Dear Mark,

I am sure that there is a lot of work going on behind the scenes at England Squash to get full squash back without restrictions. However it would be very helpful to have some visibility of these plans, as it is a while since we have had an update on your website.

Action is needed. Our members are becoming increasingly underwhelmed by restricted play. They cannot understand how the Pro Tour is scheduled to make a return next month, some at quite a low level, when there is no sign of restricted squash being relaxed. Our club membership payments are due soon. We need to send membership invoices for £300+ before the end of this of this month. (We do not offer a monthly direct debit facility).

This will come at a time where there is no date on the horizon for people to return to play normal squash. It begs a very simple question – if members cannot play why should they re-join or at least why not defer payment until such a time that they can play normal squash? Either way significant revenue is lost and at a time when the club has just invested substantially on a full refurbishment of all its courts. Also, the longer that people are not playing the higher the inclination to not return at all. We are seeing real evidence of this already – groups of members simply saying they are “out of the habit / too hard on the body”.....

Yes we are looking at financial incentives to re-join but without hope of a return to squash soon there is a big risk that they will not work.

There are further concerns around our junior membership. We operate one of the largest junior squash programs in the country. However more than 90% of these juniors do not play squash as their first sport. The longer that there is no guidance as to when more juniors can share a court means the higher chance they will find alternative sports to play. Nor can we structure a coaching programme. Years of effort  have gone into building this programme and our thriving girls section.

The announcement of a proposed return to the pro circuit means that in 4 weeks’ time I can host a PSA event yet my members cannot play. This is very confusing. Knowing there is light is encouraging and allows for planning. Club squash is in the dark.

Clearly the loss of members effects ES revenue directly and as an NGB you are motivated to make a return happen asap but your plans must be shared. Even a variation on the routines that players can do, some sort of comms- let players know you are doing all you can. Radio silence is frustrating players and is running a very real and serious risk of long term damage to the sport.

Regards,

Stacey