



**“The Healthiest Sport in the World”**

## **2017 City of Rochester Middle & High School Squash League and Championships: Program Overview and Funding**

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### **Summary**

Squash is a racquet sport that offers great fitness, discipline, and enjoyment to school-age children and also provides a potential avenue for admission to many ivy league universities. Five years ago, I began a small venture called SquashRocs (Squash-Rochester) to teach the sport of squash to junior level players (middle and high school students).

The mission of SquashRocs is to further increase youth participation in squash by expanding access to squash for the urban students of Rochester, with the aim of helping these students become well rounded students of the sport, along with their academic courses.

The coaches working with SquashRocs will provide young students with training and will also serve as positive role models, emphasizing the importance of high school and using their squash experience to go on to college.

SquashRocs is running a program over the spring of 2017 for students in the City of Rochester, at no cost to schools or students. Beginning with an open day of squash play, allowing students the opportunity to try squash, followed by an 8-week youth squash league with coaching for any students that wish to continue. At the end of the league, SquashRocs will host a team tournament where the squads will be competing for the inaugural 2017 City of Rochester Middle & High School Squash Team Championship.

In this inaugural year, SquashRocs is targeting mainly charter schools in the City of Rochester (because there has been past participation among charter schools with SquashRocs), although the program has also been promoted to all schools in the Rochester City School District.

The fundraising goal for the 2017 City of Rochester Middle & High School Squash League and Championship is \$10,000. This funding will provide for up to 56 children ages 10 – 18 the opportunity for two, 1 hour coaching session per week for 8 weeks (16 hours of squash) followed by participation in the City of Rochester High School Squash Team Championship, to be held at the University of Rochester.

SquashRocs will continue to expand and grow, and is seeking funding for a further league in the summer of 2017, that will provide opportunities for more urban participation through the summer vacation.

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## **About Squash**

Squash is one of the fastest growing sports in the U.S. and is a great way to improve your fitness, strength, agility, skills, and general well-being. Because it utilizes both fitness, racquet skills and court movement technique and strategy in every round of play that builds during a match, squash has become known as the chess of sports. The squash community is very international and active in many diverse countries around the globe, with the top 50 players in the world originating from 19 different nations. All five continents have produced a world champion. This sport suits any body size/type, and is an indoor sport (good for the Rochester winters), making it an ideal sport for life.

Squash is a great sport for school and college with the US Squash High School championships being the largest squash tournament (by participation numbers) in the world and over 60 colleges offer squash and scholarships, including all the Ivies. The University of Rochester is ranked in the top 4 in the USA.

The Harvard Medical Schools says “*Regular exercise releases brain chemicals key for memory, concentration, and mental sharpness.*” Forbes rated squash as the #1 healthiest sport , noting “*...the preferred game of Wall Street has convenience on its side, as 30 minutes on the squash court provides an impressive cardio respiratory workout.*”

Want to know more about squash, see youtube channels: psasquashtv, england squash, portlandcommsquash.

## **Coaches**

### **John Walsh**

John Walsh is a squash player, coach, trainer and founder of SquashRocs. John is a native of England, and has played competitive squash from junior through university and beyond. John moved to Rochester in 2010, and is a US Squash certified coach. John has coached for Midtown Athletic Club, Harro East Athletic Club, University of Rochester Womens Club, Nichols High School (Buffalo), PUC Achieve Charter School, and Young Women’s College Prep Charter School. John has a BSc Honours degree in Cybernetics and Control Engineering with Subsidiary Maths. Prior to focusing exclusively on squash, John’s first career was in software development.

### **Fred Hagen**

Fred Hagen is a squash sport enthusiast. Fred was first introduced to squash while in graduate school in Canada and became an avid player around 2000, when he was a faculty member at the University of Rochester Medical School. Since then he has been coached by varsity players from the University of Rochester Squash team, volunteered as a tournament assistant and usher at the Squash Tournament of Champions (TOC) in Grand Central Station (NYC), played in a weekly Rochester City Squash League, and has been squash team captain for the past four years. Fred is a father of 3 girls, who all attended City Schools in Rochester for part of their education. Fred has a Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, was a Professor at the University of Rochester Biochemistry and Biophysics Department, and served as the Director of the Proteomics Center, a Mass Spectrometry facility. At present, Fred is semi-retired, running a part-time construction business and staying fit, focusing on squash and Tai Chi.

## **About the Program**

The spring program '2017 City of Rochester Middle & High School Squash Team League and Championships', is being promoted openly to all middle and high school students via the charter and RCSD schools athletics departments.

The program will run for 8 weeks, with an open enrollment/sign up policy, for up to 56 (8 teams of 7 players) students.

### **Open Day Details**

The initial open day will be on Saturday May 6<sup>th</sup> at the Harro East Athletic Club. It will be open to all city students from grade 5 and up. It will run for 2 hours. Students will have the chance to play squash (probably for their first time), receive a little coaching, and watch professional squash on video.

Boys and girls will be encouraged to participate equally throughout the program.<sup>1</sup>

At the open day, students may then sign up for the following squash league.

### **League Details**

The squash league will run for 8 weeks, from May 8 through to June 30, at the Harro East Athletic Club. The students will be grouped into teams of 7, and each team will be allocated two, 1 hour slots, after school at 5pm, 6pm, or 7pm, on different days of the week.

### **Final Tournament Details**

The final tournament will be held on the weekend of July 1-2, at the University of Rochester. The teams will be divided into two pools. Each pool will play all the teams in their pool. The winners of each pool will go on to the final, to decide the inaugural 2017 City of Rochester Middle & High School Squash Team Champions.

Trophies will be presented to the players of the winning and runner-up teams.

### **Further Programs**

SquashRocs will look to run more squash programming for the city students over the summer vacation (funding allowing) and also look to partner with any interested schools to form school teams.

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<sup>1</sup> SquashRocs will encourage equal participation among schools, grades, ages, and genders. The league and tournament are designed around this equal participation for planning purposes. If actual participation is not exactly as envisioned, adjustments can be made accordingly.

## Target Students, Schools and Grades

The program is open to all city based students in middle or high school, from grade 5 and up, both boys and girls.

Schools being invited (in no particular order) are: Discovery Charter School, Eugenio Maria De Hostos Charter School, Genesee Community Charter School, PUC Achieve Charter School, Rochester Academy Charter School, Rochester Prep Charter School, University Preparatory Charter School for Young Men, Urban Choice Charter School, Vertus Charter School, Young Women's College Preparatory School, School of the Arts, School Without Walls and World of Inquiry School.

Also, all RCSD schools are being included by posters and fliers, to be passed out via the RCSD Executive Director of Athletics (Carlos Cotto) and through the schools Athletic Director.



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## **Budget**

Based on a program of 8 weeks with 8 teams participating, approximate costs are :-

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Staff</b>   |                |
| ▪ John Walsh, Head Coach and League Organizer                              | \$2,800        |
| ▪ Fred Hagen, Assistant Coach  | \$2,100        |
| ▪ Other costs  | \$800          |
| <b>Subtotal -- Staff</b>   | <b>\$5,700</b> |
| <b>Equipment</b>   |                |
| ▪ 6 squash racquets and 12 beginner balls, to supplement current equipment | \$399          |
| ▪ Uniform Tee Shirts for players, coaches, volunteers and sponsors         | \$1,195        |
| ▪ Other costs  | \$280          |
| <b>Subtotal -- Equipment</b>   | <b>\$1,875</b> |
| U of R courts for finals weekend   | <b>\$1,087</b> |
| <b>Total Direct Costs</b>  | <b>\$8,662</b> |
| Fiduciary Overhead   | \$1000         |
| <b>Total Fundraising Goal</b>  | <b>\$9,662</b> |

Note: A 6 week program with 4 teams participating would cost \$6,215. A fully detailed budget can be provided upon request.

## **Sponsorship Opportunities**

Sponsors have the choice to put their logo on uniform shirts, name the program and/or the championship tournament, and use of the program in their own promotional materials. We also hope to gain local TV coverage.

The fiduciary partner for the 2017 City of Rochester Middle & High School Squash League and Championship is ROC E6, Inc. A charity (501c3) organization working hard to bring 'uncommon' sports to the city of Rochester students.

<http://www.roce6.com/>

**Donations can be made by check, payable to: ROC E6, Inc, and sent to: John Walsh, 75 Pinnacle Road, Rochester, NY 14620.**

Also see the website for giving online by credit card, and the latest program updates.

I thank you for your support. J. Walsh.



## Appendix A

### Feedback for coach John Walsh

Camryn and Marisa Warren (2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> from left)  
Nichols High School (2019) and 2017 US High  
School Team Squash Div IV Champions

“We have been playing basketball since we were about five years old and played on the Varsity Basketball team as freshmen at Nichols School last year. We got into squash when Dan Drury, the Boys Varsity Assistant Coach, came up to us after a practice, and said how athletic we were. He was very interested in us trying to play squash because he thought that we could be more successful at squash than basketball.



The great thing that he said about squash is that you can be any size to play.

We started hitting before and after basketball practices with Dan Drury and some of the boys on the Varsity Squash team. By the time that squash season came around this winter, Coach Charles Ptak of the Varsity Girls Squash team saw our potential, so we made the Varsity Squash team. Each practice and week we improved. After the first week, we were both ready to compete and we both won our matches.

After having a successful season, our team advanced to nationals and we won our division.

Squash is a great game and has provided us with more opportunities than we would have gotten with basketball. We would not have gotten the opportunity to play for a national title with basketball.

Squash has taught us discipline, respect for yourself and your opponent, and dedication. It is never too late to learn how to play squash, because you never know where you might end up with it.”

They are looking at colleges: Princeton, Harvard, Cornell, William Smith, University of Michigan and Notre Dame, with a 3.8 in Honor and AP courses.

Danessia Warren  
Mother of Camryn and Marisa

“Nichols team won...first time in the 125 year history of the school. Nichols had 4 players that won: the #1, #2, #5, & #7 positions. Marisa traveled as an alternate. Cam played the 7th position. Her opponent from Kingsford Oxford was undefeated this season. Cam loss the first game to her 6-11, then went on a winning run with: 11-5, 11-5, and 11-2.

They are both sleeping now on the car ride back, but plan on calling you this week to thank you. They said you have no idea how much you taught them & how much that tourney at University of Rochester helped them.”

Madison Goodwine

St. Lawrence University (2018)

“My name is Madison Goodwine and I'm a sophomore at St. Lawrence University. I grew up in Rochester playing squash with my dad and grandpa, but had played competitive travel soccer all throughout high school. Once I got to college I was ready to switch things up so I tried out for the squash team. One of the things I like most about squash is that it's an individual sport but you're still apart of a team. This was different than what I was used to, having played soccer and lacrosse in high school, but I love it. You have the support of a team in order to accomplish individual and team goals. Being involved with squash has helped strengthen my mental game and mindset both on and off the court as well as helped me get physically more fit. Because the matches are played individually you only have yourself to rely on, meaning you won't have a team mate there to make up for your mistakes. This forces you to confront your weaknesses and work hard to improve them in order to better yourself. I like having both this mental challenge and motivation to get better and work hard. My advice for people on the fence about trying squash is to give it a shot because you never know what can happen. I went to school not knowing if I would play soccer or squash and now I practice everyday for two hours and I can't imagine what my day would be like without it. It's become a part of me and my lifestyle and I wouldn't change a thing!”

Elizabeth Ferguson

MCC (2017)

“My name is Elizabeth Ferguson; I am an alumni of OLM class of 2012. I was introduced to the sport of squash in 2011 by Coach John. During my academic studies at Mercy I always found I had too much energy, or couldn't focus and sit still, my grades suffered and my social life was difficult. When I began playing it was just that, playing. However, it quickly became a passion and from there it became a constant in my schedule and life. Every week twice a week I was playing squash, if I wasn't playing I was watching or reading or thinking about it. My energy and free time focused on this fun addicting competitive sport. Squash is both a team sport and an individual one. When you're on the court, it is only you and your opponent; it is your mistakes and your successes. Every swing of the racket is to be calculated and thought out, a game of strategy, quick thinking and energy. My grades quickly improved, my body, my mind, my spirit were all trained and pushed to the limits, my excess energy was put to use and my mind could focus. Squash to me isn't just a sport, but a passion, a lifestyle and a life changer. Without Coach John and squash I would have failed my senior year of Mercy and I wouldn't be the successful, educated and confident woman I am today.”



## Squash at College

Squash is not an official sport of the NCAA (so there are no NCAA limits on athletic scholarships). The governing body for intercollegiate squash is the College Squash Association (CSA). See:

<http://collegesquashassociation.com/>

The current number of squash teams at U.S. colleges:

| <b>College Squash Teams</b> | <b>Varsity</b> | <b>Club</b> | <b>Emerging</b> |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| <b>mens</b>                 | 33             | 9           | 39              |
| <b>womens</b>               | 30             | 7           | 14              |

The top 10 mens college squash teams in 2017 are: Trinity, Harvard, Columbia, University of Rochester, St. Lawrence, Drexel, Yale, Pennsylvania, Dartmouth and Princeton.

Other local colleges: Cornell, Hobart College, Hamilton College, Colgate, Ithaca College.

Top 10 womens college squash teams in 2017 are: Harvard, Pennsylvania, Trinity, Princeton, Yale, Stanford, Cornell, Columbia, Dartmouth and Brown.

Other local colleges: Hamilton College, Colgate, St. Lawrence University, William Smith College, University of Rochester.

The college squash teams actively recruit players for their squads, so talented players at the high school level enjoy relatively favorable prospects of playing in college compared to more popular sports. Squash can be a great differentiator in applying to college, and the following colleges also offer scholarship funding for their varsity squash teams:

- Stanford University
- George Washington University
- U.S. Naval Academy
- Fordham University
- Drexel University

## Articles About Squash

For a collection of newspaper articles, see:

<http://www.squashrocs.org/articles/>