

2017 (56th) ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NORTH BALWYN TENNIS CLUB Inc.

Another year has passed with many wonderful days of tennis and friendships formed. Congratulations to all players for playing with good spirits and sportsmanship. The clubhouse and court facilities are serving us well. Thanks must go to members for looking after the wonderful facility so well.

THE COMMITTEE

Our committee of volunteers for 2016/17 consisted of

President: Graham Besley

Vice President: Ross Davies

Secretary: Tony Barton

Treasurer: Rowena Sheung

Membership Secretary: Peter McCaw

Junior Organisers: Andrew Halford and Stuart Brown

Committee Members: Rhonda McCaw, Melanie Katopodis, Peter Moran, Don Jinnette

Meetings were held monthly. A special thanks is due to all committee members for their enthusiasm and their positive ideas for improving the operation of the Club. We ran a number of subcommittees to manage ongoing business, including areas of child safety, coaching, buildings and grounds, fund raising, club championships and disciplinary issues.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Club remains strong but with a reduction to 326 financial members as of October 2017 compared to 352 in October 2016. Much of this reduction is in the Junior ranks, thus attracting more Juniors will be a priority next year. We remain an affiliate of Tennis Victoria which not only avails us of advice from this peak body but also provides members with player insurance coverage.

FINANCE

Our financial position remains sound with cash reserves increasing over the year from \$124,740 to a current balance of \$147,878. This amount includes a 'sinking fund' provision of \$ 40,000 for future renewal of court surfaces.

We thank our auditor Theo Eversteyn for his support.

As we want to implement some major improvement projects over the next two years, the Committee recommends that fees be increased by \$10 for adults and \$20 for Family. This is the first increase in 4 years for these membership categories.

NEW PROJECTS: The Committee is committed to continually upgrading our court facilities and surrounds. We have completed a new sprinkler system on the four en tout cas courts. This will allow better watering and hence surface protection during the hot summer months.

We have applied to Council for a planning permit to add LED lights to courts 5 and 6. This process has been complex and taken some time, however we have been advised that a 'Notice of Decision to Approve' has been issued. This project will meet the growing demand for night tennis for both social and competition levels. This project is expected to cost approximately \$45,000 and will be implemented in the first half of 2018. We have been actively seeking grant opportunities to help minimise the cost to members. So far this has been unsuccessful.

Due to the continued high maintenance and power costs of the existing twenty four court lights, the Committee is also planning to replace the metal halide lights with LED units giving annual savings of around \$5,000 (project cost estimate is \$30,000 if completed in conjunction with the above court lighting project. If done later, would be closer to \$40,000)

Much of the court fencing is in poor condition and will also need replacement over the next few years (project estimate is \$40,000).

SENIOR TENNIS

We continue to field Senior competition teams in Saturday afternoon ERT, ladies midweek including Tuesday MEMRLTA, Wednesday EDWTA and Thursday WDTA. Thursday afternoon Veterans MMTA continues to remain very strong.

Night competition with BDNTA has continued with 13 teams participating. Many other members also play social on nights when there are courts available. Fast 4 Friday night social twilight tennis that is rotated between 4 local clubs continued and is a great way to introduce new members to the Club.

Senior social tennis continues to be active on a number of week days. Monday afternoons is an especially strong group with up to 5 courts in use. A Sunday afternoon group is also becoming active.

JUNIORS AND COACHING

Coaching continues to attract a good number of young participants, which bodes well for the future of the sport.

Junior competition over the winter season saw great success. Majority of our teams finished in the top 4 and we gained a handful of flags. Once again we are so proud of all the juniors that represent the Club; they are fair and have great court etiquette. Our parents show great support for the juniors and make sure it's not just about winning but making sure they enjoy the game. This approach is to be encouraged. There is the old tennis saying 'you need to learn to lose before you can win'.

The summer season is underway and looks like it could match the winter season.

CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Club had a great turnout for the 2017 club champs. A high number of juniors threw their hat in to have a go which shows a great attitude. Although a tournament, the key goal is for juniors and adults to get to know each other and enjoy the event. We had a few juniors enter the open with an opportunity to play some of the senior members of the club, this being a great experience for them. For next year's event, we plan a low cost entry (\$2 per event) to encourage even more participation. We also intend on extending the 50+ men's doubles to be an open event to include women. This promises to create a lot of friendly competition.

CHILD SAFETY

From Jan 2017, the legislated Victorian Child Safety Standards became mandatory for Clubs and Associations. A subcommittee has been working through the requirements to meet the 7 safety standards. The Club has issued a Policy statement of commitment to child safety, a Code of Conduct that establishes clear expectations on behaviour of our Members in relation to children and has appointed a Child Safety Person to whom any concerns can be raised. The committee thanks Sheryl Kerwick for taking on this new responsibility. Please refer to the special notice board for details on this important aspect of the Club's operation. Requirements for transporting children to and from tennis have also been issued. All Coaching staff and most Committee members have obtained "working with children" checks.

CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

At this year's AGM the Committee is recommending that members adopt a revised Constitution, based on the following reasoning;

The Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 established Model Rules which take precedence for an Incorporated Association in at least 23 areas of operation. The Clubs existing "old style" constitution has not been updated since 2003. By adopting a form of the Model Rules, we will have a constitution that can be followed for all procedures without the need to check for variation from the Model Rules. It's clearly time for a change.

The change also gives the opportunity for the Club to take a more flexible approach to categories of membership, allowing us to simplify forms for new members and to make it easier for the Club to offer other categories of membership in the future if needed.

CONCLUSION

The committee believes the Club is in a sound financial position with a strong membership base, we have an excellent clubhouse and clear plans for continued improvements to our court facilities. An emphasis on growing Junior ranks will be a priority over the next year. We have a good community spirit within the Club and will continue our efforts to develop a basis for friendships to grow.
