
PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to Northcote Tennis Club's 2024 AGM.

This year has been another busy one for the committee, marked by several changes in club management. Although change can be intimidating, it often brings more positive outcomes than negative ones.

Jacinda Bowring, who had been with the club for five years, resigned before Christmas. Although we were very disappointed to see her go, we are fortunate to have welcomed Kath Johnson, who has adeptly stepped into the role with support from the committee and Deanne.

There were a few changes of the committee over the year with Sarah Stratford and Anna Gibbs stepping down and Grant Borrie stepping in as Communications Officer and Andrew Spence as Junior Convenor.

Last year, I mentioned that the club's constitution needs to be reviewed and updated by 2026. This process is still underway with Tennis New Zealand, which plans to roll out the new template this September. The club committee will discuss it, and members will vote on it at next year's AGM.

Facilities

At the last AGM, I mentioned that we were developing a Facility Plan to manage the financial aspects of the club's chattels, court surface care, and building maintenance. This plan has been completed, along with a maintenance log for annual updates. Graeme Meachen is working a few hours a week to help the committee maintain the grounds and courts, with larger tasks being outsourced.

Thank you to Marian for her unrelenting maintenance of the club's gardens. Our club gardens are the envy of other clubs, and your hard work has made them a true asset to our community.

The date for the annual working bee has been set, and the list of jobs will be posted soon. The committee encourages all members to contribute in some way towards the upkeep of the club.

This year, we replaced the damaged windbreaks on courts 1 and 2, which have made a significant difference, especially along the pathway to the club.

Courts 1-4 have had a commercial refurbishment including relaying of the infill, sweeping to lift the turf fibres and a Chem bomb to remove and prevent moss, mould and algae. This refurbishment will be repeated twice a year to ensure a longer life of our court surfaces. It is also important that regular removal of debris on the courts occurs, and this is something that all club members can help Graeme with.

The new gates, with digital access, are nearly ready to be installed. This will allow non-members easier access online using the Club Spark booking system. The majority of these costs for the gates has been covered by grant funding from the Lion Foundation and Milestone Foundation.

The fence still requires repairs, and we are awaiting the acceptance of a grant application to proceed with that work.

Playing Numbers

Our senior membership numbers remain strong at just 298 however both the Junior membership and beginner's program numbers were down this year. Junior Membership sat at 132 and the beginner's program around 115.

Competition

A big thanks to Leigh Elliott and Dean Farquhar for their tremendous work as Club Captains. Northcote entered 32 teams into Interclub this season, and putting together these teams is no easy task. On top of that, they organized the Battle of the Bridge between Northcote and Howick, the Battle of the Burbs, and a new battle between Parnell and Northcote Clubs.

While Northcote lost to Howick and Birkenhead, we managed a win over Parnell. We also fielded entries in both the Men's and Ladies Chelsea Cup competitions. The Ladies teams made it to the semifinals, while the Men's team, unfortunately, could not match their semifinal finish of last year.

Our Club Championship was once again an extremely well-attended event with many awe-inspiring matches and quite a few upsets. Finals day was well supported and produced some fantastic matches. A huge thank you to Grant Borrie for running the club champs again this year and for keeping the members informed on the winners and losers with his expected witty repertoire.

Our Junior program successfully ran Interclub competitions both before and after Christmas this season, fielding 24 teams. The season concluded with an enjoyable Junior Club Prize Giving following the completion of the Club Champs. It's wonderful to see many top-quality players emerging from the junior system, with several participating in Senior Interclub and the Senior Club Championship.

The success of the Junior program heavily relies on parental support, and I want to thank all the parents for their dedication. A special thanks goes to those who volunteered to manage teams throughout the year—a challenging but vital role. I also want to express my gratitude to the Junior Committee members: Scott Martin, Kate McIntyre, Laura Whittaker, Carmel Walsh, and Meredith Crawford, who assisted Anna Gibbs before Christmas and Andrew Spence after Christmas with team arrangements.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our coaching team led by Deanne Alter and our dedicated junior coaches particularly Steve Downs, Darryl Sutjiadi, Josh Taplin and Daniel Ramaiyah for their outstanding efforts in running the Junior coaching programme and the Beginners Programme. This year, Tennis NZ introduced a new approach to coaching Juniors, and our team has embraced these changes with enthusiasm and commitment.

Finance

This year, the committee hired a grant expert to assist with grant funding applications. Since October 2023, we have secured \$44,000 in grants for coaching, tennis equipment (including balls), power, communication costs, insurance, upgrading our court gates from key locks to digital, and audit fees. An additional \$69,000 in grant funding applications is pending approval for various expenses.

Unfortunately, we have been unable to secure funding for a full-time administrator, resulting in a reduction of those hours to 20 per week. Consequently, several tasks, such as the newsletter and maintenance, have been reassigned to committee members.

This year, securing sponsorship proved challenging, especially with our limited number of committee members. Despite reaching out to real estate companies and Burger King, we were unable to secure those sponsors. However, we extend a big thank you to our steadfast sponsors, Noelene Tyler-Davies, who supports the club annually, and McVeagh Fleming Lawyers.

The bar generated over \$24,000 in revenue once again, proving to be a strong financial asset for the club. However, managing the bar and kitchen requires volunteers, and often the same individuals end up shouldering this responsibility. We greatly appreciate the efforts of those who contribute their time and encourage more members to volunteer.

Despite the additional grant funding, rising operational costs have strained the club's finances. The committee is committed to finding ways to manage these challenges effectively.

Thanks

A heartfelt thank you goes out to everyone who has served on the Committee over the past 12 months. Your dedication has been crucial in keeping the club running smoothly during this period.

Andre Williams is stepping down this year after two years of remarkable commitment to improving our financial processes. Andre, we deeply appreciate all your hard work.

Leigh Elliott is also stepping down this year after a third term on the committee. Leigh has served as Junior Convenor, Communications Officer, and Club Captain. Being on the committee once is commendable, but to return twice in different roles is truly exceptional. Your efforts in organizing the Interclub teams, assisting with the Ladies Chelsea Cup team, and coordinating competitions with Howick and Parnell are greatly appreciated. We are grateful for your dedication.

Andrew Spence is also transitioning out of an officer role but will remain a non-officer member of the committee.

We extend our thanks to Deanne Alter, our Head Coach, for her enthusiasm and countless hours devoted to the club.

Finally, we warmly welcome Kath Johnson to the club in her role as Club Administrator. You have seamlessly stepped into this position, and we look forward to your continued contributions.

Thank you all for your incredible support and hard work.

Looking Ahead

When I first took on this role, I committed to serving for only two years. While I have mostly enjoyed my time as President, I am pleased to be stepping down. Not only am I stepping down as President, but I am also leaving the committee to pursue other interests and focus on improving my golf game.

Attending the President's Breakfast meetings has been a highlight for me. I encourage the club to continue having a representative at these meetings, as the networking and support offered there are invaluable. My knowledge of all things tennis has significantly expanded through these gatherings.

As I step away, I will leave behind the many processes I have developed to assist the next President, hopefully making their navigation of this role easier than mine was.

I have been very fortunate to work with a supportive committee that has greatly helped me in my role as President. While we have begun to address some of the challenges the club faces moving forward, there are still more hills to climb. A strong committee is essential, and while we have managed to fill some vacancies, there is still room for more members. Please remember that running a club of our size takes hundreds of hours, and input from a broader range of people is essential to spread the burden. If you don't have time to join the committee, you may still have time to assist us in other ways.

Thank you to those who have attended today for your support and dedication to the club.

Kirsty Speedy
President