



ROYAL PARK TENNIS CLUB (INC.)

2019/20 Annual Report

*On behalf of the Management Committee I am pleased to present the following report regarding the operations of the Royal Park Tennis Club (Inc) during the 2019/20 year. It has indeed been a year of unexpected and extraordinary events with the **Covid19** outbreak which impacted all aspects of our operations.*

The most significant of our activities and results are:-

FINANCIAL

- **Our sound financial position and continued efficient management of our facilities.**
- **An annual income of \$220,185 (2018/19 \$221,291) resulting in an operating profit of \$32,358 (2018/19 \$28,012) which excludes depreciation, amortisation and interest. Net assets totalling \$397,510 (2018/19 \$421,678).** Most significantly, our result was positively impacted with \$28k in Government support related to Covid19 in the form of Jobkeeper Allowance (\$18k) and Cash flow boost (\$10k).
- **We received total tennis program grants of \$6,576 (2018/19 \$13,300) during the financial year.**

MEMBERSHIP

- **Membership picked up slightly to 486 (2018/19 was 469). Recruitment was again strong across social & junior categories, and we maintained our 1000+ total registered players, which includes members, hirers, social and special programs participants.**
- **The Club provided members a credit for the period of time competition tennis was suspended and for when the Club was closed for tennis because of Covid19.**

MANAGEMENT

- **Carole, Janice, Neil, Greg, Kevin and Natalie continued to be our very effective operations team and worked diligently throughout the Covid19 shutdown periods to ensure a safe environment in full compliance of the Government's guidelines.**

MATCH AND TEAM, JUNIORS, TOURNAMENTS AND CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS

- **82 teams participated in 14 different Association competitions. Matches were suspended about the half-way mark in the Spring/Season 1 competitions due to Covid-19 restrictions.**
- **We held the annual Junior Classic tournament, and Seniors Round Robin, supported the Tennis Australia Nadal Cup, and repeated last year's Twilight Tournament.**

FACILITIES & MAINTENANCE

- **Our major activities for the year were renovation of the bathrooms, painting of the interior of the Clubhouse, updating of signage, and landscaping in preparation for our 130th anniversary celebrations.**

SOCIAL

- **Junior End of Season, end of year Club gathering, Wednesday night, Sunday afternoon, midweek and several other one-off social tennis programs were held and reasonably well attended.**

130th ANNIVERSARY

- **The Club celebrated its 130th Anniversary in November 2019 where more than 220 past and present members and friends attended and the Deputy Lord Mayor, Aaron Wood, congratulated the Club on its contribution to the community.**

TENNIS VICTORIA ANNUAL AWARDS

- **Royal Park Tennis Club was a finalist in the Club of the Year awards and Liz Ross was a finalist in the Officials category.**
- **Our President, Caryle Demarte, was elected to the Board of Tennis Victoria.**

COMMUNITY SERVICE PARTNERSHIPS

- **We obtained grants for the Huddle program and the Mercy Aged Care facility in Parkville which were however placed on hold because of the Covid19 outbreak.**

COACHING

- **We have continued to enjoy the successful coaching programs operated by Matt Gregory and Dan Donnelly and their teams.**

RESPONSE TO OUR STRATEGIC PLAN AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE PAST YEAR

Last year we committed to undertake the following priority activities and set out below is our response to these:

Strategic Plan

We have continued to progress the initiatives as detailed in our three year Strategic Plan however all aspects of our operation were seriously impacted with the shutdown and operating restrictions because of the Covid19 outbreak. Nevertheless we achieved the following:

- **Junior Development programs that provide a positive experience and connection to the RPTC community.**
Again we were able to involve a number of Junior players in senior competition and Pennant. We have recently seen greater interest from some parents to be involved which is a positive sign. A practice program was initiated for junior competition and social players.
- **Social tennis and competition structures including social tennis, Tennis Australia sanctioned tournament and the Twilight tournament.**
We continued the monthly Sunday afternoon social tennis session, Wednesday night social tennis, the women's social tennis program (Tuesday mornings), and mixed (Thursday mornings) and introduced a young adults program on Sunday afternoons. During February and March 2020 we conducted 6 Open Court Sessions which proved to be very successful. We successfully repeated our "Twilight" tournament in late November /early December and the Rafa Nadal Junior development tournament in January 2020.
- **Use of technology and communications to better engage our members, users and community.**
We continued to enhance our use of technology and communications but this is an area for continued focus into the future.
- **Maintain our strong operations so that we remain a viable not-for-profit Club.**
We are in a strong financial position and have seen our monthly revenue continue to grow because of a strong increase in the use of Book-a-court.

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1st July 2019 to 30th June 2020 – Kim Summerill, Treasurer

FY20 was a year of unexpected and extraordinary events. Despite these challenges, the club performed in line with budget, delivering an operating profit of \$32k vs budget \$30k.

The unprecedented events of FY20 did have a transactional impact on the club with a series of unders and overs (vs budget) that are explained below and in the financial statements.

Cash

Cash balance at 30 June 2020 was \$280k, with \$63k held in our trading account and the balance held in term deposits. Our cash balance increased by \$24k during FY20.

Income

Overall income was \$8k higher than the budget with a number of ups and downs:

- We received \$28k in government support related to CV19, in the form of Jobkeeper Allowance (\$18k) and Cash Flow Boost (\$10k)
- Court hire fees were \$6k higher than the budget and largely attributed to public court hire (likely the result of CV19 restrictions on other sports)
- Restrictions on organised activities meant that coaching income, teams revenue, bar revenue and clubhouse hire were lower than the budget (total \$28k)
- Membership revenue was in line with the budget.

Expenses

The club incurred \$191k of expenses vs a budget of \$185k.

- Teams and clubhouse hire were impacted significantly by CV19. That resulted in significant savings against the budget for tennis balls and bar (cost of sales), total costs \$6k less than the budget. This was offset by higher staff wage costs.

- The Club participated in the Jobkeeper program that required us to pay eligible staff a minimum salary of \$1,500 per fortnight. Total additional payments to staff for FY20 were \$14k (offset by Jobkeeper income).

Compliance

FY20 compliance activities are up-to-date; BAS's have been lodged and superannuation commitments have been met. The FY20 audit is complete and financial statements are available for members to review. There were no material management issues noted during the audit.

2020/2021 Budget

The 2020/2021 budget has been approved by the Management Committee.

FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT and MAINTENANCE - Caryle Demarte:

Facility Development:

- Clubhouse and Bathrooms renovated:** Our major priority was to tidy up and improve the Clubhouse in preparation for our 130th Anniversary celebration. New vanity units were installed in the toilets, and both the toilets and interior of the main Clubhouse were painted. New tables, chairs and a 2nd PC were purchased, and 3 extra security cameras installed to cover the court areas.
- Carpark** The City of Melbourne cleaned out the main drain from court 7 which has reduced the flooding impact and have undertaken to redesign the entrance and carpark area.
- LED Lights** The City of Melbourne installed double arms on the poles on the east side of court 7 and the west side of court 4 which has greatly improved the consistency of lighting on those courts.
- Court Seats** We purchased 10 new bench seats for the courts.
- Cypress trees** The City of Melbourne removal of the cypress trees along our western boundary line was stalled by VicTrack awaiting a permit for completion.

Facility Maintenance:

One Working Bee were held during the year plus a couple of days spent cleaning out the maintenance sheds.

Maintenance Contractor and Caretaker

Neil and Greg continued to keep our facilities looking clean, tidy, safe and well maintained. As usual, we received positive comments on the standard of maintenance and cleanliness of our facilities which is a credit to all involved.

My personal thanks to Kevin Walsh for his ideas, enthusiasm and support in progressing maintenance and new initiatives, and all of those members who attended the working bee.

ARCHIVING - Caryle Demarte

Betty Wohlers spent many hours archiving all of our Club's records which was a huge task and a great resource for the Club. Betty was supported by Kevin Walsh and Peter Wood who digitised many of our records. A great display was available for the 130th celebrations.

COACHING - Caryle Demarte Our experienced coaches, Matt Gregory and Dan Donnelly and their teams, have provided excellent opportunities for Club members and non-members to get involved in tennis.

Matt Gregory and his team undertook the following programs in the year:

Community Programs

- The Huddle – ACE Program
Introduced approximately 30 new local children to tennis through an 8 week program in association with the North Melbourne Football Club, North Melbourne Police, and Royal Park Tennis Club.
- Ladies Tennis Morning
A program designed for mums and ladies to either learn or get back into tennis. This involved both coaching, Match play, and morning tea with our coaches and the Royal Park Tennis Club staff.
- Elderly Program
On Friday afternoons, our coaches visited the Parkville Mercy Centre to conduct modified tennis programs for the elderly.

Club Programs

Matt and his team continued to offer tennis coaching programs for players of all ages and abilities 7 days per week including;

- ANZ Hot Shots
- Cardio Tennis
- Private and semi private lessons
- Group Lessons
- Continued integration of players into RPTC teams at junior and adult level.

Professional Programs

- Singha Grand Slam Experience
16 players from Thailand trained for 1 week at the Royal Park Tennis Club in the lead up to the Australian Open junior tournament. 1 boy and 1 girl competed in the main draw.
Representative players on the Tennis Australia December Showdown nationals.
- 2 boys and 1 girl successfully transitioned into the ITF Pro Tour

Staff Development

- Our coaches participated in professional development seminars including;
 - The Grand Slam Coaches Conference
 - Tennis Australia workshops
 - In house staff development days

Matt's staff comprises 3 female and 5 male full time coaches. All are qualified through Tennis Australia, the ITF, and WTA - ATP retired players association.

Matt and his team thank the Club, management and members for their ongoing support and working together to best represent RPTC in the local community.

Dan Donnelly offered the following programs over the past year:

- Pee Wee tennis 5-7 yr olds
- Adult tennis coaching groups and private lessons
- Junior coaching groups and private lessons
- Junior squads
- School holiday tennis clinics.

Through Dan's coaching he also offered information on Club memberships , court hire , and competitions junior and senior . Coaching services were promoted throughout the area for all levels of coaching prior to Covid.

Due to the Covid pandemic Dan has lost 30% of his client base. Dan is sure that with a return to a 'Covid normal' lifestyle or even better a vaccine, he will return to full capacity by October 2021. It will take several months of promotion of the coaching services to regain his previous numbers.

Dan thanks the Club from Management Committee to Clubhouse and grounds staff for their support of his coaching program in this year in particular. Dan notes that it has been difficult for everyone but the Club has a great resilience and continuity at all levels .

Both Dan and Matt's programs are for all ages and capability levels and have had flow on effects of new members as well as new players for competition (both junior and adult). Some 23 transitioned to membership this year.

We are looking forward to continuing our partnership with Matt and Dan so that we can give the community the best tennis experience Royal Park can offer.

SOCIAL - Maria Keys

The major social events held during the year were:

Double date day

This featured our Juniors' presentation for Season 2 teams, and a festive season gathering. Melbourne's fickle weather intervened, and put a dampner on the get-together, with limited numbers braving the downpours !!

NSNTA Golf Day

Our team participated again in this annual charity day. Some 50 local tennis club golfers and friends enjoyed the opportunity, and our team featured Michael Furey, Nigel Christie, Barry Davis and Rob McRae. Well played!!

Wednesday Night Social Tennis

The popularity of this 2 hourly weekly event has built up over 5 years, with between 12 and 24 players of intermediate and above standard involved. Another 48 new participants joined in with some of the regulars, and enjoyed the round-robin format organised by Kevin Walsh. Due to COVID-19, play ceased from 18 March to 10 June then recommenced from 17 June but closed again from 14 July .

The Club gained \$6,240 in net revenue for 2019/2020, and the total player list from February 2015 increased to 359 including club members. More players each week come from the Club's Meet-up group which had 1608 members listed as at end of June, an increase of 324 on the previous year. The Meet up group also attend Tuesday & Thursday morning social hits and end of the month Sunday afternoon open tennis.

Various Social programs:

These were started as opportunities for members and the general community to reconnect with tennis or join in a casual but organised group hit at a convenient time. Regular sessions were provided for various cohorts, with light refreshments and networking time included to foster interaction and promote Club activities:

- Young Adults (17-25) – Sunday afternoons monthly - average 6 over a 6 month pilot period.
- Sunday afternoon (monthly): round robin format - average 22 attendees over 6 sessions.
- Women's Tuesday morning: 112 participants over 18 weeks averaging 6-7 per week
- Thursday morning mixed: 72 players over 17 weeks averaging 4-5 per week.
- Open Court Sessions: a Tennis Australia initiative with "fun" activities and tennis ball "games" to bring people "back to, or into" tennis. 58 community and club participants over a 3 week period averaging 19 per week

Unfortunately, all social programs had to be suspended in early March because of the Covid19 restrictions

130th Anniversary

Thank you to the workgroup comprising Helen Joyce, Maria Keys, Jason Vochala, Kevin Walsh, Paul White, Betty Wohlers and myself. A special thanks to Kevin for all of his efforts in contacting past members and ensuring a great turnout. More than 220 past and present members, their families and friends attended. Music was provided by the students of the Princes Hill Secondary College and a certificate of recognition was presented by Tennis Victoria. Photo displays via a rolling TV slideshow and several albums were great recollections for attendees to skim through. The Deputy Lord Mayor, Aaron Wood, attended to recognise the Club's contribution to the community.

MEMBERSHIP - Maria Keys

Another strong renewal rate (74% - 351) was reinforced by 17 returning from leave, plus 99 new members. Our overall total reached 486 (+4% on 469 in 2018/19), but some impetus was lost in the March-June Covid restriction period. The male/female ratio changed to 66%/34% (from 64%/36%) with increased male numbers in both adult (+37) and junior (+8) groups. Female numbers remained fairly steady, and juniors maintained a 31% share.

Recruitment trends were quite diverse – adult competition (12), juniors (37) and social (36) - suggesting that our range of playing options is maintaining popularity and supporting our activity levels. Other positive signs are that 13 family groups joined up, while 68 players have stayed with the club for some ten years – thus adding stability and experience to our teams and general operations.

Through our social tennis programs, we have also added to our profile as an inclusive Club, which welcomes all comers, and our Social category is now close to 800. Our strong combination of social, registered and community members continues to demonstrate we are an active, vibrant club with quality, well managed facilities.

TOURNAMENTS/SPECIAL EVENTS - Maria Keys

Twilight Tournament

Wet weather affected this event in November 2019, but a smaller field of 37 players helped organisers to push through with rescheduled matches for both adults and juniors. Most popular again were the Men's singles, and Club members featured in the winners' circle: Michael Prionas (Graded Singles), Michael & Ollie Brock (Graded Doubles), Stuart McCurdy & Nicholas Busuttill (Open Doubles) – a repeat from 2018!.

Club Championships:

These were deferred, then cancelled, due to Covid-19 cutting across the timetable in March 2020.

Junior Classic

A category change to Junior Development Series lifted the interest in this tournament, with 68 players enjoying the round robin format in all 9 events. These included singles and doubles, for Boys and Girls - 8/u, 10/u, 12/u & 14/u, with 100 matches played over 2 days. "Orange" and "green" balls were required for lower age groups. Club members won three of the keenly contested winner medallions - Hugo Johnston, James Grieve and Aria Dodson – all in 12/u singles.



Participant numbers increased 100% from 2019, though boys still dominated overall entrants. That is fairly typical in tournaments currently, and more work is needed to change the trend. Two of our past "Future Leaders" joined a regular band of court "managers" who assisted organizers Carole Houston, Maria Keys and Danni Skiba, and their "maintenance fee" activity is now recorded.

Rafa Nadal Tour Australian Masters Invitational

We hosted this high profile event in January, with Tennis Australia conducting a 4 day tournament involving 32 boys and girls from 4 States, plus India and Japan. Both singles and doubles were contested. The Club benefited both financially and reputation-wise from the opportunity with many favourable comments from visitors/participants.

Seniors Social Round Robin

This annual graded event run with partners Tennis Seniors Victoria attracted 47 players, including 19 Club members. Most were from local suburbs, together with a very loyal group from Frankston! Club members Rob Mcrae and Jennie Day were prominent in the winner's circle, and all enjoyed the tennis, and tasty afternoon tea.

MATCH AND TEAM – Jason Vochala

Night competition continued as the top attraction for senior players, with a total of 41 teams nominated for the two Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday seasons. Results were quite diverse, but we did capture three flags in Spring 2019 (Ladies C Grade 1, Men's C Reserve 4 & D Special).

The Club maintained involvement in Saturday afternoon competition as well, with 3 teams, 1 being successful (OSD A Reserve). Teams also played in Ladies mid-week (NSLTA – Section 4 Winners!) and Metro Masters competitions. All local North Suburban Associations suspended/cancelled Autumn seasons due to Covid restrictions.

Winter Pennant attracted entries for nine teams, with one Masters' (35+), two Women's and six Men's grades. Grading was done, but matches did not start and the season was also cancelled due to Covid-19.

Many thanks to all, and to Team Captains who led the "on court" activity.

JUNIORS: - Jane Collins.

NSJTA Competition:

Season 2 2019 – (Jul to Nov), 17 teams, 103 registered players – A to D Grade 3.

5 of 17 in finals, with 1 winner in Grand Final by 23 games (Boys A Grade 4); D1 Unisex Runner Up.

Season 1 2020 – (Feb to Jun) 15 teams – 91 registered players, with 29 out (3 aged out) plus 13 new players.

A Grade 2 to D Grade 4; 4 Mixed, 1 Boys, 10 Unisex.

Competition was abandoned on the morning of Saturday 14 March, Round 6, due to Covid-19.

At the time, we had 2 of 15 teams in the top 4.

This year was dominated by the impact of Covid-19 and the need to adjust quickly to unfolding information. It was fortuitous that we started the year with a focus on improved communication channels with parents and players, and a larger Junior Committee to support operations. The expanded Junior Committee included roles of:

Junior Coordinator – Jane Collins

Junior Team Selection Coordinator – Dolf La Greca

Saturday Morning Coordinator – Kevin Walsh

Communications and Event Coordinator – Diana Fu

Junior Social Play and Team Practice Coordinator – Michael Dodson

Junior Liaisons – Olivia Amor and Alessia Ieraci

WhatsApp and TeamStuff were trialled as tools for team managers to use with parents. WhatsApp emerged as a favourite - very helpful with a heat out, poor air quality stoppage (due to the bushfires) and then Covid-19. These tools supported, rather than replacing traditional mechanisms like NSJTA's TeamApp or direct email to parents.

Late in 2019 and into 2020 we trialled a Wednesday night social hit, run by parent, Michael Dodson. This was very successful with regular participants and drop ins. We are using this as a way to keep juniors in the game and an alternative when their love of competition tennis is waning.

Finally, with the terrific support from Michael and Diana Fu (parents and members) of FusonIQ, we were able to develop an online registration form, which has been used to take registrations for Season 1 2021.

So while this year has been challenging and not remotely how we imagined it to be, we were able to achieve some positive steps forward, and in 2021 will seek to increase our focus on leveraging the input from the Junior Liaisons and aim to have some Future Leader nominees again in the future.

Thanks to Kevin Walsh and Carole Houston for their considerable help throughout the year and for their crucial support to transition from the experienced hands of Kata Pinter to the new expanded Junior Committee.

FOOD HANDLING STANDARDS – Caryle Demarte

The City of Melbourne has rated our operation as a Category 2 in terms of food handling obligations. This will require some minor renovations to both the bar and kitchen, increased training for all members involved in the preparation of food and ensuring that we have a Food Handling Supervisor identified at the Club.

COMMUNITY SERVICE PARTNERSHIPS - Caryle Demarte

This year we again successfully applied for a number of grants to assist in our role as a community service provider:

- A City of Melbourne Connected Community Grant of **\$1,298** was to provide transport and programs to the Mercy Aged Care Centre and The Huddle. Both programs were suspended because of Covid19.
- Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions **\$1,000** to help with Covid19 expenses.
- Department of Jobs Precincts and Regions Female Participation grant of **\$4,278**.

Finally, with the support of Matt Gregory and Dan Donnelly we provided free cardio tennis, adult coaching and junior coaching programs during Tennis Month. The Club conducted a free open tennis program on the Sunday and Tuesday during the same program and also provided a free social tennis program during Seniors Week.

PLANS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE COMING YEAR

In line with our strategic plan we are continuing to focus on increasing participation and providing a friendly environment by focussing on the following areas:

1. Junior programs that provide a positive experience and connection to the RPTC community, endeavouring to involve more parents and seeking ways of building partnerships with our local schools.
2. Enhancing our social tennis programs to include school age children, and continuing to build on delivering quality tournaments.
3. Use of technology and communications to better engage our Parents, members, users and community; in particular, a redesign of our web site to be more mobile phone friendly.
4. Identify opportunities and build partnerships with local service providers and create new channels to attract participants.
5. Maintain our strong operations so that we remain a viable not-for-profit Club that has a sustainable future.
6. Rebuilding courts 11-13 with the City of Melbourne taking on the role of Project Manager and funding 50% of the cost.

We welcome questions and suggestions at any time regarding where we should be focussing our resources.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

To successfully manage a Club of this size requires a significant effort from many people and I extend our gratitude and appreciation to the following for their support and valuable contribution to the success of our Club:

- Carole Houston, Janice Lacy, Neil Oborn, Greg Kennedy, Kevin Walsh and Natalie Walsh for having again provided excellent management and operation of our activities, court usage and maintenance of our facilities.
- To the members of the Management Committee - Joey Agerholm, Jane Collins, Maria Keys, Troy Knowling, Anthony Malkoun, Kim Summerill and Jason Vochala, a big thank you for your help and support. A special acknowledgement to Joey who is leaving our Club and Victoria to move to Queensland to be near his family. Joey was on our Committee for only one year but made a significant contribution during that time by taking the lead co-ordinator role in conducting our very successful Open Court Sessions. A special thank you Joey because of your enthusiasm, friendship and the difference you made to our Club.
- To the members of the 130th Anniversary workgroup and in particular to Betty Wohlers and Peter Wood for their archiving and photo efforts.
- To all the dedicated members who gave their time and energy to maintenance, tournaments, social and operational activities.
- To the members of our Junior, Match and Team and Tournament Committees for their efforts, and
- To our Coaches, Matt Gregory and Dan Donnelly and their teams for their excellent coaching services to our members and the public and for their support of our Club.

To all members, thank you for your loyalty, participation, encouragement, input and support. We rely on you telling us what your needs and aspirations are for our Club and its facilities and we appreciate being told that what is happening at the club is good or could be better.

Finally, I encourage you to seek opportunities to get involved because it is essential that you and your member friends do your bit to ensure our Club is in a place that provides an enjoyable and fulfilling experience for you, your family and friends and continues to thrive and grow.

Caryle Demarte
PRESIDENT
November 2020