

Weston Creek Tennis Club Strategic Plan 2019

28 May 2019

1. INTRODUCTION

The WCTC was established in 1971 as a community facility operated by a volunteer Committee and located adjacent the Cooleman Court shopping precinct.

The first Certificate of Incorporation was issued in 1981 with a lease of 25 years from 1983, after which the lease was renewed for 99 years.

The Club and its facilities have been maintained by a volunteer committee. A major fundraising drive involving members taking out debentures over 2 years to build courts 9-12 in 1994/95, along with two ACT Government grants, for \$30,000 towards the replacement of courts 3 and 4 (cost \$45,000) and one for \$90,000 towards replacement of courts 9-12 (cost \$135,000). The Club has been self-sustaining, with improvements such as court replacement (courts 1 and 2 and courts 5-8), Club house refurbishment, enhanced lighting, landscaping of grounds, practise wall, gazebos plus new replacement gazebos following extensive vandalism to the club facilities.

Four coaching contracts have been awarded since 1984 with the present Canberra School of Tennis contract being in place since 2001.

2. OUR VISION

Our Vision is to provide a high quality, community focussed tennis facility for the Weston Creek, Molonglo and Northern Tuggeranong communities with a facility to be enjoyed by all, and which can contribute to a lifelong healthy lifestyle. The importance of Tennis as a lifelong sport is provided at Attachment A.

3. OUR AIM

Our *Aim* is to provide 12 courts of high quality for day and night play for all players along with a well maintained and attractive Clubhouse and ground facilities.

4. WHAT DO WE HAVE NOW

The present Club facility has:

- 12 synthetic grass courts, all with lighting and each with 4 metre high fencing;
- A practice wall plus 2 gazebos and 2 maintenance sheds – one each for the coach and Club nets, barrow, and blower;
- A Clubhouse equipped with a kitchen, showers, toilets, tables and chairs, and BBQ;
- An electronic court and gate entry system and a website www.tennis.com.au/westoncreektc/; and

- A CCTV security system. (Please note: Acts of vandalism are a steady challenge, especially with the proximity of the Skateboard Park. This costs the Club money and effort.)

In terms of facility management, the Club is assisted by:

- A small committed volunteer committee base;
- A professional coaching team for coaching all standards and ages;
- A strong presence in the ACT through close liaison with ACT Tennis and Tennis Australia- the Club is affiliated with ACT Tennis;
- A history of successful involvement in Pennant and Championship play; and
- Sponsorships by Rebel Sports and the Canberra Southern Cross Club.

5. CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

The Club has identified three critical areas to continue its vision, they are:

- Facility Development and Maintenance;
- Facility Management; and
- Promotion and Communication, particularly targeting children and younger adults.

The Club is over 40 years old and some facilities are in need of attention, such as court surfaces, lighting and fences, with some more urgently than others.

The operation and management of the Club by a few dedicated volunteers has worked over the last few years, but with difficulty, with members juggling work and family commitments. However, this situation is not sustainable, with volunteers not readily forthcoming. Though the volunteer model has been a successful practice in the past, a sustainable model would include the appointment of a Club manager, with such a person being guided by, and reporting to, a Club Committee.

The expansion of the number of children and younger adults who continue to play tennis, join the Club, and participate in its operation, has been less than ideal for a Club the size of the WCTC (see [Attachment B](#) for further details and programs).

6A. KEY FOCUS FOR 2019-2023 REQUIRING GOVERNMENT/TENNIS AUSTRALIA ASSISTANCE

- Replacement of wire fencing. The fencing is rusty, sliding down the poles, and is a safety hazard (see [Attachment C](#) for *Facility History*);
- Replacement of all lighting with LED lights. The current globes have been very expensive to replace and run, and have a high failure rate; and
- Court surface replacement program will be necessary over the next few years.

6B. SECONDARY FOCUS FOR 2019-2023 BUT NOT REQUIRING OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE

- The Clubhouse roof has been leaking and needs maintenance or replacement. (The Clubhouse flooring has been replaced recently); and
- Appointment of a paid Manager to “operate” the facility.

7. OTHER LONGER TERM ISSUES

The *Facility Development and Maintenance and Facility Management* issues are covered above and Promotion and Communication is covered in Attachment D.

Promotion and Communication

There is a need to provide resources and expertise to promote and advocate tennis as a healthy sport and lifestyle for all ages. A tool for this would seem to be achievable through the Book-a-court system and Registration System, but this will require more input and system redesign by Tennis Australia.

The gate entry, book-a-court and registration system has been problematic over the three years it has been in operation, and is still not entirely satisfactory at this stage. Although many members do not have problems in booking a court, some still do and the Club wants Tennis Australia to focus more on problems associated with the contacts data base and its alignment with the membership data base.

The system has readily identifiable benefits with keys no longer needed, there is no need for a local booking agency, and members can easily choose which courts are available for booking on any given day. There are still members and players who cannot access the internet but the Club expected that the number in this category will diminish and disappear as more people become familiar with the system.

Attachments:

Attachment A The importance of Tennis as a lifelong sport

Attachment B WCTC Coaching and Tennis Programs

Attachment C WCTC Facility History, Key Dates and Office Bearers

Attachment D Goal Setting

THE IMPORTANCE OF TENNIS AS A LIFELONG SPORT

In Australian, UK and European studies using data collected on over 80,000 older people over a period of 14 years, data showed that those people involved in sports like tennis or racquet ball, swimming and aerobics had the lowest risk of death and had a significantly lengthened active life.

“Overall, 44% of those studied met recommended public health exercise levels. That is 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity each week. Among those that did, people who played racquet sports had a 47% lower risk of early death during the nine year study than people who didn’t exercise. Swimmers had a 28% lower risk of death and those doing aerobics showed a 27% lower risk of dying. These were the reductions after the scientists adjusted for factors that might affect early death, like smoking”. (Ref: *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, 2008).

More recently, the *Australian Sports Commission (ASC) AusPlay* survey, which is a comprehensive telephone survey that looks at both Australian parents/guardians and their young children’s physical activities has presented contemporary research findings highlighting the importance of physical activity in children and youth’s health, cognitive functioning, engagement, motivation, psychological well-being and social inclusion.

Ref: Active Healthy Kids Australia (2016). Physical literacy: do our kids have all the tools? 2016 Report Card on physical activity for children and young people
<https://www.ausport.gov.au/information/ausplay>

AusPlays, April 2019 Report includes data collected from January 2016 to December 2018. The Report has been prepared for Sport Australia and shows that tennis comes in at number 7 with 1,202,011 participants. This is based on annual participation that is organised out-of-school activities only for children 0-14 including all activities for adults 15+. For 5-8 year olds, tennis was in the top 5 for males and females, based on participation at least once a week (organised out-of-school activities only). Two thirds (64%) of Adult participation in Tennis was organised, with the majority of organised participation (70%) in sport clubs.

Compared to other sports, tennis had one of the best retention rates past 11 years of age, especially among males. The dominant motivation to participate in tennis was ‘Fun/enjoyment’ (47%), however ‘Social reasons’ (42%) and ‘Physical health or fitness’ (37%) were also strong motivators.

Ref: References and more information about AusPlay and the Report, including the methodology summary, survey questions, key terms and definitions, national tables etc., can be accessed via Sport Australia’s Sport Market Insights on the Clearinghouse for Sport website (with direct access through researchinsport.com.au). Please use your Clearinghouse for Sport login for full access. Any further questions about AusPlay(or queries for additional customisedreporting/further analysis of the dataset) can be directed to Sport Australia via: AusPlay@sportaus.gov.au.

COACHING

Sustaining a strong membership and player base is dependent upon attracting and encouraging young people into tennis and becoming active members of the WCTC. This is why the WCTC engages the Canberra School of Tennis (CSOT) to provide high quality professional services. The CSOT programs include:

- Pee wee Tennis, MLC Hotshots, and Cardio Fit.
- Open days attracting in excess of 500 participants.
- Charity fund raising events and social gala events, including Christmas parties for juniors and seniors. There are also junior pennants teams within the club.
- Regular social gala competitions catering for all ages and genders.
- Teenage tennis competitions
- Age competitions
- Tennis Carnivale
- Coaching promotion in schools
- Website updates & newsletters
- Coaching promotion in schools Player Development (junior and adult)
- TA accredited club coach and coaching program

Further program details are provided below:

Tennis Programs

The Club has a well-established and active ANZ Tennis Hot Shots Program in place with regular sessions being conducted for neighbouring school groups, as well as programs being conducted after school, during school holidays, and regularly on Saturday mornings.

The Hot Shots program is conducted by the Club's tennis coach and his assistants, all of whom hold Tennis Australia qualifications.

The number of children participating in the ANZ Hot Shots Program varies from season to season. However, during the summer months up to 450 children regularly participate.

The diverse & organised programs include:

- A range of TA endorsed tennis coaching programs which attracts a diverse range of people. From Hotshots playing & lesson programs for children through to Cardio tennis programs, holiday camps & local in-house tennis competitions & junior ACT competitions & tournaments.

- A strong connection with local schools which is vital for grassroots tennis programs at Weston: Chapman, Arawang, St. Judes and St John Vianneys already attend schools tennis coaching activities & this term have started working with the new school in Wright called Charles Weston Primary as well as Duffy Primary & St. Thomas the Apostle in Kambah.
- Open Day Tennis Events are very important in connecting with the local community. These events are run twice a year, one straight after the Australian Open to connect with the buzz & interest of tennis in the summer time & the other a RMH Charity Day Tennis Carnivale event in September. These events allow the local community to come to the Weston Creek Tennis Club, and experience all the club offers.
- Interstate Teams Challenge in October
- Weston Creek Junior Open in October
- End of Year NZ Junior Tennis Tour in December

WESTON CREEK TENNIS CLUB FACILITY HISTORY, KEY DATES AND OFFICE BEARERS

- Club and interim committee formed at a public meeting on Wednesday 20 October 1971 at the Waramanga Primary School. Jock Dickson (interim President) and Dorothy Moody (interim Secretary/Treasurer). The first committee meeting was held at Jock Dickson's place (46 Adinda Street Waramanga) on 1 November 1971.
- Club financial year agreed to be 1 May to 30 April and AGM held within 90 days of the end of the financial year.
- Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Works confirmed Block 12, Section 22, Weston was the area bounded by Scouts Rd to the edge of the Scout Hall, the tree line to Namatijira Drive (not including the nature strip and path), and to the drain easement adjacent Stretton Drive. The staging would consist of Stage 1: Courts 1-4, Stage 2: Courts 5-8; and Stage 3: Courts 9-12. The Clubhouse would be a 'Type 661' standard tennis pavilion.
- Stage 1 clay courts with lights opened on Sunday 2 December 1973 at 2.30pm by Ken Willis (dec), President of the ACT Tennis Association.
- Stage 2 clay courts with lights opened in 1975 – no details of opening.
- No 1 Court Synthetic Grass laid in 1976. This was the first court of its type in Canberra.
- No. 2 Court was laid with synthetic grass in 1977, but using river sand.
- Courts 5-8 laid with synthetic grass 1985.
- Club membership peaked in 1977/78 at 763 and restrictions had to be put on court useage during peak times.
- Motorised petrol driven roller purchased 1981. This was subsequently sold (together with larger roller – see below) when the mod grass went in.
- First Certificate of Incorporation 13 October 1981.
- First lease under new lease agreement dated from December 1983 for 25 Years.
- Courts 5-8 laid with mod grass in 1984 after receiving an ACT Govt Grant.
- Coaching contracts negotiated with the 2 coaches 1984.
- Court 2 became unserviceable as river sand had been used. Courts blasted with firefighting hose and sand replaced 1984.
- Ride on mower purchased second hand. Subsequently sold to a club member when the paving was done (see below).
- Payment of Land Rent commenced for first time from 19 November 1990 to 18 November 1993. The legislation was under *Section 3AA of the Leases Act*, ACT Government, Department of the Environment Land and Planning. Rent determined as being \$4,400. Building to be maximum height not exceeding 2 storeys.

- Stage 3 clay courts 9-12 with lights and spoon guttering completed and approved. Funding provided through loans by members and a small ACT Govt Grant. Courts 9-12 opened by Senator Gary Humphries in August 1995.
- A second diesel driven heavy roller purchased for rolling of courts in January 1995 (subsequently sold once the mod grass went in).
- Gazebos built by TAFE Canberra apprentices 1998.
- First contract negotiated with Canberra School of Tennis 2001
- Showers and kitchen installed 2002
- Clubhouse painted inside and out 2001 and industrial carpet laid.
- Large gazebo with shade cloth 2004
- Landscaping and paving completed 2005
- Six (9-12 and 1-2) new artificial grass courts laid 2005/06
- Two rollers and ride on mower sold in 2005.
- Courts 3-4 laid with artificial grass 2011/12 (need to check with Stewart on the date)
- Practice Wall improvements 2006/07
- Club Lease renewal for 99 years - 2008.
- Clubhouse painted 2016.

YEAR	PRESIDENT	VICE PRESIDENT	SECRETARY	TREASURER
1971/72	Jock Dickson	Vacant	Dorothy Moody	Dorothy Moody
1972/73	Dudley Fitzsimmons	Colin Power	Dorothy Moody	Mike Bury
1973/74	Colin Power	Tony Williams	Lynn Elphinstone	Dot Simm
1974/75	Colin Power	Tony Williams	Lynn Elphinstone	Peter Kallio
1975/76	Colin Power	Tony Williams	Lyn Elphinstone	Peter Kallio
1976/77	Colin Power	Mike Rudwick	Pat Napper	Peter Kallio
1977/78	Colin Power	Alan Carroll	Pat Napper	Peter Kallio
1978/79	Colin Power	Alan Carroll	Lorraine Wood	Peter Kallio
1979/80	Colin Power	Peter Kallio	David Mathews	John Mears
1980/81	Mike Rudwick	Tom Holmes	Chris Hall	John Mears
1981/82	Garry Napper	Max Lemmon	Clive Bartlett	Ray Finnegan
1982/83	Gary Napper	Max Lemmon	Martin Chapman	Ray Finnegan
1983/84	Graeme Rossiter	Max Lemmon	Bryan Henshaw	Ray Finnegan
1984/85	Graeme Rossiter	Col Power	Tim Harris	Ron McNeilly
1985/86	Graeme Rossiter	Rob Smith	Tim Harris	Rob Smith
1986/87	Graeme Rossiter	Arthur Dickens	Tim Harris	Bob Lane
1987/88	Colin Power	Graeme Rossiter	Tim Harris	Bob Lane
1988/89	Colin Power	Carol Johnston	Tim Harris	Mike Heap
1989/90	Colin Power	Charles Griffith	Tim Harris	Mike Heap

1990/91	Colin Power	Charles Griffith	Tim Harris	Mike Heap
1991/92	Colin Power	Colleen Tyrie	Fran Heap	Mike Heap
1992/93	Colin Power	Graeme Rossiter	Fran Heap	Mike Heap
1993/94	Graeme Rossiter	Tim Harris	Desley Dawes	Mike Heap
1994/95	Graeme Rossiter	Bruce Levy	Desley Dawes	Mike Heap
1995/96	Graeme Rossiter	Charles Griffith	Margaret Atkin	Helen Govey
1996/97	Graeme Rossiter	Tim Harris	Margaret Atkin	Helen Govey
1997/98	Graeme Rossiter	Tim Harris	Margaret Atkin	Helen Govey
1998/99	Graeme Rossiter	Tim Harris	Margaret Atkin	Peter Fraser
1999/00	Graeme Rossiter	Tim Harris	Margaret Atkin	Peter Fraser
2000/01	Graeme Rossiter	Tim Harris	Margaret Atkin	Peter Fraser
2001/02	Graeme Rossiter	Tim Harris	Margaret Atkin	Janet Redwin
2002/03	Graeme Rossiter	Tim Harris	Margaret Atkin	Janet Redwin
2003/04	Graeme Rossiter	Tim Harris	Margaret Atkin	Janet Redwin
2004/05	Graeme Rossiter	Margaret Atkin	Trish Hagan	Janet Redwin
2005/06	Graeme Rossiter	Margaret Atkin	Tim Harris	Graeme Rossiter
2006/07	Graeme Rossiter	Margaret Atkin	Tim Harris	Mike Heap
2007/08	Stewart Back	Margaret Atkin	Graham Clews	Mike Heap
2008/09	Stewart Back	Margaret Atkin	Vacant	Mike Heap
2009/10	Stewart Back	Margaret Atkin	Vacant	Mike Heap
2010/11	Stewart Back	Vacant	Lyndal Young	Mike Heap
2011/12	Stewart Back	Vacant	Margaret Appleton	Mike Heap
2012/13	Stewart Back	Vacant	Margaret Appleton	Geoff Kotz
2013/14	Stewart Back	Vacant	Margaret Appleton	Geoff Kotz
2014/15	Stewart Back	Vacant	Tim Harris	Geoff Kotz
2015/16	Stewart Back	Vacant	Peter Ward	Geoff Kotz
2016/17	Stewart Back	Vacant	Vacant	Geoff Kotz
2017/18	Stewart Back	Vacant	Clair Dupont	Geoff Kotz
2018/19	Stewart Back	Graeme Rossiter	Clair Dupont	Geoff Kotz

1. Facility Development, Facility Maintenance and Facility Management

The WCTC is the largest public tennis facility on the Southside of Canberra, and although the facility has been maintained as best it can through the hard work of volunteers, it is essential that the facility is upgraded.

Goal 1: Facility to be upgraded

Though the WCTC is on a strong financial footing there are key elements of infrastructure that will require financial assistance from Commonwealth, ACT Government and Tennis Australia grant processes to undertake critical projects. These are outlined below.

In terms of actual facility the WCTC considers the following require urgent attention over the next four years:

1.1: Replacement of the Wire fencing

There are safety issues associated with the perimeter fencing. The fences are rusty, to an abrasive stage, and sagging between support posts causing the bottom of the chain wire to curl into to court area in a dangerous manner. This component of the project involves the replacement of the wire mesh enclosing 8 courts with good quality galvanized external wire mesh to a height of 4 meters around 12 courts (original mesh was erected in the 1970's) and installation of galvanized steel tubing at the top of the posts so that the mesh does not fall down. This requires the removal and disposal of the existing wire mesh which has collapsed downwards.

1.2: Replacement of the current lights with brighter, less power consuming lights

The court lighting and associated control boxes are out of date and fragile to the extent where it is liable to fail causing cessation of night-time operations. It also could be dangerous in certain situations. An updated lighting system would also provide a substantial cost saving in power usage. The WCTC believes that with the removal of old luminaires on 12 courts and replacement with new 36 1000 Lux luminaires 'heads' will lead to a more efficient and effective lighting system.

Players of all standards are attracted to high class modern playing surfaces. Six of the courts are at the stage of needing urgent replacement, and therefore a program of rectification is required, but this will need significant financial assistance. The Club has currently put in for a Federal Grant and though missing out on Phase 1 funding the Club understands it could be selected under Phase 2.

1.3: remove the existing (Circa 1973) flat metal roof and replace it with a new metal roof, including storm water plumbing.

The WCTC Clubhouse roof leaks causing water to access the inside of the clubhouse and is in urgent need of replacement.

1.3: Court replacement strategy for six courts is required over the next two years.

Over the next four years the WCTC is looking at replacing the artificial grass (especially where roots have penetrated), including possibly with artificial grass or hardcourt or a combination of both. This of course will require government assistance, and the Club has already applied for a significant Federal Government grant.

2. Onsite Manager

The WCTC is already a large tennis facility, but it also has room to expand to the North (towards the Scout Hall) and to the West of the facility (towards Streeton Drive). In order to do this in terms of the overall Vision, during the next four years the WCTC is looking at possible management alternatives to facilitate expansion. However, the WCTC must try to balance the need for survivability and commercial requirements against the desire to be an expanding and viable, community ‘Club like’, and above all, open Club.

Though the operation and management of the Club by dedicated volunteers has worked over many years it is perhaps time for the Club to look into a business model that could include a paid manager arrangement, with the person being guided by, and reporting to, a Club Committee. Though a list of duties and selection criteria would need to be developed the overarching role of the manager would need to be focused on the day to day running of the facility, its promotion and communication with the region, and the integration of the coaching programs such that potential members of all ages and standards are actively guided into becoming members of the Club.

2.1: The Club is investigating a Club Manager role, but noting that this will be influenced by the potential cost to players if this change was to be implemented.

3. Promotion and Communication

A key underpinning component of the overall *Tennis ACT Strategic Plan* aimed at growing, managing, promoting and developing the sport of tennis throughout the ACT and region by:

- Providing strong leadership and direction that guides the sport towards our vision;
- Advocating the accessibility of tennis as a sport for all people ;
- Promoting the health, economic, social and entertainment benefits that tennis delivers;
- Preserving the rich heritage and traditions of tennis;

- Partnering effectively with Tennis Australia, government, corporate partners and our clubs; and
- Taking an active approach to the commercial development of the sport and industry in the region.

A key component of this Milestone is to maximise community engagement (participation) in tennis as an active recreational activity.

Goal 3.1: It is essential that the WCTC maximises this ‘tool’ in order to assist in expanding, promoting and communicating the game of Tennis.

The benefits of the new system are several, and entry to the Courts and the Clubhouse are now simpler. However, it appears that Tennis Australia has not applied sufficient resources to implement both the membership and *Book-a-Court* systems. We have been promised that problems will be fixed, but, this has not happened. It is over two years since the changeover started. The end result is that the introduction of the new system has been very painful and a lot more costly than promised.

The support provided by the help desk at Tennis Australia has been reasonable, but there are still many bugs in the system (some major) that you would expect should have been eliminated by now. For example, the Registration System and the membership data base has still not been synchronised, with the *Book-a-Court* system causing unnecessary inconvenience to members trying to book courts at members rates.

Goal 3.2: The WCTC will continue to liaise with Tennis Australia to assist in better management and technical support to successfully implement both the membership and Book-a-Court systems.

Junior coaching, pennant competition (day and night), social (day and night) and casual play is well supported, however, as in all Clubs, there is a paucity of players in the 20-40 year age group. This is a nationwide issue for many sports. To assist in addressing this within the region

Goal 3.3: The WCTC will promote and welcome potential players from the new suburb of Molonglo through its website, letter drops, newsletters and on-site promotions.

Tennis Carnivale is a wonderful event, but would benefit Club outcomes by giving participants something to take away from the event which they could use to follow up, and possibly join the Club. A small flyer should be provided to participants at the event. As a matter of urgency, the Club needs to develop a basic flyer that can be used in letter drops and handing to all coaching students, and facilities such as Cooleman Court, local Club and shops, and residential houses in the region. The flyer should provide basic information on the Club (including fees) and essential contacts including mobile phone, email and website. From time to time articles on the Club and its achievements and attractions could be placed in community papers and magazines. Local radio stations could be engaged to run Outside Broadcasts from the Club, especially during Tennis Carnivale. Actively engaging the ACT

Government, and when applicable Federal Government agencies to ensure that the Club is 'on the radar'.

Goal 3.4: The WCTC will continue to seek out sponsorship opportunities, including the maintenance of the Canberra Southern Cross Club and Rebel Sports arrangements

The *Canberra Southern Cross Club (CSCC)* receives applications for direct grants. The WCTC anticipates that the present 7.5% of 'card swipes' at the CSCC venues will continue and increase. WCTC is a member of that program and we ask all WCTC members and their friends who are members of the CSCC to 'sign up' when they visit any CSCC venue.

Rebel Sports store also support the WCTC. When making purchases at any Rebel Store, WCTC members swipe the 'Rebel Store' Card and 5% of the amount is credited to the WCTC account for purchase of tennis consumables such as balls.

Please note: This Draft has been prepared for discussion and amendment amongst members with a view to finalising a final Strategic Plan by the 30th of June 2019. Please contact Graeme Rossiter on 62882477 or 0431930710