

Wangaratta Lawn Tennis Croquet & Pickleball Club – President’s Report Saturday 12th October 2024

To all our 300+ members of our great club,

You will by now all be aware, as per our last AGM passed resolution, that we have formerly registered our new name as Wangaratta Lawn Tennis Croquet and Pickleball Club, which we have assigned the acronym WLTC. This name reflects the future of our great club which incorporates our three key sport offerings as we continue our 100-year heritage. We also have re-designed our logo which maintains the use of our traditional colors and was circulated in a recent club newsletter.

I would like to thank everyone once again for your support, co-operation and contribution to the health and sustainability of our great club. It is particularly pleasing to see the integration of Croquet into our club. I would like to thank Adrian and Max for their understanding and willingness to support the varying demands of both croquet and tennis throughout the year as part of their curator roles at the club.

The season started with a potential Merriwa Park flood risk due to a levee bank leakage, fortunately this did not impact our season kick off. I would like to acknowledge the support from our Mayor, Dean Rees, Councilor for Sport and Recreation, Harvey Benton, and the council staff for their ongoing understanding and support that kept our season on track. We have regular meetings with Council representatives to ensure we maintain a strong collaborative relationship.

I would like to thank the Committee for their diligent work over the last 12 months. Their contribution has supported our 5 key pillars of sustainability and success outlined in the following dot points:

- **Core operations** – effective & diverse committee, highly capable curator, high standard grass courts, well organized and flexible offerings for tennis, croquet & pickleball.
- **Culture, values and community reputation** – welcoming, strong relationships with the Council, Tennis Vic, Local media & broader community.
Club values as follows:
 - Respect for all
 - Integrity in our relationships
 - Family friendly, social & fun
 - Progressive
 - Professionalism & compliant
 - Inclusive
- **Relevance and sustainability** – strong membership base, strong junior participation, well organized competitions, events and tournaments
- **Governance and Administration** – Maintain financial viability, policies, procedures & guidelines, compliance with government requirements, clear direction and leadership, effective communication within the club, recognition, respect & success of all subgroups within the club with open & formal feedback channels.
- **Facilities** – Well maintained tools, equipment & facilities, security of water, prioritized improvement projects.

Reflecting on the last pillar (Facilities), we raised money for a defibrillator more than 10 years ago. Unfortunately, this was recently required but proved lifesaving when one of our members recently suffered a cardiac arrest on court. We are very grateful for the outstanding resuscitation by a group of players led by Brian Scobie, John Brunner and guest player Travis McDonald, but others not mentioned played vital roles – great group effort. Dr Michael Falkenberg will again provide his CPR and defib training to members early this season.

We would like to thank Inland Rail Corp for a grant for a new defibrillator for \$2200. This has been installed on the verandah, is brand new and should see us re-equipped for such future emergencies for another 10 years.

I would like to formally thank our club coach, Doug Smith, for his contribution to the club over many years and wish him and his family well as Doug takes on his new Paramedic role in Bundaberg, Queensland.

As a result, we have worked closely with Tennis Victoria to create an Expression of Interest document and associated advertisement that has gone on our club social and the Tennis Vic/Tennis Aust website. I would like to thank Michelle, Michael and Sam for their support during this process. The response was very encouraging and after short listing three outstanding candidates, we have chosen Greg Duns as our new Club Tennis Coach.

Special thanks to Premier Panels for their last **four** years of sponsorship of our biggest fund raiser, the annual “Premier Panel” Australia Day tournament. The last tournament in Jan 2024 was perhaps our most successful so far. This event’s income helps keep our membership fees at a modest level and enables us to continue to improve our facilities. Special thanks again to Frank, who does an incredible job, and all the other volunteers that pitched in and helped ensure the Tournament was such a success. I encourage all members to find ways to volunteer at next year’s 99th running of the Australia Day tournament as well as other areas around the club as many hands make light work and we don’t want to burn out our regular volunteers. Plus, special thanks to Mike Lairson for the BBQ ribs dinner, which was again a huge success.

Our NE Veterans tournament(s) bring in 40 to 50 players from the region who always enjoy our hospitality and lawn court facility. These two tournaments return a small but important contribution to our Club income. Thank you sincerely to Gapsted Wines and club member Bob Morrison (Morrison’s of Glenrowan wines) for providing wine used as prizes respectively for each tournament, maximizing income from these events. Thanks for the volunteer contributions for catering. Thanks to Kevin Callahan and Michael Falkenberg (our vets reps) who organised these events. Thanks to our hard-working and passionate committee and other volunteers that ensure we have a well maintained and well managed club. Our grass court surface continues to be of a very high standard with tennis and croquet played on the grass throughout all 12 months of the year. Many thanks to Max and Adrian, who have developed a robust seasonal plan to keep the courts in great condition.

A special thank you to our committee portfolio holders, the amount of volunteer work performed behind the scenes by our Vice President; Leanne McInnes, Secretary; Michael Falkenberg, Treasurer; Kevin Callahan, Greens Committee; Max McAuliffe; Match Committee; Frank Harris, Croquet; Heather Goulbin and Anne Dodd, Junior Co-Ordinator; Michelle Flynn, Sam Allen, Matt Sammon, and Jono Koop and Twilight Co-Ordinator; Steve Russell and Shaun Ablazej deserve to be acknowledged with lots of great contributions from all. Also special thanks to Mason Scholes who is the Club’s Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) – thank you Mason for volunteering for this

important role. David Godkin continues to produce periodic articles and photos highlighting Club events – thanks so much David.

Thank you to Tennis Vic, Tennis Australia and especially Jo Maples (our local Rep) for ongoing support, guidance and assisting our governance.

A program to drive women and girl participation in tennis – pitched to lapsed and new players was carried out throughout last season, championed one of our new Life members, Mandy Allen. Special thanks to Mandy and her assistants in driving this initiative.

I would also like to give a special mention to Dr Michael Falkenberg, who in addition to his secretarial duties has again worked tirelessly over the last 12 months on numerous grant applications where we have secured several grants. Thank you, Michael, your support is much appreciated.

We continue to look at ways to satisfy current member tennis needs and provide a variety of ways to attract new members which are the key to a sustainable club. We now have many ways to enjoy a tennis experience at our club, some of these are listed below:

- Saturday morning Junior competition thanks to Michelle, Sam, Matt and Jono
- Saturday Aggregate (Thanks to Frank, Phil and Max)
- Various twilight competitions (Thanks to Shaun and Steve for main comp)
- Australia Day – Premier Panels tournament (Thanks to Frank and co and Premier Panels for sponsorship plus Mandy & Matt for intergenerational round robin)
- Numerous Veterans Tournaments (Thanks to Kev and Michael)
- Hot shots (Thanks to our club coach; Doug Smith)
- Club Championships
- Coaching with Doug and the team
- Usage for Regional Schools including all abilities special schools.
- Social night tennis (Thanks to Sam and Sabrina)
- Our program to encourage more female participation (Mandy and team)
- Georgia Allen for her help with our social media promotions

Congratulations to our Club Champions Sam Allen and Michelle Hill. Also, congratulations to all doubles and singles grade senior and junior winners.

Special thanks to Alan Busk for his support in cleaning the clubhouse.

Quality Inn Gateway Hotel are proudly announced as the new naming rights sponsor for our January 2025, 99th Australia Day Tournament. Johansen Insurance will also be a major sponsor of the event.

I would also ask that all members encourage others to get into tennis and come down and enjoy our wonderful facility as new members are key to the growth and prosperity of our club.

In closing, I would like to thank you all for your support, friendship and competition during the 23/24 season. We are looking forward to the 2024/25 season.



Barry Sullivan

President – Wangaratta Lawn Tennis Club