

## 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Report of the North Balwyn Tennis Club Inc. 2019

### THE COMMITTEE

The NBTC Committee of volunteers for the 2018/19 year consisted of:

President:	Ross Davies
Vice President:	Peter Moran
Secretary:	Tony Barton
Treasurer:	Shesh Murthy
Junior Organisers:	Stuart Brown and Andrew Halford
Committee Members:	Yana Barton, Don Jinnette, Rhonda McCaw, Sheryl Summons, Michael Zhao and Wen Zhou
Membership Secretary:	Peter McCaw (this year, this role was carried out as a non-committee member)

As in previous years, the intention this year has been to hold Committee meetings on a monthly basis (excluding the AGM month of November, and the busy holiday months of December and January), and apart from a minor hiccup in June, we have held meeting in all other months. As always, 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 helping to ensure that the club runs smoothly and efficiently.

We continue to run seven Subcommittees to manage on-going business and issues as they arise, covering the 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. Thanks to all the Subcommittee members and the conveners for their efforts over the last year.

And special thanks to Peter McCaw who continues to carry out the role of Membership Secretary, but this year in a non-committee member capacity. This is a time-consuming, and sometime difficult role, juggling membership renewals, new member applications, payments, management and distribution of our security access cards, etc. The Committee is grateful for Peter's efforts, and his attention to detail, over the course of the last year.

### MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the club remains strong, with 326 members (as at 7 Nov 2019), which holds our membership at the same levels as at this time last year. While it is always the intention of the Committee to grow membership, just maintaining membership numbers remains a challenging task, and I thank all members of the club for everything they may have done to encourage others to (re)join and be part of our club community. And it is worthy to note here that the Committee has adopted a recently announced initiative (by local councils and Access Health Services) called the 'Inclusive Clubs Program', from which the NBTC Committee has identified that it would like to 'include' more women, and has therefore decided, for the 2020 year, to focus on increasing the membership and participation of women at our club. Watch out in 2020 for club subscription incentives, promotion of women's competition and special on-court activities designed to attract women.

### FINANCE

Our financial position remains healthy with a cash reserve of \$139,450 (at 31 Aug 2019) after recording a \$4,287 surplus from income and expenditure for FY2019. Though the surplus we recorded this year is less compared to last year, this is still a good result because a surplus allows the Committee to build its cash reserve and implement more projects for the benefit of members! Please note that our cash reserve includes a 'sinking fund' provision, now standing at \$60,000 (which we aim to increase each year by \$10,000) for the future renewal of court surfaces. I would like to thank Shesh Murthy, in his first year as club treasurer, for the excellent job he has done in maintaining our accounts for the year, and to Theo Eversteyn, our auditor, for the job he does to keep us honest!

## **CAPITAL PROJECTS and MAINTENANCE**

Having undertaken the major and expensive upgrade to our court lighting system in 2018, this year has been mostly about working hard to maintain our existing facilities, and to rebuild the club finances in preparation for our next major project – the replacement of the ageing and misshapen chain wire fences surrounding Courts 3 – 8, and between Courts 6 & 7. It is the intention of the Capital Projects Subcommittee to get stuck into this project early in the New Year.

## **SENIOR COMPETITION**

### ***Saturday ERT:***

We have had 6 teams competing in the ERT competition over the year; the current season commenced in October with 4 Open Sets teams in Sections 2, 5, 7, and 8 – these teams are fairing well with Sect. 7 and 8 teams on top of their ladders. Then we have 2 Open Singles-Doubles teams in Sections 3 and 6 – while both these teams are struggling, it's the early stages of the season and we wish them all the best for the remainder of the season. The next ERT competition commences in April/May 2020.

***Midweek Ladies:*** NBTC has three teams in Midweek ladies competition, two Tuesday MEMRLTA teams, Section 2 and Section 9, and one on Thursday WDTA Section 1. This year saw the retirement of a MEMRLTA team that had been playing together for many decades. However, it's good to see that some of the players from this team have made the transition to the BDNTA Monday night ladies competition. The Thursday WDTA team has also been playing together for many years and they continue to achieve pleasing results. At the conclusion of the winter season playing in Section 2, the team ended on top of the Ladder only to be defeated in the Grand Final. Nevertheless, they were promoted to Section 1 for the current summer season where they currently hold 4th place in a highly competitive field. From reports I receive, while they enjoy good results, these remain secondary to their enduring friendships and the fun they have on the court.

### ***Thursday Metro Masters:***

NBTC continues to be one of the biggest supporters to this competition and we should be proud of our level of participation. Five teams represented the club in the Autumn 2019 season in Sections 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, and their efforts yielded two finalists (the Sect. 2 'Uno' team and the Sect. 4 'Tigers') and one premiership (congratulations go to the 'Panthers' in Sect. 6). And in the current Spring 2019 season, four teams in Sections 2, 3, 4 and 5 lined up to take on the competition. Unfortunately the Sect. 5 'Jaguars' lost in the recent semi-final, however two teams (the Sect 2 'Numero Uno' and Sect. 3 'Tigers') are competing in the Grand Finals to be held during the coming week ... good luck to both teams! A very solid performance for the club over the last year ... the next season commences in February 2020.

### ***BDNTA Night Competition:***

Night tennis competition at NBTC is held over two seasons and we entered 12 teams in both the Autumn and Spring seasons this year. Four teams made the grand finals in the Autumn season with Thursday night Section 3 Singles/Doubles 'Takin' team bringing home the 'Premiers' flag. Six of our 12 Spring teams are in the four in the current Spring season – the finals start this week ... good luck to all 6 participating teams.

With the club's recent investment in the installation of new lights on Courts 5 & 6, there is now scope for more competition teams, social night play and evening private coaching. The improved LED lighting has also been greatly appreciated by the members. With the advantages of always having two competition courts per team per night, and no night court fees when playing night competition at NBTC, we hope to attract more teams to the BDNTA.

## **JUNIOR COMPETITION**

### ***Saturday and Sunday ERT:***

The winter ERT season was cold but that didn't stop the NBTC kids heating up the court. Not only was the playing standard high, but we were also extremely proud of the level of sportsmanship shown throughout the season, and we continue to get positive feedback from our opposing teams – sometimes being a good

sport is more important than winning. And in terms of team performance, one of the best efforts was from a brand new team with Oscar, Jason, Siddhanth, Advait & Adanya, coming from 4th position on the ladder to win the premiership!

We have seen some change from having a number of teams in singles/doubles, to just one team this season. All others are now playing open rubbers (best of three set singles and a set of doubles), which is a far stronger competition. This is an excellent format and will help build the juniors for tournaments and higher-level senior competition when they get older.

Andrew and Stuart report that they are very proud of all the juniors and the effort they put in – the priority is to ensure the kids are fair and that winning isn't everything ... yet 😊

## **SOCIAL TENNIS**

NBTC continues to offer many opportunities each week for members to participate in 'organised' social tennis. Weekday sessions currently include Monday, Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

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 ... so come along and join in.

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 – currently, four local clubs (North Balwyn, Canterbury, Deepdene, and Balwyn Park) each host the event once per month. This event is often very popular, sometimes attracting up to 20 players each week (especially in the warmer months) and allows players of all standards (from participating clubs, their members, friends 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 into 2020. Thanks to the Committee and club members who take turns throughout the year to host this event when it's our turn.

Sunday social has again been a major success this year with a consistent flow of 18 or more members enjoying organised social play every Sunday, even through the cold and damp Melbourne winter ... this is a very healthy sign. A special thanks to Shesh Murthy and Wen Zhou for their commitment to the running of this weekly event. And as always, players of all standards are welcome ... so come to the club and join in!

## **COACHING**

I hope we all know that 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 16 years. Led by Andrew Halford and Stuart Brown, we currently have up to 4 coaches at any one time, helping players to improve their game. For junior coaching, there has been a recent shift from almost all group and private lessons, to a situation now that includes a big increase in squad numbers. 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.

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. So, TM are currently investigating other ways to attract new clients such as coaching signs, pop up banners and a new stepped coaching program aimed at 5-10 year olds using lower bouncing coloured balls and small pop up nets.

Adult participation is on the rise. TM also reports that they have a handful of private and two-player private and group lessons running weekday mornings and evenings. Most of these players are women – a great result supporting the current NBTC focus on boosting the participation of women in sport.

### **CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS**

It is disappointing to report that based on insufficient entries, the NBTC Committee reluctantly cancelled the 2019 NBTC Club Championships earlier this year. Several of the Honour Board events attracted only 1 or 2 entries and the Committee decided that running the Club Championships with such a low number of participants would undermine the prestigious nature of these events. The Committee is well aware that this is not a good outcome, and the Subcommittee is working to make the Club Championships in 2020 a more attractive event to more club members.

### **CLUBHOUSE RENTALS**

This year, the Committee formalised its policies and guidelines for renting out the clubhouse for functions, both for members and non-members. We have had three functions so far this year; each has been highly successful and they have helped to widen the exposure of our wonderful facilities.

### **CONCLUSION**

I am pleased to report again that the club continues to operate from a sound financial position, and with a strong membership base. We should be thankful for the facilities that we have available to us – they allow us to enjoy our tennis on and off the court. I hope you have had a great year, and I wish you all the best for 2020.

**Ross Davies**  
**President NBTC**  
**17 November 2019**