**Senior Interclub Newsletter**

 **September 2020**

Hi all and what an unusual year we have had!!

Luckily Covid-19 did not strike in summer, and we got most of the season completed before lockdown. It did however affect all the winter codes, and that will have a roll-over affect on our season. But firstly we must congratulate our winners from last season.

**Committee**

Due to personal circumstances, Kirsty Alexander has had to resign from her position on our Interclub Committee. Her services and work will sadly be missed, especially all the effort she has put in to the Women’s Doubles league. I will also miss the way she was able to keep Trevor in line!!! Thankfully, Rachel Inglis, of Maungaraki fame, has kindly offered to step up and take over where Kirsty left off. Thank you very much and we welcome your help and input.

**Winners**

In Men’s Div 1 Pre-Christmas, Avalon comfortably took out the top spot, ahead of Wainuiomata 1 and Stokes Valley, with all three teams moving to Premier 4 Post-Christmas. Avalon went on to finish second, thus gaining a spot in Premier 3 for the coming season – congratulations to them. Lower Hutt took out the Post-Christmas title for Div 1 with Pinehaven coming through in second. Wainuiomata raced ahead for the win in Div 2, followed by Maungaraki 1 who just pipped Lower Hutt 3 for second spot.

In the Women’s Doubles Grade, Wainuiomata continued on their winning form from Pre-Christmas to also take out the Post-Christmas title, with Upper Hutt stepping up and jumping a spot to claim second in the latter half of the season.

**Top Club**

This was very close last year, with Muritai, Avalon and Wainuiomata all in the running. The trophy was presented at our AGM 24th August, to the eventual winner Avalon. They have been performing at a very high level, well done!

**Format Change**

It has been decided that we need to try and reduce the length of time players are having to spend on court, in order to retain our player base and counteract the decline in player numbers. Therefore, we are (almost) going to align ourselves with the Premier format in Doubles matches, with one exception. In all Divisional doubles matches (except the Women’s doubles league) the 3rd Set will now be a Match Tie-Break to 10 with a winning margin of at least 2 points. In addition to this, in the first and second sets, deuces will be decided by Hot-Points (sudden-death) *ON THE SECOND DUECE*. Premier have sudden-death on the first deuce, we will have it on the second deuce.

**Covid-19 effects**

Mostly we have been unaffected by Covid-19, but the start of the season has not! Love Tennis has had to be pushed back to 10/11 October, which gives us very little time to organize ourselves. Interclub will start the very next weekend, on October 17!! Therefore we are asking all our Club Convenors to please get ahead of the ball, and start prospecting your players and organising your teams now. We will aim to have a convenors meeting mid-September (possibly by Zoom) and really need to know what teams you are going to have by then please.

**Women’s Divisional Interclub**

In the past few seasons we have struggled to find enough teams to create a Women’s grade for singles and doubles. We hope to revive this grade, but can’t do it without players/teams. We are proposing 3 possible options: The first would be to have 4 player teams, with doubles and singles same as the men, but we would need a minimum of 4 teams to make this viable. The second option is to have a competition of two-player teams, with one doubles and two singles matches played each week. This would allow us to have more teams, but everyone gets the same amount of tennis. The third option is to combine with the Wellington Interclub league, but this would require teams of 4 players, and also starting at the bottom grade, so may take a season or two to get to the top grade.

