

RLTA President's Annual Report 2006

All is relatively well in the world of the Redlands Lawn Tennis Association. This past year sees our membership at close to 500 of which about 100 are juniors, which in itself bodes well for the future of the club. Our facilities are the envy of most clubs in south-east Queensland and, in my view, our members include some of the nicest people that you are ever likely to meet.

Highlights of 2006

Administration

From an administrative point of view, there have been some subtle but very significant changes at the RLTA in 2006. Our full time club administrator role (Betty McCoy) was cut back to a part-time position (Secretary/Manager), which is largely responsible for the site management and club activities. In conjunction with this change, our club coach, Jani Kroyherr, and his Universal Tennis team have now taken full responsibility for all Pro-Shop activities (including court hire and collection of membership fees, etc) and for running the junior fixture program. Despite a few teething problems, the new arrangements seemed to work out, with Betty finally getting the opportunity to come up for breath and even managed an overseas holiday in April. The smiling new faces who helped Jani out in the Pro-Shop included Penny Rogers and Danielle Green. Jani also depended heavily on parents to help with the junior fixtures and thanks must go to Di Green, Julie Ward, Wasiela Weary, and Andrew Ross for their wonderful efforts in keeping the kids on track and the fixtures on time.

Volunteers

Our volunteer groundsmen Keith Collyer and Pat Cleary continue to do a wonderful job of keeping the site clean and the courts in good shape. This year they have been joined by another volunteer in the form of Bev Hogan, who helped Betty in the office with the book-keeping, banking and membership functions. On behalf of the club I wish to thank them all for their efforts.

Site Redevelopment

As part of the larger long-term plan to redevelop our site and its facilities, there have been quite a few subtle enhancements at the centre this year, with many enthusiastic members helping out in working bees to clean the exterior walls and windows of the new clubhouse, paint the remaining better brick walls and umpire stands various shades of Griffin green, and erect new shade sails at the western end of the clubhouse. For those members who have something positive to say, there is even a new suggestion box at the clubhouse entrance (also painted Griffin green). Special thanks must go to committee member Reg Griffin for his efforts and persistence in ensuring that many of these worthwhile projects were completed on time and in a professional manner. The club is also indebted to him for constructing magnificent new Club Champions honour boards destined for display within the clubhouse.

After a couple of attempts at getting it right, we now have a functional drain at the western entrance of our complex and some high-tech water control devices between courts 2 & 3 (the "Keithy-baby" bump). As a result, our clubhouse is no longer in danger of flooding and, of course, it has hardly rained since.

The Veterans and in particular, Yvonne Willson, deserve a special mention for their fund-raising efforts during the past two years with the aim of buying new furniture for the centre.

Their efforts so far have not only resulted in the new portable BBQ, but also new wooden tables for our verandas (thanks to the building skills of Bill Turner).

While we now enjoy excellent and energy-efficient lights on all eight courts, we have for some time had recurring problems with those lights that were installed a few years ago on courts 5, 6 and 7. Finally the problem has been resolved and the supplier has admitted that they were part of a deficient batch and has now replaced the inner workings of them all on those courts.

At the end of 2006, courts 2 and 5 have both been completely re-surfaced with synthetic grass (Omni super 10) at great expense to the club. The fact that we were in a financial position to do this after the major expenses of clubhouse and lighting redevelopment in the past couple of years is further evidence of sound financial management at the club. We now have in place separate accounts to plan and cater for long-term asset management in relation to courts and clubhouse. Special thanks should go to our Treasure Bill Tapper and his fastidious assistant Reg Griffin for their efforts in this regard, as well as a special mention to the Mid-week Ladies club whose timely financial contribution to the court re-surfacing was most welcome.

However, at this stage, there are still two issues that we have yet to resolve: the first of these is the ultimate fate of the original clubhouse and the second is the problem of sun reflection from the new clubhouse roof.

In the case of the original clubhouse, the plan was for its demolition as soon as practical after the completion of the new clubhouse. However, both the cost of that demolition and the unforeseen need for additional ground storage space have meant that we have been re-thinking its fate. The existing roof leaks badly and we are faced with the prospect of spending significant funds to replace the roof (about the same as to demolish and remove it) or to spend even more significant funds to re-roof and refurbish the old clubhouse in the style of the new clubhouse so that it is more aesthetically integrated into the site. It is not something that warrants quick action without all the implications of those actions being fully considered and explored. In the mean time, some cosmetic work has been undertaken to soften the image of the old clubhouse (trees planted at the eastern end and lattice work and plants added between the posts at the western end) and a few bandaids used to restrict the water leaking in during wet weather.

In the case of the sun-reflection, we have attempted to minimise its impact with shade cloth erected vertically on tennis court fences (courts 2 & 3) but with very limited success. A cost-effective solution has yet to be found.

Tennis – Club Championships

This year for the first time in several years, the club again conducted annual club championships. The reason that they had been in hibernation for a few years was that there was insufficient interest in playing tournaments that were conducted on weekends. The change to a night-time round-robin format seems to have re-kindled interest and there were sufficient entries to conduct both A and B division events for singles, doubles and mixed doubles. The winners for 2006 were:

A Mens Singles:	Steve Parr
B Mens Singles:	Austin Ward
A Mens Doubles:	Jani Kroyherr & Damian Gunn
B Mens and Ladies Doubles:	Janelle Spittle & Jo Brooks
A Mixed Doubles:	Steve Parr & Janelle Spittle
B Mixed Doubles:	Alex Muga & Lynley Taylor

The RLTA conducted its Under 16 Junior Club Championships on Sunday 15th October, with club coach Jani Kroherr the tournament director and referee. It is the first time in several years that this tournament has been conducted and it was very well supported with sufficient entries for three events, A & B Singles & A Doubles, with boys and girls competing together. Sean Anderson claimed the Junior Singles crown while Mikayla McKenna and her partner Daniel Ferre claimed the Junior Doubles title. The B Grade singles was won by Jayk Pascoe.

Tom Ferguson Shield

On 13th August, 12 men and 12 ladies represented the RLTA at the annual Tom Ferguson Shield match between Redlands, Gold Coast, Beenleigh and Beaudesert. After winning the shield in 2005 for the first time ever, our team was unable to defend it this time around. However, we did finish in second place behind Beenleigh, who were far too good for everyone on the day.

Redland Bay Challenge

On 27th August it was our club's turn to host Redland Bay in what has become the local derby with the Rosie Dunn Memorial Shield and a few egos at stake. A total of 28 players from each club participated in teams of 4, the players of which were all ranked to keep the tennis as even as possible. After the RLTA gave them a tennis lesson last year, Redland Bay returned the favour this time round, winning 28 set to 13.

Redland Bay Junior Challenge

This was our first junior challenge match with the Redland Bay club and was organised by the two coaches from the respective clubs. It was held at Redland Bay on 12th August and was fun for all. Redland Bay proved to be the better team on the day winning 28 sets to 8. Coach Jani Kroyherr hopes to include Beenleigh in these junior challenge matches in 2007.

Club Fixtures

Club fixtures remain strong with Monday and Thursday night competitions running at full capacity. The Saturday A Grade fixtures have dropped from eight to seven teams and are now using just three courts each week. At the same time, the Veterans social tennis of a Saturday afternoon is growing rapidly and has been making full use of the additional available court. The junior fixtures in 2006, under the guidance of Jani Kroyherr and Universal Tennis, were divided into three separate divisions which were played on three separate days (Wednesday and Friday afternoons and Saturday mornings). This new structure provided more flexibility for juniors who played multiple sports and also allowed more room for growth in junior numbers given the limited number of courts.

Thank you

I would like to thank all of the RLTA committee for their support in 2006, especially the honorary secretary Bruce Young and honorary Treasurer Bill Tapper for their help in keeping the club functioning and the bills paid. I would also like to add that it has been an absolute pleasure working with our efficient secretary/manager Betty McCoy, Jani and his Universal Tennis team (Penny and Danielle), and our own team of volunteers (Keith Collyer, Pat Cleary and Bev Hogan).

Ian Somers

President RLTA.