

TENNIS WESTERN B.O.P (Inc)

ANNUAL REPORT AUGUST 2022

Tēnā koutou katoa.
(Greetings to you all)

It is my privilege to present the 2022/2023 Annual Report on the activities of Tennis Western BOP.

The primary objectives of Tennis WBOP are to:

- provide organisational excellence, promote and support clubs and their membership, promote game development and protect and grow Tennis WBOP assets
- promote, develop and advance the sport of tennis by providing access to facilities and services to members by supporting affiliated clubs and their programmes.

In the previous three years, the major impediment to the game of tennis has come from the impact of Covid 19 restrictions. While there was also the need to delay regional and national competitions in the first part of year, most disruptions after that came from the impact of climate. At times persistent rain seemed to be scheduled to coincide with club, interclub and regional competitions, causing frustration and threats to patience for players and tournament organisers alike. February's Cyclone Gabrielle was the extreme. There have been conversations about adjusting our playing schedules to accommodate projected poor weather patterns but the reality is that there is a greater need to develop covered courts.

National

From my perspective, Tennis NZ has had an uneven year. It has continued to support *Love Tennis* strongly and it has developed a suite of very useful resources for club administrators and coaches on its website. It is also working directly with clubs on request and I understand that this has been worthwhile. Tournament Planner is now widespread, but not every club uses Club Spark and this has caused some communication issues. The introduction of the World Tennis ranking number will be an asset for current player seeding and goal-setting but right now there is a challenge to modify existing technology to accommodate the variety of needs. Actual implementation of the fusion may take up to a year. With hindsight it may have been better to trial a rollout more thoroughly. The affiliation fee process is still something of a mystery hence the need to stay with the CPI increase until advised otherwise. Tennis NZ still does not understand the essential difference between Tennis Western BOP and other associations: the executive committee administers according to the requirements of the clubs, not the other way around.

Regional

Waikato Bays has continued to improve its administrative processes this season and the decision to have specific responsibilities remain with the same people has created a valuable continuity, especially in the links to Tennis NZ. Circumstances such as Cyclone Gabrielle and some issues over team selection for the national teams event have meant more zoom meetings than was the case in the past. Debra Dowland (Bay of Plenty) is the Chairperson for 2023 / 24. You can expect to see a change to the dates for regional junior teams selections, a Player Code of Conduct introduced as part of the need for a greater level of protection for our younger players and, hopefully, more clarity around the future of national tournaments for the 15 to 17 year age groups. There is an understanding with Tennis NZ that a junior ITF will be hosted in Hamilton or Tauranga each year to provide

opportunities for our development squad graduates. Tennis Eastern is grateful for the support it received from Tennis Western BOP as it rebuilds after the cyclone.

Local

What follows is a summary of some aspects of this season.

- The success of the ITF tournament in December 2022 was a tribute to the energy and commitment of the organising committee. The national and international responses made it clear that Gerald Greig and his Papamoa volunteers had made a major contribution to an event that players and officials enjoyed and that brought a big tick from Tennis NZ. It is no surprise therefore that the ITF is confirmed for this December at a slightly earlier date.
- It was pleasing to see Tennis NZ bring its national awards ceremony to the Papamoa Surf Lifesaving Club at the start of the ITF. It was a serious ceremony that brought many of the country's top players to town and made them accessible to conversations with locals. Papamoa Sports Tennis Club was on show here by taking the ClubSpark Award while Sylvia Wilmhurst received a Te Tohu Hāpai Honour for her long service to tennis administration.
- Junior Pathways programme. There has been good progress made with the Junior Development programme in the way that it works more closely with parents, its communication with the players and in the work with the coaches. Currently our younger age group is performing more to the level that we expect from the investment of time and funding. We also need to be realistic in that being able to compete on court with the best from the big centres will continue to be a challenge that can centre on a family's resources. The coach and manager feedback from the national team event was valuable, especially the identification of the specific stroke development needed. Andrew and Sussa have worked very hard to keep continuous improvement going. Thanks also go to all of the clubs that have supported the Pathways objectives by offering a range of junior tournaments across the season to cater for match-play.
- The Girls programme has quietly achieved a number of its goals. Regular sessions led by Luis have kept the players interested and Sussa has made sure that they are given the right opportunities at the right time. 2024 may well be crucial for this group as more of them are close to the age that many girls seem to leave the game.
- The Tennis Western BOP prize presentation is an occasion to celebrate success. Former All Black Sevens Coach, Sir Gordon Tietjens, shared a thought-provoking set of coaching tips using a traffic light approach to lift player performance that had relevance for both junior and adult players. The visual presentation was a step-up from previous years and the major awards were well-deserved. A consistent talking point is where the junior awards and some of the inter-club results fit into the ceremony. This topic was referred to the Delegates' Committee and its current view is that most of these awards are more properly part of a club prizegiving. We will look at this again earlier next year.
- The Delegates' Committee is the major link between the clubs and the Executive that works on its behalf. Getting two / three delegates from each club to meetings is still a challenge even though 90% of meetings are by zoom.
- The Tauranga City Council has embarked on an ambitious "redesign" of many sports facilities on council-owned land. This struck home for several clubs such as Mount Maunganui and Tauranga Lawn, where plans indicate a major restructure with no guarantee of agreed consultation outcomes. A forced sharing of facilities and grounds raises immediate concerns for any club while the disruption to actual play for lengthy periods has an adverse impact on all aspects of club tennis. Executive members have supported

club submissions when required and will continue to do so. Otumoetai's lead in challenging the intention of the council to give clubs very short notice to leave leasehold land is a further example of how we can work together in support of each other using the expertise of our members. Fortunately, Tennis Western BOP has been able to develop a consultative and cooperative relationship with the council with regard to the Papamoa facility. The Vision Document, that also has the support of the Papamoa Charitable Trust, Sport Bay of Plenty and the Papamoa Club, has allowed the council to see that there is a viable development plan for tennis that has benefits for Tauranga. There is a timeframe and it is up to us to lead its implementation.

- The statement of accounts again reflects a solid financial base. Warwick deserves every commendation for his management of financial transactions and grant monies.
- Coachforce works throughout the Bay of Plenty. Peter ensures that two important pillars for the provision of good tennis - coach development and refereeing / tennis management - are available to all clubs. His work creates a reasonable expectation that clubs can access referees for their tournaments, a situation that other regional associations envy.

On a sadder note, senior tennis has lost a substantial supporter with the recent passing of John Mickell. John was a life member of Tennis Western BOP Masters and Tennis New Zealand Masters. He also established a charitable trust that allowed players with reduced circumstances to travel to international team events. The John Mickell Trophy is the prize for the regional team that has the best winning percentage at the NZ Masters competition, a trophy won on several occasions by Tennis Western BOP Masters. Many players and supporters in Tauranga will have known John through senior tennis and also from the donations and gifts of equipment that he made to clubs.

Finally, my thanks to all of you who have supported tennis at any level during the last season. Your efforts in making sure that all players, especially juniors, could continue to get coaching and match play, made a big difference to their ability to cope with the new challenges in our society. Thanks also to the Executive Committee for its stewardship of Tennis Western BOP: all are consistent in their desire to commit time to working for others. Sussa, as Manager, carries a substantial load in delivering the mechanics of all competitions and in lifting the quality of the support available to clubs. Most of us do not see the time that she has to spend finding solutions to situations that have emerged (especially the rain) and negotiating access to courts to allow competitions to be completed. Arohanui Sussa.

Noho ora mai

(Stay well)



Robert Naumann
Executive Chairperson
14 August 2023.

