

## Squash: Nigel Dunkerley sponsored by European Pilot Academy

Up and coming squash player Nigel Dunkerley, 29, is being sponsored by European Pilot Academy, over the next year.

Dunkerley, who has recently been moving up the National League Rankings, will shortly be eligible for a call up by the National Coach for team training for the European Small Nations Squash Tournament being held in Iceland this September.

Dunkerley has only been playing squash at a competitive level for just over two years and has made remarkable improvement since. On his first ever Malta International Open he placed third in his category beating his Polish adversary. He is now a well respected adversary within the ever growing local squash community qualifying automatically for all 'A' group tournaments.

The European Pilot Academy, established in Malta for more than 15 years, is Malta's first recognised flight academy training local and foreign pilots. The company has recently committed itself to support sport.

European Pilot Academy managing director Capt. Ray Zarb was glad to be offering this sponsorship to Nigel "this agreement reflects the belief that our company has in sports and education, which are becoming two of European Pilot Academy's fundamental social commitments," he said.

Nigel Dunkerley said it was now possible for him to take part in many more international tournaments, thanks to the sponsorship. "Normally, I was only in a position to take part in four local tournaments and maybe two international ones yearly. This is simply because of the huge expenses involved. Thanks to this sponsorship, I now hope to double my participation. It's exactly what a player of my level now requires to improve his game which hopefully will leave a mark also outside the Maltese Islands."

This year Nigel will be concentrating on making the grade to be called for National Team Training. "It is our hope that Nigel will improve his standard and ranking in the near future to be able to secure a regular place in the National Team which already has achieved numerous medals within the small nations category. We hope there will be other companies like the European Pilot Academy who offer sponsorships for budding squash players in this regard," said National Squash Coaches Ivan Balzan and Steve Rizzo.

Ivan Balzan and Steve Rizzo have recently returned from a Level 2 Coaches course in Vienna. Both players have been ranked in the top bracket for a long period of time in the local scene and now felt it was the right time to give something back to the squash community by becoming the first Maltese qualified Squash Coaches at National level.

Malta Squash President Liz Said was also pleased with this sponsorship agreement between Dunkerley and the European Pilot Academy. "On

behalf of Malta Squash, I thank the European Pilot Academy for such a big initiative. We are all aware of Nigel's determination and skill and, despite all the limitations, we always try our best in providing any additional financial and technical help," she said.