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6/12/2023

PRESIDENT'S LETTER - END OF YEAR

Hello DTTA Members/Everyone

It gives me great pleasure to write to everyone at the end of what has been a very successful year of table tennis.

Our membership is 128 at the time of writing, and is approaching the numbers we had a few years ago. We are very pleased you decided to register as a member, be it a Competition member, a Social member, a Senior member. Quite a few of you joined in the second half of the year using our "pro-rata" membership option. We hope you will all continue in 2024. To that end we will send another letter at the start of 2024 with details of social practice times in January/February, next year's membership, some dates for your calendar including the start of Term 1 Junior coaching, our Club Open Day on Sunday 11 February, and try out days for those of you who want to play competition.

Juniors this year

The NT Junior Squad, comprising Martin Feng, Sebastian Lai, Renee Li and newcomer Antara Panchal, trains with coach Jonathan Tong. Martin, Sebastian and Renee competed in the Junior events at the National Championships in Sydney in July with some good results. All four top juniors compete with the club's top players in A grade.

Monday Junior coaching for age 12s and under ran for 4 terms with coaches Elfrida Kalich and Nick Pastrikos. We are looking at adding another junior coaching session for intermediate juniors next year. Nick has been a very welcome addition to our coaching team. Nick ran the Spinnerroos programs this year which are aimed at younger and beginner students.

Junior players also played their part in B and C grade. It was very pleasing to see juniors Ted Jones, Jayden Ma, Leeam Milne, Jimmy Hee, Jonathan O'Bryan-Keenan, Beina Liu, Plato Sin and Ben Koefoed playing very competitively in C Grade teams or subbing, and Toby Koefoed in B grade, and supported by dads Rodney Hee, Kim Sin, Jackson Ma, Paul Liu and Simon Koefoed.

We thank all the parents for bringing your children to coaching and supporting them through club membership and playing in competitions. We hope you all continue in 2024.

Competitions

The Club Championship was held in July. Run by club stalwart John Pudney, it was well supported by members and included the prestigious Closed Singles title (won by Jonathan Tong, runner-up Tom Randle) and junior and veteran singles and doubles, and fun events such as "Big Ball". We hope to build on this success in next year's Club Championship.

A, B and C Grade Competition has now concluded for the year with Season 2 finals on Wednesday 29 November. C Grade and B Grade fielded 6 teams of 3 in each Season. A Grade suffered with reduced playing numbers and ran with 4 teams of 3 in Season 1 and 5 teams of 3 in Season 2.

Season 1 winners: A Grade: MMA (Mitchell Bedford, Aakash Patel, Martin Feng); B Grade: Wolves (Viqar Ali Khan, Eric Catalbas, Andrew Barton); C Grade: Geckos (Jackson Ma, Jayden Ma, Shi Zhuang Lu).

Season 2 winners: A Grade: R-an-R (Rodney Hee, Renee Li, Antara Panchal); B Grade: Geckos (Shubham Chand, Jackson Ma, Dickson Lam); C Grade: Super Heroes (Russell Williams, Jayden Ma, Beina Liu).

Robert Ho writes up the comp results each week in the Club Newsletter emailed to all members. You can look at back issues on the DTTA website at www.revolutionise.com.au/dtta/newsletter/2023newsletters/

Thank you to the convenors of A (Elfrida/Rodney), B (Andrew Barton/Rick Gibson) and C grades (Christine Marshall). And thanks to everyone who played in and supported Comp this year. We aim to start C grade on Tuesday 13 February, A grade on Wednesday 14 February and B grade Thursday 15 February. We'll send more details at the start of next year.

Seniors Social Program

There is a very strong and enthusiastic Seniors Social section at our club. Thursday mornings were well supported throughout the year often with full tables and over 24 players. Elfrida Kalich and Gavin Bedford provided coaching for seniors during the second half of this year. We got a Grant of \$1000 towards Seniors Month in August. There was a record turnout for Seniors month sessions, and this year we trialled Tuesdays as well, continuing both days for the remainder of the year. Many social seniors have played and subbed in C Grade. Geni O'Brien and Ann Webb have assisted Christine Marshall running the very successful seniors program. There is a Christmas morning tea on Thursday 21 December. Please bring a plate of goodies to share. Seniors will start again next year on Tuesday 9 and Thursday 11 January 2024. Seniors membership will remain at \$60/y and \$5/visit.

Sunday Social

For the first time this year, the club ran what we called *Sunday Social* sessions aimed at attracting the general public to come and try out table tennis on a casual basis. We have been really pleased at the response we've had. Family groups have come along (we have a family rate of \$12), groups of friends, singles, all ages - many of whom are trying table tennis for the first time. Members have

volunteered their time to support the sessions. We provide bats/balls, tell the visitors about our club and facilities and opportunities to play and to join, and introduce them to other visitors, and generally get everyone on the courts having fun, learning a bit (or a lot) about the game, and hopefully wanting to come back for more. Many of our Sunday visitors have joined as members. Some have played in the grade competitions. Sunday sessions are closed now. We intend to start again end of April/start of May next year. Please consider volunteering one or two Sundays (3pm to 5pm) every now and again next year to help out.

External events supported by DTTA

We started the year with Michael Yaxley and John Pudney setting up tables at Palmerston Recreation Centre and at the Festival of Us on Australia Day at the netball centre, supported by club volunteers, playing and persuading the public to come and try. DTTA supports events by ClubHouse Territory for the public and some for people with disabilities. John and Michael do a wonderful job transporting tables/barriers around and encouraging people to play table tennis. You might have seen them at the Waterfront in the school holidays based at the permanent concrete tables. Every year DTTA also participates at the annual Chung Wah Society Chinese New Year Festival. In 2023, the day coincided with our Club Open Day but with good organisation, especially by Rodney and other helpful members, we managed to make both events resounding successes. The Club Open Day is planned for Sunday 11 February 2024, 10am to 1pm with BBQ lunch. The Chung Wah Society New Year Festival is on Saturday 3 February 2024. Make a note in your diary. We'd like your support at these events. More details to come.

Hosting schools and organisations at our hall

This is an opportunity for others to play table tennis as an organised group using our hall and equipment, and, if requested, with our coaches, at a very reasonable charge.

The largest event we hosted this year was the InterSchools Table Tennis Tournament run by NT Schools in September. DTTA Convenor Elfrida and Hannah Roll from NT Schools and the teachers resourcefully rearranged the existing six tables and brought in the reserve tables to accommodate 150+ high and middle school students.

A number of schools have booked the hall, sometimes with coaching, including Essington and Sanderson Schools and SEDA.

The PE Teacher of a local middle school that recently came to our club for play and coaching said:

Our Year 9 PE class was lucky enough to have some sessions at the Darwin Table Tennis Centre where our students were able to develop their skills and understanding of Table Tennis whilst also enjoying some fun games. The team at DTTA were very welcoming and gave up their time to pass on their knowledge to the students. I would highly recommend them if a class or individuals were looking to learn more about table tennis, get involved competitively or even just for a fun extra curricular activity during school.

There is also scope to host community and special interest groups who wish to hold a table tennis event. Last year club member Michael Ndukwe encouraged the Nigerian Community in Darwin to come and play. Next year we are hosting the Darwin Nepalese Community in January. Enquiries about booking our facility and coaches to darwintta@gmail.com.

Veterans success

Elfrida Kalich, Joe Abrantes, TT Lee and Rodney Hee played in the Australian Veterans Championships in Canberra in October. Elfrida, Joe and TT won 13 medals between them.

Elfrida won Gold for over 70 womens singles, over 70 mixed doubles, and Silver for over 70 womens doubles, over 65 womens doubles, over 65 mixed doubles, over 70 teams representing the president's team. TT won Bronze for over 80 teams, over 80 mens doubles, over 75 mixed doubles. Joe won Bronze for over 80 teams, over 80 mens doubles, over 80 mixed doubles, over 75 mixed doubles.

This is an outstanding effort given our small table tennis community!

TY Lee Perpetual Trophy

The TY Lee Perpetual Trophy has been donated to the club by the Lee family in recognition of TY's life long commitment to table tennis in the NT and notably at the Darwin club, and particularly for his work with the juniors. TY was a champion player, and a dedicated and expert coach, guiding the development of many of our leading junior players. We are delighted to accept this wonderful trophy which will be awarded for the first time in 2024.

Financial support

Our income comes from memberships, match fees, visitor fees, seniors attendance fees, junior coaching fees, sports vouchers, and what we can raise in sponsorship, venue hire and grant moneys. Our share of the utilities and cleaning costs for the Multi-Purpose Hall is \$15,000/y.

We are a smallish club and we are very dependent on membership fees to exist. We have been affiliated to Table Tennis Australia (TTA) for the last three years through our state body, Table Tennis NT. A significant portion of each membership fee goes to Table Tennis Australia.

We have received two TTA Equipment Grants of \$1000 each in 2020 and this year. We were eligible this year to apply for a Seniors Month Grant and were granted \$1000.

We welcome casual visitors for a small attendance fee, often interstate visitors who are holidaying in Darwin. Registered TTA members from other parts of Australia have reciprocal rights to play at clubs like ours, and so do our members if they visit and want to play interstate. Take your membership ID number with you. You can get your ID number from logging into DTTA RevSports website www.revolutionise.com.au/dtta/home/ or by asking us at darwintta@gmail.com.

Membership/Registration

Membership classes in 2023 have been as follows:

1. Adult competition \$120/y - entitles you to play in Season 1 and 2 comps (match fees apply), and to attend club practice sessions on Mondays and Fridays free of charge.
2. Concession competition \$100/y is slightly cheaper than adult comp and is for full-time university students, recipients of state pensions, and juniors who are playing grade competition. It entitles you to play in Season 1 and 2 comps (match fees apply), and to attend club practice sessions on Mondays and Fridays free of charge.
3. Social \$100/y - entitles you to attend club practice sessions on Mondays and Fridays free of charge.
4. (a) Seniors Program \$60; (b) Coaches \$60; (c) Officials \$60; (d) Juniors not playing comp \$60. (a) Entitles Seniors to attend Tuesday/Thursday mornings (\$5 attendance fees apply). (b) Entitles Juniors to play on Monday and Friday practice sessions. (c) Entitles Coaches to be eligible to coach at our club. (d) Recognises Officials at our club.

We have decided not to increase registration costs for 2024.

Memberships/Registrations expire on 31 December 2023. Renewals can be done in January 2024. Guidelines on how to register online will be available soon. Don't try to register until the New Year. Note, you will need your membership ID to renew your registration if you renew online. The full list of 2023 DTTA members and their ID numbers has been posted on the Club Noticeboard. Please take a note of your ID number. You can also email us at darwintta@gmail.com to get your ID number. You can of course complete a paper form to renew your membership and make your payment by EFT to the DTTA bank account (bank details on form). Download the paper membership form at www.revolutionise.com.au/dtta/documents/forms/

Please renew your membership by 31 January.

Facilities

We purchased new professional standard tables from the 2022 Veterans Championships held in Darwin. Sadly, one of the six tables has sustained a large chip at one end during this year. We need to take care of our tables. Please tell us about any damage you see.

We maintain a good working relationship with sporting neighbours Gymnastics and Judo and once again we were able to accommodate them with extra space for their various championships for which we charge a small hire fee.

Patti Brown on our committee has led an immense clear up and clean effort on the shared storage room next to the office. The store is shared by the three sporting associations. It was very damp, mouldy and full of old decrepit equipment that was not being used but taking up a lot of valuable room. Patti would be the first to acknowledge the help we've received from Gymnastics and Judo and from John Withers (Dept of Sport) during this clean up job. The leak is fixed and a new air conditioner is running 24h but at 26 C to keep the store room a usable and healthy environment.

As noted before, individuals and organisations can apply to hire our facility, playing equipment and coaches.

Courses

TTA Level 1 coaches Elfrida and Jono offer private coaching during the year for members.

Table Tennis NT's CEO Graham Symons ran a TOPS coaching course this year. That is the precursor to taking the TTA Level 1 coaching qualification.

This year the club asked coach Jonathan Tong to run a workshop showing members how to remove old bat rubbers, clean up the bat and replace with new. The club purchased glue and some other equipment to facilitate this for members to do their own bats in future. Jono is also running a 2 day coaching course for beginners and intermediate players on 8 and 9 December.

Governance

Michael Yaxley stepped down as club President at the AGM held May 2023 and Rodney Hee became President. Michael has served as President for 3 years and on the DTTA Committee for longer. The club acknowledges Michael's immense contribution, enthusiasm and vision. Other committee members are Secretary Deepesh Panchal (also Public Officer), Treasurer and Membership Secretary Ann Webb, Graham Symons (Juniors programs - Graham is also CEO Table Tennis NT and President TTA), Robert Ho (Newsletter and Facebook), Patti Brown (Security & Maintenance), Christine Marshall (C grade convenor and Thursday Seniors), Michael Yaxley (General Committee) and Geni O'Brien (General Committee). DTTA Committee meets on the first Monday of the month. Thank you to all committee for your hard work this year.

In the last few years, the club had been a bit short of committee members and got somewhat behind with the financial statements due at each AGM and to be submitted as part of the Annual Return to the NT Licensing Board as required of an Incorporated Association. We are very pleased that we have caught up. We got the 2021 accounts audited and approved at a Special General Meeting in April and the 2022 accounts audited and approved at the Club AGM in May, and we are on track for our Annual Return for 2023 which will be tabled at the AGM in May 2024.

Practice sessions up to Christmas

Members can continue to attend practice sessions up to Christmas Eve on Monday 5pm to 9pm (once junior coaching has finished on 11 December), on Wednesday 7pm to 9pm, Thursday 5pm to 7pm and Friday 5pm to 7pm. There will be no Saturday or Sunday practice sessions.

Christmas/NY closure

The club will be closed on Christmas Day (25 Dec) and Boxing Day (26 Dec) and New Year's Day (1 Jan).

Members who have an official access key card may arrange to play during 27 to 31 December. But if you do, we'd like you to email darwintta@gmail.com to advise which day, what time, and who is playing before you go. You are responsible for the security of the premises.



We will re-open Tuesday 2nd January.

Convened practice sessions at start of 2024 will be Monday 5pm to 9pm (7pm to 9pm when Term 1 junior coaching starts on Monday 29 January), on Wednesday 7pm to 9pm, Thursday 5pm to 7pm, Friday 5pm to 7pm. There will be no Saturday or Sunday practice sessions in January though private coaching and NT state squad coaching will be taking place on Saturdays. The Nepalese Community Day is on Saturday 13 January, 10am to 4pm.

The membership year ends on 31 Dec each year. We ask you to pay your 2024 registration by the end of January.

In conclusion

We recognise and thank our members and friends of the club for their help and support during the playing year.

We thank the Competition convenors, our helpers at Sunday Social especially Geni O'Brien, Patti Brown and Rodney Hee, we thank John Pudney, Michael and Rodney who cart our tables and barriers around to external events and enthuse children and adults to try table tennis; we thank the members who turn out for working bees and support open days; and our coaches who inspire our juniors and bring on our future stars; and our hard working committee who volunteer many hours in support of club development; and last but not least, **YOU**, our club members, on whom this club is soundly based (though we'd always welcome more volunteers).

Seasons Greetings and Happy New Year to everyone and safe and enjoyable holidays and travels.
See you in 2024.

Rodney Hee

President, Darwin Table Tennis Association Inc

