

Squash President Optimistic for "Unpredictable" Election

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Ramachandran suggested squash could be played on Istanbul's Bosphorous Bridge or in a bull ring in Madrid. (Getty Images)

(ATR) World Squash Federation President N Ramachandran tells *Around the Rings* the IOC should choose squash if they want to fulfill their promise to bring a new sport into the Olympics.

"The members felt a new sport should be brought into the Games, and squash is a new sport," he said of the sports bidding procedure which began over two years ago.

That was the critical factor in the decision-making process, he said, in a sly dig at the ancient Olympic sport of wrestling, which is campaigning to survive the Olympic chop. The IOC Executive Board proposed wrestling be cut from the core 25 Olympic sports at a meeting in February.

"I have full faith in the Olympic Movement, the executive board and IOC members," he told *ATR* Tuesday, speaking 12 days before the vote.

Wrestling appears to have the greatest momentum heading into the Sept. 8 vote at the IOC Session in Buenos Aires.

But Ramachandran insisted anything could happen, saying, "Until the votes are counted, nobody can predict a result in any election."



This year's World Squash Championships were held in Mulhouse in eastern France. (Getty Images)

"I am an incurable optimist. We have done all that we had to do."

Ramachandran said the federation had made "tremendous strides" to improve the sport's governance and presentation since its failed quest to join the Olympics four years ago.

"We have turned the sport around. We have changed the system of scoring and refereeing. It's low cost and very easy to integrate in the Olympics – two glass courts, 64 athletes and a handful of officials. There's no need for any separate training area," he explained.

He said Istanbul, Madrid, and Tokyo could all provide spectacular city backdrops for squash if it is chosen for the 2020 Olympics – glass courts could be put on the Bosphorus Bridge, or even a bull ring in Madrid.

Noting that squash had made itself easier for TV audiences with the use of enhanced HD cameras, he emphasized its universality as "the only sport which has produced male and female world champions from every continent."

The Olympic bid is on the agenda of the WSF's management committee meeting in London later this week. Final preparations are being made for the 20-minute presentation to the IOC Session on Sept. 8.

Ramachandran, who arrives in Buenos Aires on Sept. 4, declined to reveal any of the star names who will take the stage as part of the sport's presentation team.

Written by [Mark Bisson](#)