



Annual General Meeting

The MCC Real Tennis Section held its first Annual General Meeting on 29 April 2010 in the Committee Room of the Melbourne Cricket Club. A small group attended to support the formal process of electing the committee and approving the annual report and financial statements.

The committee for 2010 comprises Andrew Shelton (Chairman), Iain Buchanan (Secretary), Paul Wheeler (Treasurer), Henry Turnbull and Fred Kininmonth. All positions are honorary.

The Chairman thanked John Faull, a foundation member, for his contribution to the committee and to the Section's activities. John retired from the Committee during 2009.

The Chairman reported on the Section's activities and reminded us that a prime objective of the Section is to promote and foster the game of real tennis among members of the MCC and to represent the interests of those members. The Section also provides an opportunity for members to engage in the wider life of the MCC particularly with events held throughout the year for members of the 11 different sporting sections.

Most of the specific activities described by the Chairman are referred to in this and the previous two newsletters. However little mention has been made of the Section's finances and on this subject the Chairman reported that the Section ended the financial year (31 December) in a healthy financial position. Funds from an original grant of \$10,000 received from the MCC in late 2008 were used for various establishment costs, including the purchase of a set of balls and rackets and to assist with the Club Nights where charges to first time players are limited so as to encourage participation. A copy of the Annual Report is available from the Secretary by emailing mcarts@y7mail.com.

The section has come a long way since it was incorporated as an association affiliated with the Melbourne Cricket Club. It is now affiliated with the Australian Real Tennis Association, the governing body of real tennis in Australia, and has 73 members with 9 from other MCC sections.

Members' Activities

Our members have been represented in a number of matches and tournaments since the last newsletter.

The World Championship

In pride of place is our world champion, Robert Fahey. In early May Rob met his challenger Steve Virgona at the Royal Melbourne Tennis Club. It was Rob's tenth defence of his title since becoming world champion in 1994 when he took the title from Wayne Davies, an Australian then based in New York. Steve Virgona is also Australian, originally hailing from Ballarat, but currently the head professional in Philadelphia.

An account of the match was included in the May edition of the MCC Newsletter and on the MCC website so there is little point in repeating it here but what was not mentioned was Rob's having successfully defended his title more times than any other player in the three hundred year history of the game. Rob's skill and athleticism are remarkable and belie his 42 years. Rob won the match 7 sets to 2 and his play in the final set on the third day was a remarkable exhibition of skill, speed and accuracy.

The World Overs

Several members, including Ian Bull, James Guest, Mike Happell, Wayne Spring, Henry Turnbull and Paul Wheeler, took part in the World Overs held in the UK in April. The World Overs are held every two years and consist of three team contests plus singles and doubles championships.

The team contests are between national teams from Great Britain, the USA and Australia who play on a round robin basis for the Cockram (over 50), the Bostwick (over 60) and the Danby (over 70) trophies. Although Australia has done well in the past this was not our year and we failed to bring home a trophy.

The singles and doubles were another matter and two MCC members distinguished themselves in that Mike Happell won the over 50s singles and he and Ian Bull won the over 50s doubles. Also, Paul Wheeler made the final of the over 70s singles.

The team matches were played at Lord's and the Middlesex University in Hendon while the singles and doubles were played at the Queen's Club. Real tennis is one of those sports where there is a considerable home advantage as all courts have their own characteristics and Lord's and Queen's are no exception. The next World Overs are scheduled to be played in Melbourne in 2012 where it is hoped that Australia will fare better.

MCC v RMTC

This match was played at Romsey on 18 October 2009. It was an enjoyable occasion with some good tennis being played and with one or two close encounters. Handicaps were used with each joust being the first to 8 games.

MCC		RMTC	
P.Wheeler & H.Turnbull	lost to	R.Kininmonth & I.Bull	4/8
O.Guest & A.Miach	lost to	M.Mathias & R.Hince	3/8
P.Williams & A.MacKinnon	def.	J.Hewson & M.Garnett	8/2
M.Williams & J.Guest	def.	B.O'Brien & A.Miach	8/5
O.Guest & M.Williams	def.	R.Kininmonth & M.Garnett	8/7
I.Bull & A.MacKinnon	lost to	A.Miach & B.O'Brien	6/8
H.Turnbull & P.Williams	lost to	M.Mathias & M.Garnett	7/8
P.Wheeler & J.Guest	lost to	R.Hince & J.Hewson	3/8

Result-RMTC defeated MCC 5-3

ERRATUM

In the last October's newsletter a loss to MCC (Lord's) was recorded by H.Turnbull and P.Wheeler whereas the latter should have read P.Williams. (One PW too many!)

Talking of the Williams family it is pleasing to record that Daniel Williams won the Australian Junior Championship in April. This was the first win by an Aussie for 4 years the 3 previous winners all being from overseas.

Club Nights

Four Club Nights have been held so far this year with more than 20 people being introduced to real tennis from other MCC Sections. We now run a beginner's session on the South Court while the North Court caters for returning players who have some experience. A number of keen players continue to return and have picked up the game quickly. Without doubt there is potential talent to be tapped from among the various MCC sporting sections.

The Friday evenings start from 6pm at RMTC and everyone enjoys some fun coaching from our professional, Paul Tabley, followed by a pleasant supper. The following Fridays have been scheduled for future Club Nights:- 6 August, 3 September, 1 October, 5 November and 3 December.

All MCCRTS members are encouraged to attend these nights. Please book with Paul Tabley on 0401 610 170 or paul@paultabley.co.uk. Costs: \$45 (tennis, supper & drinks); \$25 first time playing guest with no charge for court time.

Inter-Club Matches

Away matches have been arranged against Ballarat on Sunday, 29 August 2010 and against Hobart on the weekend of 16 and 17 October 2010. Others are in the pipeline.

The format of the matches will be determined on numbers, but they will be arranged to encourage participation by all standards. So please, newcomers, DON'T BE SHY. Whatever your level you will be able to play and enjoy the occasion.

At Ballarat we have arranged for a clinic by Brett Macfarlane, the Ballarat professional, in the morning to be followed by a light lunch. The match will start soon after, or even during, lunch to provide maximum court time. The clinic will be suitable for beginners and developing players.

At Hobart the local professional, Barry Toates, will also be available for a clinic on the Saturday morning with matches on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning, as required. There will be a dinner on Saturday night. Weekends in Hobart are always great fun and the hospitality of the Hobart tennis players is legendary. Bring your partner and indulge!

Club Championship

Entries for the inaugural Club Championship are now sought from all members. The event will be played off handicap, either official or as determined by Paul Tabley (unbribeable, or so he tells me) so everyone is encouraged to play.

Entries will be accepted up to the end of **July**, not far away, and the draw will be on 1 August 2010. Matches will be arranged through Paul Tabley at venues to be agreed by the participants, subject to court availability and access rights. This will include RMTC and Romsey.

Matches are likely to be included as part of Club Nights in Melbourne and during the various weekend fixtures at Romsey.

Hans Ebeling Room

The Section has a booking for the Collingwood v Geelong match on 7 August. Already a small group has been organised by Fred Kininmonth but it would be good to have more. Watching an important match at the MCC via the Hans Ebeling room is an undoubted privilege so please contact Fred on 0407 429 803 or robert@amacdougall.com.au who will make the arrangements through Iain Buchanan. Ladies and gentlemen partners are most welcome!

Membership Renewals

Our Secretary will soon be distributing forms for renewal of membership. The annual subscription for the full calendar year has been set at \$25. Please renew promptly.

Boomerang Cup

The Section again intends to enter two teams in the Boomerang Cup to be held in January next year. The Demons and Kangaroos both had some success two years ago in their inaugural participation surviving the round robin stage but losing in the knockout stage by narrow margins. Please indicate in the attached expression of interest form if you are interested in playing with an MCC team. It is a great way to play in this exciting tournament while supporting MCC real tennis. As an international tournament players will require a stable handicap. It is also expected that MCC teams will enter the pre-Boomerang competition for local teams to be held later this year.

Expressions of Interest

Attached to this newsletter is a form asking members to indicate those activities which are of interest. It will be most helpful if you will complete and return the form so that we can respond to your wishes as far as possible.

Please complete the form and copy it into an email addressed to paul@tabley.co.uk.

When you return the form your interests will be passed on to the committee member concerned.

Newsletters

We expect to produce more frequent and shorter newsletters in future. For example the forthcoming matches will certainly warrant a newsletter each.

If you have any items that you consider may be of interest please pass them on. Additionally if there are any questions regarding the rules please raise them. Again, don't be shy because if you are unclear about anything you may rest assured others will be too.

Paul Wheeler