eurosport.

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There were so many other features that were covered not only in the speeches and PowerPoint, but also in the specially made five minute bid film which was a real visual explanation of the attraction of squash to any host city.

In summary, we demonstrated that squash, an inclusive, innovative, athletic, youth & urban sport perfectly 'ticked all the boxes' and was completely in line with their vision for the Paris Games.

For the record, during the Paris 2024 announcement of February 21st we heard from the different speakers that their selection responded to a need to "make the Olympics more urban" and that "this is why we have chosen to present to the IOC with four sports that are creative as spectacular, geared towards youth and completely in line with our vision". We feel that this describes squash perfectly!

We then launched our Squash Goes Gold Olympic bid campaign last week, with the aim of giving the global squash community the opportunity to take an active part in our sport's future, which included the bid to become part of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games programme.

This campaign was launched last week because, throughout the entire process, we have been advised that the proposed sports would not be announced until late March at the earliest, with June 2019 being communicated as the most likely time, to give the IOC the chance to review the sports recommended by Paris 2024.

The fact that three of the four proposed sports are already included on the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games programme leads us to question whether the IOC favoured those sports, leaving practically no opportunity for other sports to integrate into the programme.

Squash has made huge strides forward in areas such as innovation, equality, sustainability and youth engagement - all of which matched the criteria that was communicated to us by Paris 2024 and the IOC.

However, we believe this decision shouldn't detract from the incredible progress that the sport has made in recent years, particularly given the fact that the sport's first \$1 million dollar tournament - the PSA World Championships - in Chicago over the coming week.

To conclude, for now, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the regions, nations and individuals who have supported the expensive and extensive campaign that WSF & PSA jointly executed.

I would also like to thank all members of the Olympic bid group and emphasise the quality of the cooperation with PSA.

We remain committed to growing the sport and believe the future of squash is very bright irrespective of the bid campaign failure. We will continue to show Paris in particular and IOC in general what they are missing out on.

Sincerely,



Jacques FONTAINE
President
World Squash Federation