



ROYAL PARK TENNIS CLUB (INC.)

2020/21 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 2020/21 year. It has indeed been another year of unexpected and extraordinary events with the **Covid19** outbreak extending into its second year and impacting 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 \$267,000 (2019/20 \$220,185) resulting in an operating profit of \$104,000 (2019/20 \$32,358) which excludes depreciation, amortisation and interest. Net assets totalling \$474,000 (2019/20 \$397,510).** Most significantly, our result was positively impacted with \$37k in Government support related to Covid19).
- **We received total tennis program grants of \$3,000 (2019/20 \$6,576) during the financial year.**

MEMBERSHIP

- **Membership dipped slightly to 460 (2019/20 was 486). Strong recruitment came from Book-A-Court casuals (50) and families (30) after the mid 2020 lockdown, but the ageing out rule affected junior ranks.**
- **The Club provided members a credit for the period of time competition tennis was suspended and for when the Club was closed because of Covid19.**

MANAGEMENT

- **Carole, Janice, Neil, Greg, Kevin and Natalie continued to be our very effective management team and worked diligently to ensure a well maintained, welcoming and safe environment in full compliance of the Government's guidelines.**

MATCH AND TEAM, JUNIORS, TOURNAMENTS AND CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS

- **80 teams participated in 14 different Association competitions. But frustration was high as matches were suspended or seasons cancelled due to lockdowns at various times.**
- **We held the annual Junior Classic tournament and Club Championships, and supported the Tennis Victoria Platinum Clay Court Championships.**

FACILITIES & MAINTENANCE

- **Our major activities for the year were preparation for the rebuilding of courts 11-13 which commenced in August 2021, plus the City of Melbourne's renovation of the disability toilets and updating of the kitchen and bar to be food preparation compliant.**

SOCIAL

- **Usual gatherings were impractical with social distancing and participant limits. Some organised social tennis sessions/programs were held intermittently and were reasonably well attended.**

COACHING

- **We have continued to enjoy the successful coaching programs operated by Matt Gregory and Dan Donnelly and their teams and were able to provide them with fee discounts to help them through a very difficult 18 months for their businesses.**

COVID19

- **Our Club was shut down for a total of 13 weeks during the financial year.**

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 tried 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:

- 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.**
We have seen many parents of our juniors getting involved in the Club which has made a big difference to the engagement of both in our programs and activities.
At the instigation of the Juniors, the Club provided Hoodies to members at a discount price.
- 2. Enhancing our organised social tennis programs to include school age children, and continuing to build on delivering quality tournaments.**
All organised social programs were disrupted at various times during the past year but we expect to reintroduce them again in early 2022.
- 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.**
The Junior Committee has enhanced its use of technology and improved communications with Parents and members. We have commenced work on reviewing the effectiveness of our web site.
- 4. 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 and Government grants.

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1st July 2020 to 30th June 2021 – Kim Summerill, Treasurer

FY20 was a year of unexpected and extraordinary events, and FY21 was no different. Our financial performance for the year was \$100k better than the budget. This is thanks to considerable state and federal government support along with lower operating costs with the club closed for a good portion of the financial year. Our performance against budget is explained below and in the financial statements.

Cash

Cash balance at 30 June 2021 was \$388k, with \$222k held in our trading account and the balance held in term deposits. Our cash balance increased by \$108k during FY21. This is largely due to receipt of state and federal grants along with increased public use of the courts.

Income

Overall income was \$72k higher than the budget with a number of ups and downs:

- * Court hire fees were \$36k higher than the budget and largely attributed to public court hire
- * Membership revenue was ~10% lower than budget
- * We received \$46.5k in grants, made up of cash flow boost \$10k, Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions \$27k, Vic Health \$3k and Department of Infrastructure \$6k.

Expenses

The Club incurred \$163k of expenses vs a budget of \$191k. Both court and clubhouse maintenance costs for 2021 were lower than budget and prior year. We also made savings vs budget of ~\$4k for lights and water.

Compliance

FY21 compliance activities are up-to-date; BAS's have been lodged and superannuation commitments have been met. Square point of sale (POS) system was implemented during July 2021 in response to a recommendation by the Club auditor. Our general ledger system was changed from MYOB to Xero on 1 July 2021 to support integration with Square.

The **FY21 audit** is complete. The Audit Report and Financial Statements are available for members to review. There were no material management issues noted during the audit.

Payroll and Employees

Award wages for Club employees were adjusted 1 Feb 2021. The next increase will apply from 1 Nov 2021. From 1 Jul 2021 the superannuation guarantee rate increased from 9.5% to 10%.

Other

During the previous financial year the Committee approved the donation of \$250 each to (total \$750):-

- Victorian Bushfire Appeal Trust Fund
- VFBV Volunteer Support & Recovery Account
- Bushfire Emergency Wildlife Victoria.

2021/2022 Budget

The 2021/2022 budget has been approved by the Management Committee.

FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT and MAINTENANCE - Caryle Demarte:

Facility Development:

Courts 11-13 - Discussions and plans were developed with the City of Melbourne who went to Tender and appointed John Barton in early 2021 to undertake the works which commenced in early August 2021 and are anticipated to be completed by late 2021.

Bike path trees - The City of Melbourne completed the removal of the cypress trees along our western boundary line and planted out the area.

Cleaning Contractor - We appointed a Cleaning Contractor to clean the toilets and showers at the main Clubhouse.

Disability Toilet - The City of Melbourne renovated the disability toilet to ensure that we are fully compliant with current standards.

Food Preparation Standards- The City of Melbourne installed a hand washing sink in both the Kitchen and Bar areas and a wet mop trough in the cleaners' store to ensure that we are compliant with the food preparation standards.

The Council replaced an old **water pipe** under the main Clubhouse causeway and repaired the **northern pavilion** after ceiling and wall cracks appeared and a number of the doors became difficult to open.

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 numerous undertook numerous programs in a very interrupted year due to lockdowns and as a result overall numbers of new players were down.

Programs for the year offered to players of all ages and abilities 7 days per week included:

- 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 was cancelled due to Covid restrictions.
- One of Matt's students, Jeremy Beale, won 8 ITF Pro Tour Titles overseas in 2021
- 3 students received T.A. scholarships to the National Development Squad
- Royal Park TC is now a training base for the 13/U boys and girls through the new T.A. Zonal Squad - North
- Ladies Beginners Program was conducted for 8 players two days per week for 2 2021 terms.
- The Huddle ACE program and Mercy Aged Care program did not proceed due to Covid restrictions

Matt's staff comprises five female and six 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's coaching Programs delivered were –

- Pee Wee tennis
- Junior group and squad coaching
- Private lessons junior/adult
- Adult group lessons
- School holiday Tennis Clinics.

Promotions of the coaching services were somewhat curtailed due to the lockdowns throughout the year but will resume in full in the new year.

It was a difficult year for service delivery but in the times I was operating we managed to recruit a large group of juniors and families for membership and competition. I would like to thank the Management Committee for their support regarding reducing the Court Hire costs on resumption - it was truly appreciated.

I would also like to thank Kevin Walsh, Karl Hessian and the other Junior Committee members for their efforts in organising junior team selection and the running of Friday/Saturday NSJTA competition .

Thanks to Carole Houston, Club Manager, and all the maintenance staff for the running and presentation of the club grounds and of course to the Management and General Committee for the overall running of the club.

I'm anticipating a very busy 2022 and look forward to working with everyone in delivering my coaching programs to Royal Park tennis club's members and the public.

SOCIAL - Maria Keys

Restrictions meant that regular social events usually held during the year were largely impractical. Several gatherings were planned at different times, but COVID intervened and caused postponements/cancellations.

Wednesday Night Organised Social Tennis

The sixth year of this popular two hourly weekly event was also affected by COVID lockdowns, with sessions held on just 18 occasions intermittently across the year. However, some 40 new participants registered, and enjoyed the round-robin format organised by Kevin Walsh. The Club gained some \$5,200 in net revenue for 2020/2021, and the total player list from February 2015 increased to 397 including Club members.

Some players each week come from the Club's Meet-up group which had 1738 members listed as at end of June, an increase of 130 on the previous year. The Meet up group also attend Tuesday and Thursday morning social hits and end of the month Sunday afternoon open tennis.

Various Organised 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) – weekly Sunday afternoons during terms 1 and 2 2021.
- Sunday afternoon (monthly): round robin format has been suspended since August 2020.
- Women's Beginner Coaching program ran during terms 1 and 2 but was suspended in July 2021.
- Women's Tuesday morning program merged with the Thursday morning Mixed:

Unfortunately, all such social programs were disrupted with the Covid19 shutdowns in the second half of 2020 and again in early/mid 2021.

MEMBERSHIP - Maria Keys

Whilst a few members were wary of COVID factors, our 72% renewal rate was only down slightly (74% in 2019/2020). Total numbers reached 460 (v. 486 last year) made up of 335 continuing, 89 new, and 16 returnees, but there were some quite different trends. The majority of new comers joined in July and October as lockdowns eased, and some 50 were social recruits via Book A Court. Another 30 were from family groups, which is a positive sign of interest in the sport and its benefits.

With competition options largely cancelled, very few cited that as their reason for joining up. Unfortunately, our organised social programs were also suspended, so almost no recruits via that avenue. But many long-term members stayed, and we have some 85 with between 5-10 years continuity.

There were several shifts in categories too - the male/female ratio changed to 68%/32% (from 66%/34%), while Junior participation dropped noticeably (-32) partly due to ageing out criteria. However, members appreciated the “no play” allowance that was made in recognition of the 13 weeks lockdown closures, and membership fees have also been held steady in 2021/22 to encourage continued interest and support for the club.

TOURNAMENTS/SPECIAL EVENTS - Maria Keys

Platinum Victorian Clay Court Championships

Tennis Victoria conducted the Clay Court Championships from the 6-10 April 2021 at our facilities. This was a highly successful event which benefited the Club with increased income and enhanced reputation.

Club Championships:

Participation increased slightly this year, with 100 entries from 73 players contesting 11 events, excluding all Women's events due to lack of entries. There were many quality matches, with strong competition in the Men's Open, President's and Vets categories. Several featured extended deuce games and long rallies.

Wet weather complicated match scheduling, but all events were eventually completed. Highlights were:

- Round robin formats being used in Mixed Doubles events to increase participation;
- Open Singles: previous champion Tom McGrath took out the Men's title;
- Open Vets: a new winner -Tim Callanan- broke Rob Mcrae's extended hold on the event;
- Multiple titles won by Tom McGrath, Tim Callanan, and Max Eissmann.



It was encouraging to see some new faces among the players, and “thank you” to organizers – Carole Houston and Maria Keys. Also Kevin Walsh and Vignesh Wilkinson, who ran a separate series for Juniors, with the aim of encouraging more participants.

Junior Classic

COVID-19 was an influential factor in this annual tournament, held over two days of Labour Day weekend. Player entries were very slow, but a sudden rush in the closing stage meant 51 local juniors participated. Round-robin format was used in most events to give players in an opportunity to mix and test their skills. Star attraction again was the 10 & Under Boys “green ball” contest, and the winner medallions were very popular.

Club member *James Grieve* won a very close tussle in the Boys 12 Section 1 singles.

And the tournament was again supported with sponsorship from Carlton Football Club.

Overall, the tournament ran well, gaining many favourable comments from players and parents.

The trend of low participation by girls continued with 13 registrants, although 3 events did have sufficient entries; 38 boys contested in four events. This apparently is not unusual currently with competitive events, and is a trend we all need to work on changing for the better.



A regular band of court managers helped with the success of the tournament, in support of organizers Carole Houston, and Maria Keys. Many thanks to Jacob Bau, Kevin Dalach, Alan Frigerio and Russell Grigg.

Other:

Several annual events were not held/hosted due to COVID related lockdowns and associated restrictions:- *Seniors Social Round Robin; Twilight Tournament; Rafa Nadal Tour Australian Masters Invitational.*

MATCH AND TEAM – Jason Vochala

Competition team tennis was also challenged by the on again/off again scenario created by COVID-19 restrictions – curfews; lockdowns and bans on community sport. The 2020 Pennant season was cancelled, as was the entire Spring 2020 Season, much to the disappointment of all local Associations and players after teams were entered and graded. NSNTA, NSTA, Metro Masters (Mens) and NSLTA were affected, but all involved bounced back for the Autumn 2021 Season, with Guidelines issued for clubs and players in regards to COVID requirements.

Positive response from resilient and keen players meant we had 16 night teams, two Saturday teams, and one for each of Ladies Midweek, and Metro Masters for that season. Despite difficulties, our players persisted, and we had two premiers – B Special 3 Men’s (NSNTA) and Metro Masters (Section 2) just prior to the next lockdown. Our five Pennant teams were not so lucky – 2021 finals were cancelled.

Many thanks to players and team Captains who made such strong efforts to support the Club and Associations during what has been a tough and frustrating year.

JUNIORS: - Jane Collins.

NSJTA Competition:

Season 2 2020 – (Jul to Nov) 14 teams – 90 registered players (31 girls; 59 boys. However, due to COVID lockdown, the season was unable to start as planned in mid-July and was then eventually cancelled in full in September.

Season 1 2021 – (Feb to Jun) 12 teams – 77 registered players (24 girls; 51 boys) including two from another Club across A Grade 2 to D Grade 4. Five teams finished in the top 4 for the season, with four finishing as Runners-Up. This was a significant improvement on the previous season and reflective of the efforts of Karl Hessian and Kevin Walsh to improve the allocation of children into the right grading.

This year continued with our larger Junior Committee to support operations with new parents joining and some exiting. The Junior Committee included roles of:

Junior Coordinator – Jane Collins (continuing from 2020)

Junior Team Selection Coordinator – Karl Hessian (commencing in 2021)

Saturday Morning Coordinator – Kevin Walsh (retired mid 2021)

Communications and Event Coordinator – Cate Johnston (commencing in 2021)

Junior Social Play and Team Practice Coordinator – Michael Dodson (continuing from 2020)

Junior Liaisons – Alessia Ieraci (continuing from 2020); Hugo Johnston (commencing in 2021)

We acknowledge Dolf La Greca and Diana Walsh who handed over responsibilities at the end of 2020.

After our trial of new communication methods in 2020, extensive usage of WhatsApp continued in 2021 with messages able to be distributed quickly through to Team Managers, and from Team Managers to parents. This method supported rather than replaced traditional mechanisms like NSJTA's TeamApp or direct email to parents. In addition, we increased the frequency of Juniors' newsletters and greatly improved the 'look and feel' under Cate Johnston's creative eye.

Following feedback from our Junior Liaisons, a key area of focus this year was promotion of a safe playing environment. We used our regular parents and players newsletter to emphasise the NSJTA's code of conduct and sought to empower and inform players and parents about appropriate and inappropriate behaviour and what to do if conduct concerns were identified. This reinforced similar messages from the NSJTA during season 1.

The Wednesday night social hit (trialled in late 2019 and run by parent, Michael Dodson) has continued to be very popular. The new online registration form was used to take registrations for Season 1 and 2021.

Tennis Victoria recommenced their **Future Leader program**, and we were delighted to nominate Aleena Noor Raziq (C Grade) for the Club's scholarship; we look forward to supporting her special voluntary club project over the next six months.

We acknowledge the extensive contribution by Kevin Walsh over several years in his role as Saturday Morning Coordinator. He also provided guidance and support to all Junior Committee members on a vast array of matters beyond this role which was incredibly beneficial. Kevin retired from this role at the end of season 1 2021. Many thanks also to Carole Houston for her continued help throughout the year to all parents and players, but especially to the Junior Committee.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- The Club became a member of Good Sports Australia, the largest community health sports program funded by both the Commonwealth and State Government.
- We participated in the Tennis Victoria Gender Equality Pilot Project which included a survey of our members. We received positive feedback and a \$2000 grant towards our programs.
- In response to a request from our Juniors, the Club organised a range of hoodies, which are available to all members at a discounted price, and received a \$1000 grant from VicHealth towards the cost of the uniforms.

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. The Huddle program and the Aged Care program were suspended because of Covid19. We shall be reimbursing the City of Melbourne some of the funds.
- Various State and Federal COVID related grants of some \$45,000 helped off-set related expenses.
- Last financial year we received from the Department of Jobs Precincts and Regions Female Participation grant of \$4,278. The coaching program was conducted during terms 1 and 2 but was disrupted in terms 3 and 4 because of Covid19. We anticipate completing the program in terms 1 and 2 of 2022.
- We received \$3000 from VicHealth for a social program for 17-25 year olds. The program commenced after Easter on each Sunday afternoon until the end of term 2. We experienced low attendance and will recommence the program in 2022.
- A \$6090 Federal Government Sustainability Grant allowed us to install 15 additional solar panels so that we can maximize the use of our battery storage capacity and save on our energy bills.

PLANS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE COMING YEAR

In line with our strategic plan we are continuing to focus on increasing participation, and building our Club for a sustainable future while providing a friendly and inclusive environment for all by focussing on the following areas:

1. Re-engaging with our membership base and building our participation in competition and social tennis
2. Junior programs that provide a positive experience and connection to the RPTC community,
3. Rebuilding and enhancing our organised social tennis programs to include school age children, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups while continuing to build on delivering quality tournaments.
4. Using technology to better engage our members, users and the community,
5. Identify opportunities and build partnerships with local service providers and create new channels to attract participants,
6. Maintain our strong operations so that we remain a viable not-for-profit Club that has a sustainable future.
7. Complete the rebuilding of courts 11-13.

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. I would like to take the opportunity to offer a big “thank you” to Janice who is leaving us at the end of October after 6.5 years as our Member Services Manager. Janice has played a pivotal role in the development, promotion and delivery of our organised social programs and the hiring of our facilities.
- To the members of the Management Committee - Jane Collins, Maria Keys, Troy Knowling, Anthony Malkoun, Kim Summerill and Jason Vochala, a big thank you for your help and support.
- 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 your 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 and be part of this great community Club and help us to continue to provide an enjoyable and fulfilling experience for you, your family and friends so that we continue to thrive and grow.

Caryle Demarte

PRESIDENT

November 2021