

57th Annual Report of the North Balwyn Tennis Club Inc. 2018 Presented at 2018 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – Sunday November 25th

THE COMMITTEE

The NBTC committee of volunteers for the 2017/18 year consisted of:

President:	Ross Davies
Vice President:	Graham Besley
Secretary:	Tony Barton
Treasurer:	Rowena Sheung
Membership Secretary:	Peter McCaw
Junior Organisers:	Stuart Brown and Andrew Halford
Committee Members:	Yana Barton, Lucas Hunter, Don Jinnette, Melanie Katopodis, Rhonda McCaw, and Peter Moran

Meetings were held monthly, and my thanks go to all committee members for volunteering their time, effort and enthusiasm to each meeting and to the various tasks that they carry out in making sure that the club runs smoothly and efficiently.

We continue to run seven subcommittees to manage on-going business and issues as they arise, including areas of child safety and protection, coaching, maintenance and capital projects, marketing, fundraising and website, social, club championships and disciplinary issues. These subcommittees are the engine room for the work undertaken by the committee – they carry out much of the pre-work necessary for good committee decision-making and they put the work of the committee into action.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the club remains strong, with 325 members (as at 2 Oct 2018), with a small 3% decrease from this time last year when the club had 335 financial members. While this may not represent a significant drop in member numbers, the committee continues to work hard to build and maintain our member levels by encouraging non-member coaching clients to join (especially juniors), conducting our annual membership drive (at the time of the AusOpen), and following up on non-financial members. I would like to thank Peter McCaw, our membership secretary, for the job he does throughout the year in managing all our membership inquiries, payments and access cards.

FINANCE

Our financial position remains healthy with a cash reserve of \$105,936 (at 31 August 2018) after recording a \$10,489 surplus from income and expenditure for FY2018. This is an excellent result because a surplus allows the committee to build its cash reserve and implement more projects for the benefit of members! The current cash reserve represents a drop from \$150,799 held at this time last year, and this is due to a capital expenditure of \$70,000 (after taking into account a \$5000 grant received from the Bendigo Bank) incurred in support of the court lighting upgrade (see New Projects below). Please note that our cash reserve includes a 'sinking fund' provision, now standing at \$50,000 (which we aim to increase each year by \$10,000) for the future renewal of court surfaces. I would like to thank Rowena Sheung, our club treasurer, for another outstanding job in maintaining our accounts for the year, and to Theo Eversteyn, our auditor, a job he says is made easy by the thorough work of our treasurer.

CAPITAL PROJECTS and MAINTENANCE

One major project has been implemented during the past year – the upgrade to our court lighting system at a total cost of \$75,000. This upgrade was undertaken in two parts. Firstly, the existing 1000W metal-halide light fittings on Courts 1 -4 were replaced with modern, energy efficient, 400W LED ‘Hawkeye’ light fittings. The effect of this work will be to lower our power consumption due to court lights by 60%, while at the same time, increasing the on-court light intensity, without introducing any negative light spill issues. The second stage of the court lighting upgrade was the installation of new poles and the same LED lights to Courts 5 and 6. The result is now 6 courts under LED lighting, allowing options to have more night competition teams, more coaching and/or more social play, especially during the winter months. This new lighting system also provides other benefits: instant ON/OFF (no globe warm-up period) and negligible (zero?) maintenance costs. All costs considered, the committee estimates that this project will have a payback period of about 8 years, with an estimated project life of 20 years – an excellent outcome if all goes to plan! Thanks to Graham Besley for leading the Maintenance and Capital Projects Subcommittee and the work they do to implement new projects and to maintain existing facilities to a standard we can all enjoy.

SENIOR COMPETITION

Saturday ERT: Five teams in both the Summer 2017/18 and Winter 2018 seasons yielded a very impressive four premierships, a runner-up, and no wooden-spooners ... well done to the Saturday players.

Tuesday MEMRLTA: Our two existing teams were joined this season by a new team of young mothers ... we can imagine their busy schedule, so this is good to see!

Thursday WDTA: One team in Section 1 played both Autumn and Spring 2018 seasons... they battled hard, played and talked enthusiastically about the great tennis, but they’re still chasing the elusive premiership.

Thursday Metro Masters: NBTC is one of the biggest supporters to this competition and we should be proud of our level of participation. Five teams in both the Autumn and Spring 2018 seasons yielded one premiership (the ‘Panthers’ in Section 6), one runner-up (‘NB One’ in Section 2), and three teams made preliminary finals – a solid outcome.

BDNTA Night Competition: Over recent seasons, NBTC has been able to field 11-13 teams per season, across all weeknights (except Fridays, where no competition is offered). With more courts under lights, there is now scope to increase the number of teams, without adversely affecting the coaching schedule and the opportunities for night social play.

JUNIOR COMPETITION

Saturday and Sunday ERT:

We have a steady number of teams entered in the ERT junior competition. There has been a slight shift, with a spike in the number of Sunday teams, which is very positive. However, Saturday mornings are still our busiest day. We have mainly teams playing the open rubbers format, giving the children the opportunity to play best of 3 sets. There are two boy’s singles/doubles teams, where the focus is on doubles. Sunday mornings also have majority of teams playing open rubbers, but we also have a girl’s singles/doubles team. Overall the juniors perform really well and generally collect a couple of premierships each season, along with a few runners-up. The proportion of girls is currently a little over 30%.

Andrew Halford and Stuart Brown, our club coaches and junior competition coordinators, are pleased to report that our juniors are well behaved and show great sportsmanship out on the court – a good balance of enjoying the game, playing fair and fighting to win. Tennis is a game for life, and the coaches maintain that as long as the children enjoy competing now, they’re more likely to continue into their 20’s and beyond. Thanks to Andrew and Stuart for carrying out the often-difficult job of organising the juniors into teams, and then getting those teams onto the court ... all while keeping the parents happy.

SOCIAL TENNIS

The committee believes that NBTC is quite unique in that it offers so many opportunities each week for

members to participate in 'organised' social tennis. These organised sessions currently include Monday, Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Thanks go to Albert Au for coordinating these social sessions.

A major social event in the weekly calendar is Monday afternoons. While this event probably started as a practice session for those that play in the Thursday Metro Masters competition, it is now treated as an open social event, available to all club members and their visitors. It is always well attended, often attracting 20+ players. And how should I say this ... sheep stations are regularly on the line!

Friday night 'Twilight Fast 4' social tennis is yet another opportunity to play socially and has been operating for a number of years under a rotation system - three or four local clubs (North Balwyn, Canterbury, Deepdene, with Balwyn Park to join soon) each host the event once per month. This event is becoming very popular, sometimes attracting up to 20 players each week (especially in the warmer months) and allows players of all standards (from participating clubs and local residents) to get together, have a hit, and enjoy a drink and a chat to finish the night. This is another way for members with busy work schedules to play socially and will continue to be supported by the club. Thanks to the committee and club members who take turns throughout the year to host this event when it's our turn.

Casual social tennis is also on the rise. Now, with more courts under lights and the introduction of the on-line booking system, members who are not necessarily attracted to competition tennis are encouraged to consider a social hit of tennis at night, under lights.

And finally, Sunday afternoon 'organised' social completes our weekly schedule. This event was started late last year, and after a modest start, it now regularly attracts about 10-12 players. Special thanks to Shesh Murthy for initiating this event and for persevering through its early stages to achieve the success it now enjoys.

COACHING

As I hope we all know, Tennis Matters (TM) is the club's coaching providers, servicing the coaching needs of club members and members of the wider community for the past 15 years. Led by Andrew Halford and Stuart Brown, we currently have up to 5 coaches at any one time, helping players to improve their game. For junior coaching, there has been a recent shift from almost all lessons being group and squad with only a few private lessons, to a situation now that has a steady level of group lesson numbers, less squad numbers, and a huge increase in the demand for private lessons.

Coaching client recruitment (an important source of new business for the coaches, and an equally important source of new members for the club) comes via the TM website and word of mouth – NBTC coaching has an excellent reputation amongst clients and new clients often appear on the back of word-of-mouth recommendations. TM and the club are also very fortunate to have Balwyn High School nearby, with many students walking near the club – this is great exposure and an important source of new clients. TM has been involved in flyer drops and newspaper articles, but they report that these are not always a reliable way of gaining new clients.

Adult participation is on the rise. TM also reports that they have several groups, a handful of private and two-player private lessons running weekday mornings. All of these players are women. In the evening, they also have several adult group lessons, as well as private lessons. One of the current adult groups is the direct result of a recent 'women in sport' promotion. A new adult team, facilitated through this coaching promotion, has joined the Tuesday morning competition and has recently added night competition to their schedule – another great outcome for the club.

The club coaches would like to build larger squad training sessions in the near future. Squads are more demanding involving a higher work rate when compared to normal group lessons, and include fitness, drills and tactics. Squads are great team training sessions and the intent is to provide a more serious approach for those playing competition or wanting to play competition.

CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS

The club was able to run another very successful Club Championships in March 2018, and while the number of entrants decreased by about 50% from previous year levels, the standard of competition remained high and the events were completed with a very worthy list of winners and runners-up:

Event	Winner(s)	Runner(s)-Up
Open Men's Singles	Lewis Freeman	Navdeep Mangal
Open Women's Singles	Philippa Rehe	Fiona Medina
Open Men's Doubles	Andrew Halford Mike Halford	Marty Ip David Rehe
Open Women's Doubles	Susan McLaughlin Sheryl Summons	Yana Barton Rhonda McCaw
Event	Winner(s)	Runner(s)-Up
Open Mixed Doubles	David Rehe Philippa Rehe	Marty Ip Georgia Burt
Junior Boy's Singles	Matthew Chen	James Francis
Junior Boy's Doubles	James Francis Luke McLean	Adryan Lim Ocean Xie
Open Over 50 Doubles	Gary Basinski Arthur Cox	Tony Barton Don Jinnette
Parent – Child	Simon McLean Julia McLean	Don McCrae Alex McCrae

Special mention goes to the winners of the senior Men's and Women's Singles, Lewis Freeman and Philippa Rehe respectively - the youngest entrants to win these events for some time ... no disrespect to any of the past 'older' winners, but well done Lewis and Philippa!

While the junior boys' events were well supported (well done to those who participated), unfortunately, the girls' events were not. The Club Championships is an important event on the club calendar and we do not want to see this trend continue and therefore the committee will work hard to encourage ALL members, especially juniors (boys and girls), to set aside three weekends of March 2019, and come along and 'have a go'! I would like to thank David Rehe for leading our Club Championships Subcommittee, and his continued support of the event, and Andrew Halford and Stuart Brown for the work they do to support David in scheduling the matches and getting everything finished on time.

CHILD SAFETY

While much of the work to establish our policies and procedures around child safety and protection was completed last year (thanks to Graham Besley and the Child Safety Subcommittee), this year has been about trying to put the essence of these documents into practice. The committee has started down this track and will continue its work to identify behaviours around the club (good and bad) and, where necessary, provide the support, feedback and direction necessary to achieve the desired outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Another successful year! The committee believes that the club continues to operate from a sound financial position, and with a strong membership base. We should be proud of the facilities that we have available to us – they allow us to enjoy our tennis on and off the court. The committee and I will continue to work as hard as we can to build and maintain this outcome.

Ross Davies
President NBTC
25 November 2018