

## **PRESIDENTS REPORT 2018/19**

After the excitement of the announcement of funding in March 2017 in 2018 we seemed to come to a grinding halt as the funding and planning process took over. However in the last 6 months the actual digging and building has well and truly started and we will very soon have an almost brand new facility to host tennis for years to come.

The highlights for the last year have been:

### **Participation**

- During 2018/19 season we fielded a total of 72 separate teams in competitions in the Wellington Gippsland Tennis Association, Sale & District Mid-Week Ladies Tennis Association and Club based competitions. This covered junior and senior summer pennant, night tennis on Tuesday and Thursday nights, mid-week ladies and winter junior pennant.
- Of the 15 Sale junior teams in the Wellington Gippsland Tennis Association 8 teams made the finals. Of these 2 made their respective grand finals in Sections 1 and 2 and both were successful in winning the grand final.
- Of our 5 senior teams in WGTA 4 made the finals and 3 won through to the Grand Final. Section 1 lost by 1 game in a tiebreaker, a fantastic effort against the top team from Maffra. In Section 2 Sale Blue finished 4th then won three matches in a row to take out the pennant and complete a remarkable final series. In Section 3 Sale Blue came up against the undefeated Longford team and unfortunately they were still undefeated after the Grand Final.
- Made grand finals in Sections 2 and 3 of Sale & District Midweek Ladies Pennant, a testament to the hard work of our Ladies President, Debbie Krusic.
- Conducted our 67th consecutive Sale Tennis Club Championships, a remarkable achievement, with Jo Rule and Abe Schuback being our Open Singles winners.
- Hosted our 11th Junior Points Tournament over the Queen's Birthday weekend attracting 80 entries from local, state and national competitors.
- Hosted our 4th Spring Junior Tournament, attracting 55 entries. In recognition of the delivery of past events our spring tournament has been upgraded to a junior tournament and a senior AMT event for 2019.
- Worked with Tennis Victoria and 5 local primary schools as part of the National Schools Partnership. These schools all delivered the ANZ Hot Shots program as part of their curriculum as well as receiving over \$1,200 of free tennis gear and a comprehensive training program.
- Delivered for the 13th year the Tennis Australia ANZ Hot Shots program. This program has gone from strength to strength with the numbers increasing from below 10 per week to now up to 30 children participating in beginner tennis activities each week. Further in 2019 we continued to deliver the Hot Shots program throughout the full year giving children the opportunity to accelerate their tennis development. This was a first in country Victoria. We also had 10 children attend the Australia Open and participate in the "Kids on Court" program where the children play on the AO courts before the first matches of the day and get to toss the coin at the start of play, a once in a lifetime experience.
- STC juniors Hunter and Baxter Pearce qualified as ballkids at the Australian Open. Hunter was a supervisor for the first time, a wonderful leadership role for an emerging junior.

- Delivered Cardio Tennis up to 3 times per week. Cardio Tennis is a group fitness activity for anyone at any playing level looking for a fun way to burn calories and interact with others outside of the gym.
- Hosted another Fast 4 Business Challenge to encourage local businesses to try out the Fast 4 format of tennis.
- Revived, after an absence of over 15 years, the Dahlsens Challenge, an inter-town challenge for juniors and seniors played between Sale and Bairnsdale Tennis Clubs. Events such as the Dahlsens Challenge are essential for the development of junior players in regional areas as it provides a rare opportunity for them to be part of a larger team representing their Club and to compete with and test themselves against their peers from other areas. We have now had 5 rounds of the Dahlsens Challenge with Sale holding a 3 – 2 advantage.
- Created another series of junior player participation opportunities with a Sunday morning junior competition with up to 30 children playing each event.
- Conducted a Free Tennis Day that attracted nearly 80 participants who enjoyed a great day of tennis and tennis themed activities and introduced them to our Club and facility.

## **Community**

- In 2016 we were successful in obtaining an Australian Tennis Foundation - Tennis Cares grant to fund the delivery of a tailored program for 15 students from Sale Specialist School in the 12 to 15 age group. The group had 2 terms of a specially modified tennis program delivered by our club professional coach, Mick Mullen. The feedback from the students and their teachers was so positive that we continued the program each year from our Club funding.
- Continued our involvement in the GippSport Healthy Sporting Environments program which is a structured program that assists with inclusion for all abilities, alcohol management, healthy eating, injury protection, UV protection and reduction of tobacco use. This in addition to our Club continuing to be a Level 3 Good Sports club.
- Sale Tennis Club hosted a third ballkids trial in March. The trial was part of the selection process for the ball kids at the Australian Open 2020. The day attracted children from all over the Gippsland region and 3 children made it through to the next stage.
- We had an estimated 35,000 separate visits to our facility from players, spectators, parents, tournament participants, school groups, casual users, function attendants, coaching students and other users.
- After an absence of 4 years the committee of Sale Tennis Club undertook to revive the Wellington Gippsland Tennis Association Championships. In a great show of support in February there were over 70 entries from the 7 clubs that make up the Wellington Gippsland Tennis Association. With large fields in the 10, 12 and 14 & Under events the children were on court early and enjoyed the best of the conditions.
- Animal Aid Victoria held a “Dogs Day Out” at the Sale Tennis Club in April. By all accounts the dogs were delighted to have their own day. Some of the people they own were also happy to see their masters enjoying the lure course, the dog show and the other activities.
- Up till the start of our renovations Sale Bridge Club was sharing our committee room on a weekly basis to conduct their club training sessions. This supports our overall philosophy of sharing our facility with other community user groups such as Sale Community Garden and Animal Aid.

## Recognition

- Sale Tennis Club has maintained its Top 50 status for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in a row in the annual Tennis Victoria club rankings. Sale came in at 20<sup>th</sup> in the rankings which is based on registered participants and user groups and was one of only three country clubs in the top 20. The ranking is a reflection of the many and diverse groups that access our facilities throughout each year. These users include schools, academies, pennant players, Hot Shots kids, Cardio Tennis, Fast 4, coaching students, tournament players, occasional users and a vast array of others who make use of our facilities on an ongoing or casual basis. We are justifiably proud of this recognition but know that we must constantly strive to meet the needs of our users.
- Sale Tennis Club was awarded a Healthy Skin Award for Excellence in the Promotion of Skin Health in the Community at the 2018 Healthy Skin Awards which were announced at a special awards night in May at the Melbourne Museum. The Skin & Cancer Foundation event celebrated individuals and organisations who support and encourage healthy skin practices in the community and within their organisation. Sale Tennis Club's efforts were rewarded for our education on skin health, which focused primarily on our junior members, as we attempt to establish lifelong healthy skin practices for younger players. This is driven by the research that shows that skin is most in danger of UV radiation damage in the first 15 years of life.

## Facilities

- We are delighted that our facility redevelopment is now well under way. At the end of the project we will have:
  - ❖ A substantially extended modern clubroom.
  - ❖ Accessible pathways to the entire complex to allow wheelchair and disabled access to all courts and our full clubhouse facilities.
  - ❖ An expanded committee room capable of serving our needs and the needs of Sale Bridge Club.
  - ❖ A spacious tournament box able to comfortably accommodate all tournament staff with an exceptional view across all 14 red porous courts.
  - ❖ LED lighting throughout the clubhouse.
  - ❖ A modern solar electricity system incorporating 3 Tesla batteries that will allow us to store the electricity we generate and use it for free at night when we use our lights resulting in significant ongoing greenhouse gas emissions savings and some very favourable cost savings.
  - ❖ 4 new international size show courts all in red porous (en-tout-cas in the old language).
  - ❖ 8 new club size red porous courts with increased width and length for greatly improved playing conditions.
  - ❖ LED lighting to all 14 red porous courts with 500 lux illumination on the 6 show courts and 350 lux on the remaining 8 courts, an improvement of several hundred percent on what we already have.
  - ❖ New modern fencing on all 14 red porous courts.
  - ❖ New spectator areas including several areas of drop down fencing to allow better viewing.
  - ❖ A vastly improved entrance and pathway to allow better access and to showcase our superb natural environment.

The significant challenge for most community based organisations is the decline in volunteerism. Without volunteers our Club cannot run and without a Club our facilities cease to be maintained, to the detriment of all current and future users. We are most fortunate that we currently have a very strong and long serving group of volunteers but we cannot be complacent as we search for the next generation of Club administrators and try to share with them the great sense of achievement that community service and volunteerism provides.

Our three committees work tirelessly to deliver our programs. Kurt Best has excelled in his role as President of the Junior Committee and has been assisted by Mick Mullen, who brings valuable experience from other clubs and districts. This committee has done a wonderful job and we should all be proud of the way they have brought together our junior program. A special thanks goes to Carmel Elliott who organised the canteen each Saturday morning. Mick is now moving on to bigger things. We wish to thank Mick for his contribution and we look forward to the opportunity to renew and refresh our coaching offer.

We were fortunate to have Debbie Krusic, continue as our Ladies President and with the help of her committee they have continued to make a major contribution. Debbie's enthusiasm and commitment for our ladies competition is the thing that keeps this unique tennis opportunity alive.

Our General Committee has been very well served by: Our "Special K's" Karen Pollett, our Treasurer, and Karen Deschepper, our Membership Coordinator; Sonya Stephenson who has kept our minutes; Mick Mullen who coordinated our Club and WGTA Championships and Murray Fitzclarence and Di Arnot who have ensured that our bar remains stocked amongst many other tasks. Thank you also goes to all of our other General Committee members for their ongoing contribution, commitment and guidance. Tina Page has now stepped down from General Committee due to work commitments. Tina is the master of detail and has helped with our Member Protection Policy and our new constitution amongst other tasks and we wish to thank her for her invaluable contribution. Paul Egan has also stepped down, due to health reasons. Paul was our WGTA Representative for 2 years, a thankless task and an enthusiastic contributor at all other levels. We wish him well with his recovery.

As with every year, I encourage everybody who enjoys the many benefits of our Club to find a way to make a contribution at some level. I also wish to acknowledge all of those people who have made a contribution, big or small, or have helped out in a myriad of ways. Without this support the Club would no longer exist.

Thank you.

Robin Lowe  
President  
Sale Tennis Club