



Redland Lawn Tennis Association Inc

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RLTA President's Annual Report 2009

When I look back on 2009 at the RLTA, I can't help but feel that while there might well be scope for improving a few things and growing our club, we are currently in a very good place. Our new site managers/coaches Dean and Sophia Toparis have proven to be a great success; our membership numbers have increased significantly for the first time in a number of years; we have increased the number of tennis activities/tournaments during the year; the junior fixtures have been strengthened; the casual court hire is up significantly; our financial position is sound; our court maintenance and replacement program is up to date; and our longer-term redevelopment plans remain on track, with the completion of refurbishments to our former clubhouse, a new fence for court 5, a new base and carpet for court 4 and progress on our plans for an additional court 9.

Administration

With the appointment of Dean & Sophia Toparis as joint coach/managers, our administrative structure has seen important changes from the previous few years. The Toparis team have taken responsibility for site management, managing court hire, fee collection and the junior fixture program as well as running a coaching program with more than 300 budding tennis players. With the Pro-shop open for business for extended hours this year, and with Sophia turning the collection of casual court hire fees into an art form, we have seen a significant increase in court revenue. The introduction of EFTPOS and a new cash register have been significant factors in making for a very smooth and efficient operation and relationship between the Pro-shop and the club.

The administration of the more club-related activities still requires a team of motivated members who volunteer their time and skills to ensure that the club functions smoothly. Our RLTA Secretary Betty McCoy still manages the membership database, ensures that our bills are all paid on time and quietly, behind the scenes without any fuss, just makes sure that everything gets done. Our Treasurer Bill Tapper still makes sure we have enough money to pay the bills while his assistant Treasurer Reg Griffin prepares the budget for the forth-coming year (and keeps Bill on his toes). Keith Collyer (caretaker) and Pat Cleary (groundsman) ensure that the courts remain in tip-top condition and the site is kept tidy and clean. Bruce MacLean has done a wonderful job of keeping members informed through monthly newsletters, while Yvonne Willson (Raffles) and Tony Barton (Bar) have made huge contributions in their own right. On behalf of the club I wish to thank them all for their efforts.

Fixture coordinators still ensure that our various tennis activities run smoothly and I would like to take this opportunity to thank these individuals on behalf of the club: Ray & Eleanor Lambley (Monday night), Betty McCoy and Di Green (Thursday night), Kym Reimers (Saturday), Maureen Hilzinger and Margaret Bird (mid-week ladies), Bruce MacLean (Vets), Tony Barton (Tuesday night social) and of course the coaches and parents who help Dean and Sophia with the junior fixtures.

Courts

As part of our re-development plans, court 4 has now had the same treatment that was dished out to court 1 two years ago. In January 2010, the old synthetic grass on court 4 was removed and the decomposed granite court surface was then replaced with compacted road base with a 1% slope from south to north, and a new synthetic grass surface was then laid over the top. Net posts and fences were adjusted to accommodate the new court contour. At the same time, the rusting old fence on court 5 has been replaced with black poly-coated chain wire in line with the other courts.

Tennis and coaching activities have increased over the year to the extent that the court complex was at capacity on at least 8 times each week prompting the progress towards an addition court to be

located at the north-east corner of our lease area. However, because of the changes to the former clubhouse and to preserve two mature Poinciana trees, we are hoping for a minor extension of our lease area to accommodate the court. To this end, we have been participating in a reappraisal of the Master Plan for the Showgrounds. If all goes according to the plan we have submitted to Council, we may be in a position to build court 9 in the latter half of 2010.

Clubhouse and Grounds

Our facilities at the RLTA remain the envy of all other centres in the region and are something of which all members should be proud. But to keep it that way has been dependent on the time and effort of many volunteers, from those who have cleaned the clubhouse walls to those who have erected shade cloth or painted fences. Thank you to all those members who have contributed in the past year. However, one task where we did employ a professional was in cleaning the clubhouse tiled floor and it would be fair to say that the result was better than we had all expected, bringing it back to its original glory.

Another significant addition to the site has been the installation of security cameras to help monitor activities on courts that are not easily visible from the Pro-shop. Some of the increase in casual court hire revenue can be attributed to the ease with which it can now be monitored.

Tennis – Club Championships

This year the club championships were conducted over a couple of weekends in August. The event was largely organised by the new coach/managers but special thanks must go to Justin Schneider who helped run the program. For the first time in many years, we have a Ladies Singles Champion as well as that of a Mens Champion. The winners for 2009 were:

Mens Singles Champion:	Matt Sticher
Ladies Singles Champion:	Melissa Gibb
B Mens Singles:	Ben Parr
Mens Doubles:	Andrew Crane & Justin Schneider
Womens Doubles:	Tania Carroll & Maureen Hilzinger
Mixed Doubles:	Les Appolloni and Kylie Steele
Junior Singles Champion:	Chris Copley
Junior Boys Doubles:	Hamish Cameron & Wade Fraser
Junior B (Unisex) Singles:	Courtney Sorrensen
Junior B Doubles:	Andrew Fowler & Layton
Junior C Doubles:	Mitchell Byrom & Ryan McIlhatton

Tom Ferguson Shield

The inter-district competition for the Tom Ferguson Shield took place at our courts on Sunday 23rd August. Sixteen of Redland's finest tennis players matched their skills, guile and cunning with the best from Beenleigh, Gold Coast and Beaudesert and we finished a creditable third out of the four.

It was a fantastic day with wonderful weather and, thanks to a host of RLTA volunteers, our guests all enjoyed it immensely. Firstly, on arrival, they were suitably impressed with the finely groomed courts presented to them, thanks to the 6:00 am efforts of Keith and his offside Pat who quietly go about their business when most of us are still in bed. Only then to be greeted by Lena, Maureen and the ladies from mid-week who offered tea, coffee and the most delicious cakes, scones, biscuits to anyone who walked in. Supporting them in the BBQ lunch efforts were Mende, Shane and Kym, who all thought they were just coming down to watch some of the best tennis that has been seen in the Redlands for some time. Sergeant Yvonne was there to collect the playing fees, to make sure no one ate too much and that there was enough to go round, to make sure that the kitchen was left clean and tidy, and of course, that all those beautiful new chairs of ours were accounted for and put away at the end of the day. On behalf of the club and the players, thank you all.

As to the tennis, Gold Coast were the eventual victors of the Tom Ferguson Shield for 2009, winning narrowly from Beenleigh (it came down to the second last set of the day) and Redlands, with Beaudesert a distant fourth. The level of play in the first division was exceptionally high and late in the day, there was still a large crowd gathered to watch the last couple of sets being played by the best players from the Gold Coast and Beenleigh.

The format of this annual inter-district competition has been a popular and successful one for some time and there has been some proposals for us to hold a similar annual inter-club competition for the juniors from within the Redlands (Wynnum, Redland Bay and Redlands). Let's hope that we can get as much support from our parents and club members to make such an event a reality.

Redland Bay Challenge

The Rosie Dunn Shield (Redland Bay Challenge) which was cancelled in July due to rain, took place at the Redland Bay Courts on Sunday 30th August. It's a pity it didn't rain again as we were convincingly beaten. In our defence, a lot of our best players were unable to take part due to injuries, but congratulations to Redland Bay on their win.

Special Olympics

On Sunday 6th September, our club hosted the Tennis Inter-Regional Competition as part of the Special Olympics and players from Brisbane, Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast Regions all participated. Special Olympics is an International year-round program of sports training and competition for individuals with an intellectual disability. It is dedicated to empowering them to become physically fit, productive and respected members of the community through this sports training and competition. Thank you to Dean, Sophia and the group of volunteers who donated their time to ensure such a worthwhile event was successful.

Redland Shire Perpetual Tennis Shield

This event was held Sunday 16th August, and as was the case for the Club Championships was held in beautiful conditions. This annual event is part of Seniors Week in the Redlands and is open to all players over 50. As usual, the ladies' names were drawn from a lucky dip box, Lynn Howe's name was drawn to partner Alec Muga and they ended up sharing the winners podium. Alec won 25 games which was 4 ahead of his nearest rival Ray Lambley, and Lynn had 22 games, just 1 game in front of Lena Bandiera and last years winner Val Watkins. Redlands Mayor Cr. Melva Hobson presented the winners with the Redland City Council Perpetual Shield, a small trophy, a bottle of wine and a meal voucher worth \$30 from Fasta Pasta and Hogs Breath Café.

Family Doubles Day

This was a new initiative of the Toparis team and proved very popular with the members. A total of 48 family pairings contested four separate divisions and it may well become a permanent fixture on the RLTA calendar as a result. Speaking of results, David & Daniel Wilson won the 1st Division, John & Chris Day the 2nd, Mick & Joel McPhail the 3rd, and Adrian & Katrina Dalglish the 4th Division.

Club Fixtures

Club fixtures remain strong with Monday and Thursday night competitions running at close to full capacity. The Saturday A Grade fixtures continue to use three courts each week, with the Vets social tennis of a Saturday afternoon making full use of the remaining five courts.

The junior fixtures went through a consolidation phase in the first half of the year under the new coach/manager administration. Once on a firmer footing with tighter rules and better commitment from parents, the competition expanded significantly in the latter half of 2009. With the addition of an integrated competition with Sheldon juniors, the fixtures were organised into six separate divisions over four days of the week and are going from strength to strength.

Ian Somers

President RLTA.