

# VETSET

TENNIS SENIORS ACT INC

WINTER ISSUE JUNE 2021

## PREFACE

VETSET is the newsletter of Tennis Seniors ACT Incorporated. However the views expressed in the newsletter are not necessarily those of the committee.

Membership fees for 2021/22 are due on 1 July 2021 - only \$20. A membership form can be found on the website.

The 2020/21 Committee comprises:

President

Graham Smith (6161 5352)

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Pat Moloney (6262 3727)

Secretary

Warren Muller (0407 916 868)

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Tim Harris (6231 3642)

Colin Lyons (0434 531 449)

Barbara McCluskey (6241 4402)

Robert Pragt (6242 6897)

Bronwyn Thomas (0410 730 808)

Sue Willis (0434 982 924)

Website: [www.tennis seniors.org.au/act](http://www.tennis seniors.org.au/act)

## 50th Anniversary Celebration

Where would you find 5 present and past presidents, 2 secretaries and 2 treasurers (one for 24 years and still going) together with three world champions. We had the Monster Quiz last year to remind us that last year we turned 50 but couldn't celebrate it due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The answer is at the delayed 50th Anniversary Dinner held on Saturday 22 May 2021 at the Yowani Country Club.

Our founding president Bob Thornton was unable to join us in the celebration due to ill health.

The report on the dinner can be found on pages 4 and 5.



Chris Norwood. Anne Haycock, Pat Moloney, David Coutts and Graham Smith

## Heather McKay

Colin Adrian, a former Board member of Tennis ACT in a recent article in Tennis ACT's Court Talk (October 2020) - Celebrating ACT's Seniors World Champions - detailed an impressive list of nine world seniors tennis champions from the ACT, since seniors (veterans) tennis began in 1970. Heather McKay (nee Blundell), born and bred in Queanbeyan, was one of the nine, as was her sister Kay.

Most Australians of more mature years know Heather to be the greatest female world squash player of all-time. On pages 6 and 7 you will find a detailed article on Heather McKay put together by Colin Adrian.



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Closing date for September Vetset  
Monday 16 August 2021  
[jgreenup@bigpond.net.au](mailto:jgreenup@bigpond.net.au)

### Annual General Meeting

**Tennis Seniors ACT**

It is proposed to hold the AGM

on Wednesday 11 August at 6.00pm

This date and the venue will be confirmed by email and on the website closer to the date

### Membership fees

A reminder that your membership fees for TSACT for 2021/22 are due on 1 July. Still only \$20.

A membership renewal form can be found inserted in your hard copy or attached to your email

# President's Report by Graham Smith

Welcome to the Winter Edition of Vet-set.

Canberra's winter has arrived with chilly mornings but we are still enjoying some sunny days. Many of us are out on the courts with our groups for some social play and also training for tournaments. Country tournaments are up and running again so I am going to get some use out of our Winnebago.

The Goulburn tournament did not disappoint again this year and is a great venue to mix with New South Wales players. So if you didn't go this year put it on your calendar for 2022.

Twenty members attended the Wagga Wagga Seniors Tournament and we outnumbered New South Wales and Victoria. It was a small tournament but we had a lot of matches and enjoyed strong tennis. Some of us have friends and relatives in Wagga Wagga so it's an opportunity to catch up. Valerie Gavin had the opportunity to play with a relative she didn't know could play tennis let alone want to play with her. Fun times!

Berri in South Australia was our last tournament destination and a great trip for the Winnebago. Three days cruising

along the Murray. ACT had one Men's team and a Ladies team. Don Masters played in another team with old mates and they won their division with Don bringing home a three pack of Banrock Station wine.

It's a love/ hate relationship playing on real grass. The bonus playing in this tournament is that you also use the courts at Renmark, Loxton and Barmera. Eighty-nine teams competed with most coming from Adelaide and country Victoria.

Eighty-two members and guests attended our dinner to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Year of Tennis Seniors ACT. It was held at the Yowani Country Club. The night was full of memorabilia from the past fifty years with Patrick Moloney, Anne Haycock and Colin Adrian each speaking about different features of the last fifty years. Kim Kachel from Tennis ACT attended together with past presidents and ACT representative players.

Bob Thornton was the first President however he was not well enough to attend on the night so he donated a special bottle of champagne for a Lucky Door Prize and it was won by Lynette Sebbens.

Di Cassel and Helen and Ian Worland made the special trip to represent Tennis Seniors NSW and Tennis Seniors Australia. Di congratulated Tennis Seniors ACT for "punching above our weight" and supporting all tournaments on the senior's calendar. She also donated a tennis racquet for a Lucky Door Prize and Gwenda Lynch was the winner. There will be photos of the night posted on our web page.. Colin Adrian and John Greenup produced a photo board and a slide show of photos from the last 50 years which was valuable and much appreciated by everyone.

The committee have received an amazing response from those who attended the night saying how much they enjoyed themselves. So thank you to all my committee. It was well worth it.

Tennis Tasmania is in line to host the 2023 Teams Carnival and Individual Championships. If you haven't been to one of these events you are missing out on a great experience. We would love to have you join us, if not in 2022 in 2023. Preparations are in place for Swan Hill in January 2022. Everyone is welcome so get your entry in when you receive the nomination form.

Hope to see as many of you as possible at the birthday luncheon for the Over Bloody Eighty members. It will be held on the 25<sup>th</sup> July at 12pm at Trevino's Restaurant Gold Creek Country Club 50 Curran Drive Nicholls. We are celebrating eight birthdays. Come along and help them celebrate.

Happy hitting

## Charity Day



The Midweek Tennis Ladies raised \$2647 at their Charity Day held on Thursday 6 May. The charity to benefit was the Black Dog Institute.

The day dawned cloudy and with the promise of rain in the morning it did not look good. However once again the weather gods prevailed and the 38 players got through their tennis albeit with the wind playing some havoc.

Only Belconnen courts were required due to the number of players. There were 4 groups - two mixed doubles, a womens and a mens doubles. The respective winners were Betty Smith and Graeme Rossiter, Sheila Daly and Don Masters, Jean Penny and Penny Moss and Kerry Scarlett and Greg Hunt. All the prize winners took a bottle of red

wine kindly donated by Graham Shaw at Shaws Estate, Murrumbateman

Following the sausage sizzle and salads for lunch and after the raffle draws. Jamie Francis from the Black Dog Institute gave a presentation on his own experience and the need to seek help when necessary. As Jamie pointed out one in 5 of us will experience symptoms of mental illness in any given year.

There was a thank you to all the people who donated prizes for the raffle or money towards the cause. These generous donations especially from Ted Huynh contributed to the high amount raised despite the lower number of players.



# Swan Hill 2022



The next Australian Seniors Championships, the 2022 Teams Carnival and Individual Championships, will be held in Swan Hill and hosted by Victoria.

The Teams Carnival is 9-14 January and the Individual Championships are 16-21 January. The minimum age is now 30 and teams are graded into 5 year age groups.

The Opening Ceremony will be at 4.45pm on Sunday 9 January at the Swan Hill Town Hall Performing Arts and Conference Centre.

Matches will be played on natural grass courts all at the one complex in Swan Hill. Nominations will not be called for ACT teams until July but now is the time to start thinking about forming or joining a team.

All players will need to lodge a nomination whether in a team or putting in a single nomination for an age group. Nominations are likely to close on Friday 1 October. Each player will need to pay \$130 on nominating.

All players nominating must be financial members of TSACT. Annual membership is \$20. Players are required to wear the TACT uniform. Mens shirts are available from Peter Breugelmanns (ph 6258 4261) and the ladies need to contact Betty Smith (ph 6161 5352).

The ACT State Dinner will be on Monday 10 January at 7.30pm at the Spoons Riverside Restaurant. The Presentation Dinner Dance is at 7.30pm on Friday 14 January at the Murray Downs Golf and Country Club.

The 2022 Swan Hill website is a stand-alone site. You will be able to access the site through our TSACT website or at <https://www.sh2022.com/>

If you require further information contact Graham Smith (ph 61615352 or mobile 0407 208 209) or Warren Muller (mobile 0407 916 868).

## Tribute to Bonnie Creech

**Bonnie Creech**  
12 June 1934 to 30 April 2021

Bonnie passed way on 30 April 2021 aged 86. She was an active member of the ACT tennis community and of the Veterans until golf became her passion. A celebration of Bonnie's life was held in the Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Pearce on Monday 10 May 2021. There was a private cremation. Our condolences go to Bonnie's family.

Bonnie was one of early members of Veterans playing in her first Australian Team Carnival in 1982 in Sydney in a 45s team with Mary Gormly, Gwen Weir and Penny Aston. She played in many more Team Carnivals. Her last one was in 1997 in a 60s team. Her team had one success in 1995 playing with Helen Vincent, Jimmie Ogle and Pearl Hore in the 60s age group.

In 1984 in Brisbane Bonnie was playing in a 45s team with Alison Ide, Pearl Hore and Wilma Bingley. The article in the March 1984 Vetset reports that there were some enthusiastic and solid players in the 45-age group. "Ask Bonnie Creech – she suffered a broken rib when hit by a Queenslander smash!". The team made the finals but lost.

She played in the twilight pennant and was on the Organizing Committee for the 1995 Seniors Teams and Individuals in Canberra. She was the Coordinator at the North Woden Courts. She remained a member until around 2001.

In the broader tennis community Bonnie played pennant with North Woden and was their representative for several years at the monthly meetings of the Ladies Branch when there were Branches in Tennis ACT's structure. She played the Midweek ladies for several years.

So Bonnie certainly was a doer for tennis. Her Death Notice said "gone golfing" but I suspect there will be some tennis as well.

**Sunday Round Robin**  
**20<sup>th</sup> June**  
**9.15am start**  
**Weston Creek Tennis Club**  
**Earn your points towards the Venezuela Cups**  
**Entry fee is \$10.00**  
Entries to  
**Colin Lyons on 0434 531 449**  
or [colinlyons@tpg.com.au](mailto:colinlyons@tpg.com.au);  
or  
**Warren Muller on 0407 916 868**  
or  
[warren.muller@internode.on.net](mailto:warren.muller@internode.on.net).

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**GO VITA** Go get healthy, Go stay healthy ... *Go enjoy life!*

**Tennis Seniors ACT**  
**welcomes the following**  
**new member:**  
Stephen Smith  
Maree Smith.

# 50th Anniversary Dinner

Tennis Seniors ACT or the Seniors Branch of the ACTLTA was born on 6 May 1970. Hence the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was in 2020. However COVID-19 restrictions forced the postponement of the dinner until this year. So 82 members, past members and partners gathered on 22 May 2021 at the Yowani Country Club to celebrate the milestone.

As people came through the door the reminiscing began. It was good to see so many former members along with current members. Apart from the 5 present and past presidents (photo page 1) there were Tim Harris and Warren Muller the most recent and current secretaries. Pat Macnicol was treasurer for 4 years and the current treasurer Peter Breugelmans has held the position since 1996.

Sadly Bob Thornton, our founding president was unable to come. Anne Haycock spoke to Bob a week or so before the dinner trying to get him to this historic event. Bob is very proud of how seniors has developed but though still good mentally he has some physical issues.

Peter and Judy Purdy, Bruce and Stephanie Larkham, Pat Macnicol and Gordon Robson caught up with a lot of old friends. In fact Bruce and Stephanie were one of the last to leave. It was nice to see Annette Richardson and Stephen Merrick and Charlotte and Alan Henderson.



As people arrived they could view a photo display "Fifty Years of ACT Seniors Tennis" put together by Colin Adrian. Nine World Champions were featured with 35 photos of

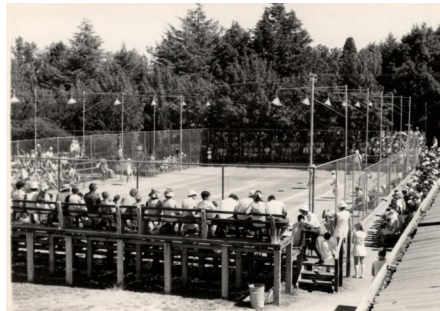
- the trail blazers nationally – first to win a national seniors title
- the trail blazers internationally – first from the ACT to represent Australia.
- those nine ACT Seniors who have world titles in singles, doubles and teams.

The feature was "the best of the best"

with the three World Senior Singles Champions - Ros Balodis, Heather McKay and Phil Higgs - all present.



There was also a slide show running with over 200 photos covering the 50 years:



- the old Manuka Courts where it all started
- events such as World Championships and Teams Carnivals hosted by the ACT Seniors
- Easter Tournaments and Twilight Pennants
- various social events and presentations and
- members playing in Team Carnivals and country tournaments.

There was something in the slide show for everyone.

A copy of the night's proceedings, the menu and a list of officer bearers and honorary life members over the 50 years were on the tables. The leaflet also included an insert overing the history over the 50 years.

With entrée about to appear, Graham Smith, our President welcomed everyone including the special guests Kim Kachel, CEO Tennis ACT, Di Castle, Vice President of Tennis Seniors Australia and Helen and Ian Worland (committee TSA).

Then in a nostalgic moment Graham reminisced "when I started playing veterans/seniors some 30 years ago I was happy to be part of this great group. Never in my wildest dreams did I even think I would be standing up here tonight in front of everyone in the role of President Tennis Seniors ACT".

Graham even managed to sneak in some jokes as the night progressed.

Over dinner there were presentations by Pat Moloney (president 2008-16), Anne Haycock (president 1991-1999 and honorary life member) and Colin Adrian.

After the presentations Di Castle on behalf of TSA thanked TSACT for their ongoing support and the support that our members give to NSW tournaments as well as other State tournaments. Some would not survive otherwise.

The night was brought to a close by the cutting of the cake by the three World Singles Champions.



Now back to the presentations.

Pat entitled his presentation "Passing Shots from the Archives". The archives were Alison Ide's records. Alison was closely involved with TSACT as well as TSA. These Archives include letters, reports, financial statements, photos, certificates, the original minute book, trophies, Player of the year and Administrator of the year awards and other interesting items, even a recipe book that was produced in 1987. However he couldn't find any record of follow up recipes!

Pat quoted from some of Bob Thornton's early correspondence and reports on issues which still remain relevant after 50 years - to arrest the drift of senior players to other sports or early retirement and of great concern to the Senior Branch that the administration of tennis in the ACT is left so overwhelmingly to the "oldies".

Anne wanted to go beyond the history covered in the leaflet included in your program and touch on events that made a difference. She related back to humble beginnings with the meeting of 10 members at the clubhouse in Manuka

Sadly Bob Thornton is the only one alive (compared with 6 at the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary dinner).

The first Open Veterans Tennis Tournament in Australia was held at the National Tennis and Squash Centre, Lyneham. (continued on page 5)

# 50th Anniversary Dinner (cont)

Graham Bartlett (or Sparko) ran the Easter Tournaments with high numbers, top players and no computers. David Holloway did a good job with a computer program. Gail Jones and Anne did a couple and there was the



Pat/Mick show (Pat Moloney and Mick Doyle picture left). Steve Longworth also

played a part.

Anne then covered the impact ACT members had on the National Body. Ken Willis, Alison and Arthur Ide, Harry Gibbs and Bob Hay all held executive positions for many years.

Yes Canberra ran the show. More recently Pat Moloney has and still holds the position of Secretary. Pat, Alison and Bob Hay have all been rewarded with life membership of TSA.

Ken Willis started the monthly Thursday tournaments and dinners. The dinners were well attended and very popular. Later Ted Bacon took over the running of the tournaments followed by Ken Sharp. The dinners in the early days were in the hands of Anne and John Petherbridge. Marg Burrows, Julie Howe and even Anne herself then had a go.

Anne then turned to Vetset beginning in 1977. And what a great source of information it has been over the years.

There is still 80<sup>th</sup> birthday recognition. Seniors tennis is a great advertisement for longevity. Anne then gave as an example one of our past secretaries Anne Parkinson who is 91 and still living independently. Anne then ran through our secretaries and treasurers.

Anne said she is very proud and humble to be one of the 6 life members of TSACT. Anne and Bob Thornton are the only two surviving.

We have hosted 4 Australian Teams and Individual Championships and 4 World Championships. The Governor General Sir William Dean opened the 1997 prestigious event. Anne recalls some players and the organising committee were invited to Government



House for cocktails. Anne almost felt important ever since.

Anne mentioned the very popular Monday Twilight Pennant (1989-2016) and the Sunday Tournaments in varying forms.



2010 Twilight winners - Tim Harris, Pat Hanrahan, John Funston and Scott Simm

Before concluding Anne mentioned the two awards in honour of two past members - the Frank Thornton Player of the Year and the George Henshilwood Award for Administrator of the Year.

Anne concluded saying it's interesting reflecting on our 50 years. We are like a good wine, we improve with age. Well done Tennis Seniors ACT.

Colin drew on his photo display, "Fifty Years of ACT Seniors Tennis - Nine World Champions" for his talk. His inspiration for the photo display came from a line in the article "We're 50" in the June 2020 Vetset - "the ACT has punched well above its weight at the national and international level".

Colin started with the first ACT player to win an Australian Seniors Title. Cres Roberts. He won the Australian 45+ Seniors Grasscourt title in 1974 on the natural grasscourts installed at the new headquarters of ACT Tennis at Lyneham.

The first teams success was in 1976 when Harry Gibbs, Paul Metzler, Charles Boag and Arthur Ide won the Australian 55+ event held in Canberra.

Jean Boag, Josie Butchmann, Jean Manning and Norma Crawley became the first ACT ladies to win an Australian team title in Hobart in 1977. Norma and Jean followed up by winning the 50+ Australian Seniors Ladies Doubles, over Josie and Jean.

The first representative in an Australian team competing in the ITF World Seniors Championships was Charles Boag in 1982 in the Britannia Cup in New York. Charles was followed by Pat Macnicol in 1983 in the 40+ Young Cup in Cervia, Italy. There have now been 15 males and 11 females who have represented Australia on the international stage in teams or individual events. Nine have been crowned a World Champion.

Colin then went on to name the nine

1. **Kay Schiavinato** was the first in 1990 to win a World Seniors Title. She played in the winning Bueno Cup team in Barcelona - the first Australian woman's team to do so. Kay went on to win the 50+ World Doubles Title.
2. In 1995 **Brian Hurley** and Neale Hooke from Queensland won the World Mens 70+ Doubles title and in 2000 Brian and Neale won the 75+ World Doubles title. In 2002 Brian was a member of the winning Bitsy Cup team. Ken Willis once said "Brian was probably the most successful and durable male in ACT veterans tennis".
3. **Ros Balodis** in 1998 won her first World Seniors Titles - the World 40+ Singles and Doubles title with Kaye Nealon from NSW. Since then Ros has won 7 World Singles, 12 Doubles, one Mixed and 7 Teams titles.
4. In 2001 **Heather McKay** was in the winning Alice Marble Cup team in Perth. She went on to win the Womens 60+ World Singles title. More on Heather's career can be found on pages 6 of the June Vetset.
5. Alison Ide won the Womens 70+ Doubles with Victorian Joyce Rodgers in 2006 in Turkey. It was a fitting end to a marvellous career.
6. In 2009 **Phil Higgs** won the World 65+ Singles title in Perth. This was the pinnacle of his tennis career and for a man who didn't take up tennis until his 40s, a wonderful achievement.
7. **Colin Holgate** competed in three World Team Championships in 2013, 2014 and 2015. The Australian team won the 2014 Austrian Cup in Florida and the 2015 Von Cramm Cup in La Baule, France giving Colin two team titles.
8. **Narelle Raftery's** highlight year was 2017 when was in the winning Maureen Connolly Cup team with Ros Balodis in Miami, Florida. Narelle once said if she was to win gold in a World Teams event she would need to be in a team with Ros.
9. In 2018 in Umag, Croatia **Helen Holcombe** had a chance pairing with German player, Reinhilde Adams. This proved masterful with the pair winning the World 65+ Doubles title.

Over 50 years 9 World Champions, 3 World Singles Champions and 39 World titles. It is a remarkable and impressive record of achievement.

# Heather Pamela McKay by Colin Adrian

In an article in Tennis ACT Court Talk (October, 2020 - [Celebrating ACT's Seniors World Champs](#)) I detailed an impressive list of nine world seniors tennis champions from the ACT, since seniors (veterans) tennis began in 1970. Heather McKay (nee Blundell), born and bred in Queanbeyan, was one of the nine, as was her sister Kay.

Most Australians of more mature years know Heather to be the greatest female world squash player of all-time and sporting aficionados acknowledge her as an iconic Australian sportsperson. With numerous awards, an MBE and Officer of the Order of Australia, she is a Legend in the Australian Sports Hall of Fame and ranked in the five greatest Australian athletes of all-time.

Surprisingly, her Wikipedia entry and sporting recognition largely fails to acknowledge her tennis achievements; achievements that would make we sporting mortals proud. What then is Heather's tennis background and why in her senior years has the sport become such an important part of her life?

Heather, one of eleven children, was born in Queanbeyan on 31 July 1941, to Frank and Dulcie Blundell. The Blundell name is etched in Canberra and Queanbeyan pioneering history, with Blundell's cottage associated with Heather's great-great-uncle.

Heather's Aunt Lily (her father's sister) was a keen sportswoman, noted for her horse riding and cricketing skills along with hockey and lawn bowls. So too was her Aunt Iris, a sporting all-rounder and feared fast bowler. Her father Frank was one of the first country, 'professional' footballers, in the Southern NSW Country Rugby League Maher Cup.

In 1939, the impact of the Depression and with World War 2 pending, the Blundell family moved back to Queanbeyan from Temora, the base for Frank's football and profession as a baker. Kay (1939), Robin (1940), and Heather (1941) – the sixth, seventh and eighth children of the Blundell clan – were born in Queanbeyan in quick succession. Her father's profession and his market gardening skills kept the "wolf from the door", in difficult years. The family's passion was sport – any sport, but with football, shooting, golf, cricket, tennis, basketball and hockey, prominent amongst the growing family. Finding a willing partner or opponent was easy.

Heather's passions became hockey (a winter sport) and tennis (a summer

sport) – passions shared by her immediate sisters. Their parents, Frank and Dulcie were both members of the East Queanbeyan Tennis Club, a short walk from the family home in Pound Street, and a regular venue for the Blundells. Tennis remained their choice of a social sport throughout the rest of Frank and Dulcie's lives.



*Dulcie Blundell, Queanbeyan Park Tennis Club, 1978*

The sporting and pioneering genes shone through for the Blundell girls at an early age. By 1956, when 14 Heather won the Under 15 NSW Tennis Junior Country Cup Doubles at White City with Jenny Lyttle from Goulburn. In the same year Heather lost to Kay in the Queanbeyan Resident titles 2/6, 9/7, 6/3 but won the A Reserve Singles over Robin 6/3, 8/6. She also won the A Reserve Doubles with Robin and the A Reserve Mixed with future brother-in-law Ken Thompson. Trophies were presented by the Club President and past Queanbeyan Mayor W B Freebody, from a noted tennis family.



*ACT Girls Under 17 Singles Cup, 1957*

In April of the same year Kay was selected to represent the ACT (finishing runners-up) in the Triangular Series for the Pat Pearce Cup, in Adelaide, against the South Australian Hardcourt League and the Victorian Southern Districts Association. Her partners were Judy Grangel (later Purdy) and Pat Bridgeman (later Macnicol) – what a team! Heather, two

years younger than Kay, was selected in the ACTLTA junior coaching squad for White City, a squad which included Barbara Pitt (later McCluskey).

In July 1957, at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Queanbeyan Junior Tennis Tournament, which was open to players from Queanbeyan and surrounds, including the ACT, the Blundell sisters swept all eligible titles. In October 1957, the Canberra Times reported an upset in the Queanbeyan Women's Resident final with Heather defeating older sister Kay for the first time in a tournament, winning 8/6, 5/7, 6/4, 'with the Cup formerly held by Kay moving to the other end of the family mantelpiece', in the sister's home.

Whilst tennis had become an important part of Heather's life, so too was hockey. Both Heather and Robin, from their mid-teens, were in the Queanbeyan Evergreens team which won the ACT A Grade Women's Hockey Competition, a number of times. Heather was to go on to represent NSW in hockey and was twice selected in the All-Australian hockey team.



*Evergreens, ACT Women's Hockey Champions, 1957*

In 1958 Heather won the junior girls singles at the Queanbeyan Easter Tennis tournament and in 1959 again won the Queanbeyan Resident Singles. It was in 1959 that Heather and some of her Evergreen teammates began playing squash socially to keep fit for hockey. Her choice of sports was about to be put to the test.

In March 1960, Heather made it three years running by winning the Queanbeyan Resident Singles defeating Rosalie Manning 8/6, 6/3. In April, despite being purely a social player, she was persuaded to participate in the NSW country squash titles in Wollongong. She proceeded to win the NSW Country Senior and Junior titles – returning home with prizes of a mixmaster and manicure set!

By August, Heather had been selected in the NSW team to compete (cont p7)

# Heather Pamela McKay (cont)

in the Australian Squash Championships. The rest is a well documented history, with Heather moving on to an unparalleled world squash career, retiring from 'Open' squash in 1981. Subsequently, she also reached the pinnacle of American racquetball and dominated World Masters Squash, finally 'retiring' from competitive squash in 1997.

In 1985 Heather and husband Brian had returned to Australia from Canada where they had coached squash for many years. Heather took up a position with the AIS Squash Program in Brisbane, alongside Geoff Hunt. In 1990, Heather was back in Canberra for four years. It was the same year that sister Kay reached the pinnacle of her tennis career, when she was a member of the first ever Australian team to win an ITF Seniors Womens World Teams competition. Kay then went on to win the 50+ World Doubles title and was runner-up in the Singles. She continued to be a prominent force in Canberra tennis until her untimely death in 2000.

Kay's passing brought to end a pact between she and Heather to play seniors tennis together travelling to tournaments whenever they could - a chance to enjoy family companionship and participate both competitively and socially in a sport they both loved.



*Heather and Kay 1993*

By 1995 Heather had returned to the AIS in Brisbane coaching squash but tennis had now become an important part of her social and sporting life. She joined the Queensland tennis seniors, representing Queensland in interstate competitions. In 1998, Heather won her first Australian Seniors Tennis Singles title at Newcastle, in the 55+ age group, defeating Dawn Martin 3/6, 6/4, 6/0.

In the years since 2000 and back in Canberra, Heather has made her mark on local, national and world seniors tennis. She has a total of nine Australian singles titles and four doubles titles. Her Australian tally consists of: 1998

55+ Singles (Newcastle), 2001 60+ Singles (Hobart), 2002 60+ Singles and Doubles (Canberra), 2004 60+ Doubles (Gold Coast), 2006 65+ Singles and Doubles (Christchurch), 2007 65+ Singles (Perth), 2008 65+ Singles (Albury -Wodonga), 2009 65+ Singles and Doubles (Adelaide), 2011 70+ Singles (Newcastle) and 2018 75+ Singles and Doubles (Gold Coast).

The pinnacle of Heather's tennis career was in 2001, when she was selected as a member of the Australian Alice Marble 60+ team to compete in the World titles. The team won the teams title in Adelaide and then Heather went on to win the Women's 60+ Singles title in Perth.

The match details of Heather's finals reflect her determination, skills and fitness, the hallmarks of her squash career. In the singles semi-final against Rosie Darmon, a former Wimbledon and French Open player, Heather was down 3/5 but saved a match point before taking the next four games to win the deciding set 7/5. In the singles final against teammate Margaret Wayte, Heather, after surrendering a comfortable lead, won a tie-break decider 7 points to 3 to win the title.



*World 60 Years Singles finalists, Rosie Darmon, Heather and Margaret Wayte m 2001*

Since then Heather has represented Australia in a further three World team titles: Velden, Austria in 2002 (3<sup>rd</sup>), Philadelphia, USA in 2004 (2<sup>nd</sup>) and in Perth in 2009 (3<sup>rd</sup>).



*Australian and World title Medals to date, 2021)*

Whilst Heather's tennis competition results are impressive, following her

retirement from squash, it is the social side of the sport which she finds equally rewarding. Travelling to tournaments and championships is a chance to renew friendly rivalries and socialise. The same can be said locally where regular club play – two to three times a week – along with the social opportunities through seniors tennis, maintains friendships, health and fitness.

Following the passing of her husband Brian in 2016, Heather has returned to her family roots in Queanbeyan, where she was born in 1941 and first learnt tennis in the 1950s. Turning eighty this year Heather has established a sporting record second to none. With many seniors now playing tennis into their eighties and nineties she has the opportunity for more records and enjoyment on the tennis court. A wonderful inspiration to us all.



*Heather at Reid, with the new generation, 2020*

The assistance of John Greenup from Tennis Seniors ACT, Wendy Grant from Queanbeyan Park Tennis Club and Heather McKay and family with photos and source material is gratefully acknowledged.

Postscript: to date we have been unable to find a photo of Heather in her junior tennis days – anyone?!



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Greg Birch 0419 547 850  
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# 2021 World Titles Update

The ITF has confirmed that the 2021 Seniors (50-55-60) World Championships in Umag, Croatia, originally scheduled to take place from 6-19 June 2021, will now be played from Sunday 29 August to Saturday 11 September. The event will remain in Umag, with the Team event running from 29 August – 3 September, before the Individual event from 4-11 September.

The Seniors World Championships will now immediately proceed the Young Seniors World Championships which remain scheduled for Umag from 12-25 September as well as the Super Seniors World Championships on Mallorca, Spain from 10-23 October 2021.

TSA have had discussions with Tennis Australia regarding sending teams to the 2021 World Championships. Whilst TA are finely balancing the desire to support Seniors players in pursuing their tennis, they are also aware of the current risks of traveling overseas as well as the challenges in returning back to Australia.

Subsequently, after some careful risk assessment TA made 8 points the detail of which can be found on the TSA website ([www.seniorstennis.org.au](http://www.seniorstennis.org.au)).

The last point was TA are reviewing what opportunities they can provide our affected athletes (ITF Juniors and Seniors) within Australia in light of this position.

As such TSA will not be calling for team nominations for 2021 until such time as when TA supports the sending of overseas teams. TSA in consultation with TA will be posting updates when they come to hand.

## 80<sup>th</sup> (OBE) Birthdays Lunch Sunday 25 July 2021



### Awards of OBEs (Over Bloody Eighties):

Jan Aubrey	Nancy Lane	Barbara McCluskey	Keith Olds
Margaret Harrigan	Barbara Mapley	Heather McKay	Dot Simm

**Where:** 'Trevino's Restaurant', Gold Creek Country Club, 50 Curran Drive, Nicholls

**Time:** 12 midday for 12.30pm

**Cost:** \$45 per head (Entree, main, cake, please purchase own drinks!)

**Attending?** Please contact our President, Graham Smith by Friday, 16 July 2021. Email: [bgsmith5352@gmail.com](mailto:bgsmith5352@gmail.com) text/ phone on Mob: 0407 208 209. (Please be aware that if you cancel after the closing date, you may be required to pay for the cost if Gold Creek Country Club charges Tennis ACT.) Please also let Graham know of any special dietary requirements, when booking.

Payment is by either cash at the door on arrival or by direct transfer to the:

**TSACT account number** at least one week prior to the event.

**Account Name:** Tennis Seniors ACT Inc, **BSB:** 062-900, **Account No:** 1048 3075.

When paying by direct transfer, when asked for a reference please **key in your name** so that our Treasurer, Peter Breugelmanns, can identify your payment.

**Be a winner! Come and join us celebrate our OBE birthdays!**

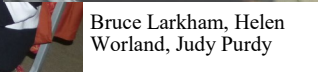
### Pictures from 50th Anniversary Dinner



Rochelle Hogan, Leonie Southwell, Anne Haycock, Karen Jameson, Bronwyn Thomas



Frank Marris, Dale Brooker  
Peter Breugelmanns, Alan Henderson, Neil Lynch



Bruce Larkham, Helen Worland, Judy Purdy





# Sunday Round Robin by Colin Lyons and Warren Muller

After the March washout we were back on the court in some cooler weather at Belconnen on 18 April. After sitting on 11 entries most of Thursday, an awkward number to run with, we had 3 more entries on Friday so ended up with 14 in a single draw with perfect gender balance 7 women, 7 men.

Once again, the organisers could not make it onto the court. Colin was in Queensland attending a high school reunion in Toowoomba and Warren was confined to the sidelines after removal of a skin spot on his right shoulder. Both hope to play next month.

Greg Hunt, with an average of 6, was a clear winner and was rewarded with the bottle of classic red wine aged on the shelves of a well-known Canberra retailer. Pat Moloney snuck into second place and forsook the white wine in favour of a box of chocolates. Just as well he didn't lose one more game or he would be sharing his chocolates. Good

performances were put in by Leonie Southwell and Doug Williamson, but just short of the 2-person podium. A special mention for consistency goes to Helen Macduff, who won the same number of games in all 4 sets she played. I have seen it done before, but it is rare.

The weather was kind to us again for the round robin at Weston Creek on 16 May, a bit cool at the start but ideal later in the morning. Despite a 30-minute later start, everyone was keen, and we played the full 5 sets. As in April, there were 14 entries but this time 9 men and 5 women. These were divided into two groups of 7 roughly based on standards, with a gender mix in each group. Knowing who swapped with whom after 4 games was occasionally tricky.

Chris Adam, in a guest appearance interrupting his Australia-wide travels, was clearly showing the benefit of the retired life and took it out with an average of 5.5. He says he will next be back much

later in the year, so we have been warned and will sharpen up our games ready for him. We hope he and Gina enjoy the bottle of red as they relax in their campervan contemplating the sunset. The reliable Daniel Tang, who doesn't know how to put in a bad performance, came in second with 5.00. We welcomed back Michael Chin after a considerable absence, and he showed us he hasn't forgotten how to play by taking out third place.

For the first time this year both organisers could play. While Colin performed creditably, the less said about Warren's performance the better. Let's just say he successfully captured the wooden spoon.

The next round robin will be on 20 June, again at Weston Creek as Belconnen courts cannot be booked while junior pennant is being played. We are back to the usual 9:15 arrival for 9:30 start in June; the courts are already booked!

## Wagga Wagga Seniors Tournament

*This report is drawn from articles written by Tom Denahy and Pauline Downes.*



The Wagga Wagga Seniors Tennis Tournament was held at the Jim Elphick Centre on 1-2 May, and once again, 51 experienced players with an average age of 55 years travelled to Wagga for the weekend and delivered some world class tennis. Players came from Victoria, Sydney, Canberra and Queanbeyan to take part in the Annual Round Robin event, now in its 20<sup>th</sup> year.

We were lucky to get the last of the sunshine before the weather starts to get cooler the closer to winter we get. The sunny weather made for perfect tennis playing conditions with unending sunshine across the two days. The tournament was run very successfully by Tom Denahy, Head Coach and Tennis Centre Coordinator. Tom was supported by the Southern Sports Academy and the Wagga Wagga Tennis Association. He has plans to improve the tournament next

year even including dinner at the tennis club, so make sure you put it in your calendar for next year.

The Women's American Doubles was very popular and originally had 14 players but the men's only had 4 so Vicky Vesse from Sydney and Pauline Downes decided to even up the numbers and play in the men's event. The men were too good with Tim Harris clearly the winner and a local, Pat Dwyer, beating Pauline for runner up. Leonie Southwell won the Women's American Doubles with Heather McKay runner up. While this event was being played there were Men's Singles events. Keith Olds won the 75+mens singles and Scott Smith was runner-up in the 50+ mens singles.

On Saturday afternoon, after already playing about 48 games in the morning, the doubles events were played with 6 teams in the 60+ ladies doubles. Pauline replaced Heather McKay at the last minute to play with Julie Pratt from Sydney. Pauline and Julie went through undefeated. The runners up were Margaret Sellwood and Leonie Southwell. It was a long event for the ladies. The lights were put on to make it easier to see the ball in the fading light.

The Men's Doubles 50+ was very suc-

cessful for Canberra participants with Scott Smith and Grant Woodbridge the winners and Tim Harris and Graham Smith the runners up.

It was an early start again on Sunday with Combined Aged Doubles events. Once again Canberra men's team of Scott Smith and Grant Woodbridge were winners in their event. It was another long event for the combined ladies doubles requiring 7 matches for each team. Victorian's Katrina Lowden and Adele Ormsby remained undefeated despite teams taking them to 3 tiebreakers in the event. The runners up were Pauline Downes and Christine Jarrett who played them in one of those tiebreakers.

The afternoon had two mixed events, with Grant completing a very successful tournament being undefeated in the mixed 30+ doubles with Pauline Downes. It was great to see him do so well as it was his last tournament as a Jerrabomberra member as he is moving to Merimbula in June to enjoy the tennis and better weather in his retirement. In the mixed 60+ doubles Tim Harris and Betty Smith came runner up.

The players stamina, etiquette and comradery was a highlight over the two days with most players knowing each other and enjoying a match up and catch up.

# Seniors Tournaments Results

## 2021 Oceania Senior Regional Championships by Sue Willis

Sue Willis reports she has said in the past that it is 'only the brave' who enter these tournaments! I was the only brave lady from the ACT to venture into this battlefield... with no victories I might add! On the male side Gary Thomas ventured forth winning a match in the mens 60 singles to reach the quarter finals.

However, for those keen to enter, this was the first ITF tournament in Australia to be organised since last March and it was a great success. Covid rules applied. The Club were under strict instructions from the ITF London to ensure each player received a temperature check and health questions on arrival. We also had to produce a copy of the pre-tournament questionnaire.

The tournament attracted 166 eager players including six International registered players. Players were also from Queensland and New South Wales.

This year, the tournament was held at the Geelong Lawn Tennis Club instead of Kooyong. The Club is an impressive new modern facility including two squash courts, eight en-tout-cas courts, six hard courts and 13 grass courts.

We older players (65 plus) were drawn to play on the tougher surface, en-tout-cas. The young ones (now starting at 30 years of age – just out of nappies) played on the grass!

I watched some great matches on the en-tout-cas where some of the rallies were sooooo loooooooooooooong as balls bounce slower and higher!!!! There

were also some spectacular slides!!

As with all tournaments but particularly after such a long break, the highlight was to see familiar faces. The warm and friendly Committee also managed a 'Meet and Greet' on the Friday evening, a BBQ on the Saturday evening as well as a very efficient canteen to cater for hungry tennis players.

On the Saturday evening, Robert Hughes received a Highly Commended Service Award presented by Tennis Victoria for his extended contributions to Seniors Tennis over a very long time!

Thank you to Tennis Victoria and all of the volunteers for an excellent event.

## Goulburn Seniors by David Ridley

It was perfect weather across the three days (26-28 March) and although we were only down to the one tennis centre this year (due to damage on the other courts) we still welcomed 135 players and their travelling partners to our tournament.

This year the ITF lowered the age of eligible competitors to 30 years old, in an attempt to increase participation in this age group and get them returning to tennis earlier. This approach proved successful for our tournament, as we had a number of players that fell into this age group that would normally be exempt. Plus it allowed them to compete against more experienced players; something they wouldn't typically be able to do.

After a difficult 2020 due to COVID, the committee banded together and hosted a great tournament in 2021. Whilst our tournament dinner environment/atmosphere wasn't as planned, the food was outstanding. The tournament itself awarded prizemoney to 52 individual winners and runners up across 26 events, with a very high standard of tennis played across the weekend. We thank all players and spectators and volunteers who made this a great event.

Around 25 ACT and district players played in the tournament with many of them featuring on the winners and runners-up list below.

### Winners

MS50+(2) - Grant Woodbridge  
MD55/70+ - Keith Olds/Brian Humphreys  
WD30/50+(1) - Joanne Adams/  
Catherine Long  
WD60+ - Leonie Ainsworth/Sue Willis  
XD30/50+(3) - Sue Willis/Graeme Rochow  
XD65+ - Leonie and Graeme Ainsworth  
XD70+ - Val Gavin/Don Masters  
CMD60/100+(2) - Tim Harris/Graeme Rossiter  
CMD130+ - Greg Hunt/Don Masters  
CXD130+ - May Howard/Grant Woodbridge

### Runners-up

MS60+ - Greg Hunt  
MD30/50+(3) - Tim Harris/Graeme Rossiter  
WD30/50+(2) - Michelle Grant/Thelma Winroe  
WD60+ - Val Gavin/May Howard  
XD30/50+(3) - Bev Roberts/Alan Pycroft  
XD65+ - Leonie Southwell/Geoff Cook  
CWD60/90/130+(1) - Leonie Ainsworth/Sue Willis  
CWD60/90/130+(2) - Margaret Selwood/Jean Penny  
CXD60/100+(2) - Jenny Armellin/Daryl Orr  
CXD130+(1) - Sue Willis/Graeme Rochow  
CXD130+(2) - Karen Layne/Greg Hunt



# Seniors Tournaments Results

## Berri Seniors Team Carnival

The Tennis Seniors SA 33<sup>rd</sup> Berri Teams Carnival was held on 15-17 May. The Carnival was cancelled last year due to COVID-19 but this did not discourage players this year with 89 teams entered, players coming from South Australia, Victoria and the ACT.

Ten players from Canberra made the trip across the Hay Plains or various other ways to avoid the Plains after getting Entry Permits to go through Victoria and Border Passes to get into South Australia. Some had to devour their fruit before reaching the SA/Victoria border or have a loosing discussion with the Quarantine Officers.

Rosa Cotta, Helen Greenup, Gail Jones and Betty Smith joined forces with Lyn Hammat from Jamestown in South Australia to form the Mixed Fashions team in the women's 65+. There were 5 other teams in the section - Mix N Match, New Crocks, Riverettes, Mid Week Friends and Bridge Bimbos. The team thoroughly enjoyed the weekend's tennis. The team played at all four venues - Berri, Renmark, Barmera and Loxton all on a variety of grass courts.

The mens 60+ team 'A Mixed Bunch' comprised of right and left handed players, players from two states and ages ranging from 62 to 77 ie a real mixed bunch. The team was Pat Moloney, Tim Harris, Graham Smith, John Greenup, Mike Horsman (Barmera) and Graeme Rossiter.



Our group comprised of seven teams, the winner being first past the post. The teams were the Barra Rats (from Ballarat and Ararat), the Nomads (roaming around Adelaide from different clubs), the Wanderers (similar to Nomads except they wandered), the Misfits (named many years ago with different players who didn't fit together), Strath Blokes +1 (from Strathalbyn plus one outsider) and the Interstaters (Geelong and Shepparton).

Matches were played at Barmera, Berri and Renmark. Renmark were the best courts and Berri, unfortunately, the worst. Competition was good and friendly with no arguments. Only problem was bad bounces at Berri which provided a good excuse for losing. We lost our first 3 matches but came home with a strong head of steam to win our last 3 to finish 5<sup>th</sup> overall. Very little separated positions two to six. Overall a good and

relatively even group.

The last member, Don Masters, was our only winner. He played with a group of friends in the Valley Villains in the men's 70+ and won their final after starting as underdogs.



*(alphabetically) Ron Cameron, Rob Hann, Jeff Labsch, Don Masters and Alan Spry*

Helen Nealer and Dave Bruckner regular players to the Berri event were seen around the courts.

This a great teams carnival and has been popular for many years often getting close to 100 teams. The tennis is played in good spirit with opportunities for social gatherings and meals afterwards. Put the Carnival in your diary now - Saturday 13 May to Monday 15 May 2022

And if you are thinking of going book accommodation now if you want to stay in Berri.

## Cowra Teams by Sue Metcalf

The Cowra teams tournament resumed on 29-30 May after being cancelled due to COVID-19 in 2020. Twenty teams participated from Canberra, Camden, Forbes, Springwood, West Wyalong, Collaroy and Orange. Frosty mornings greeted the players at 8.00am followed by sunshine all day

Winners of A ladies with a score of 41 were Party Girls, Pauline Downes, Cathy Long, Katrina O' Callaghan and Sonya Amey. Runners up with 36 points were Cathy Mayer's Dream Team with Kassy Dimes, Joanne Sherwood and Sue Willis.

A men's was won by Nathan Gardiner's Springwood Green team with 32 points, second spot was the Camden team captained by David Scotney (24 points).

B men's was won by Canberra, Graham Smith, Tim Harris, Graeme Rossiter, Greg Holcombe and Ian Worland from

Orange (37 points). In second spot was Don Master's team the Good Old Boys, consisting of Neil Matley, Greg Hunt, Chris Adam and Paul Corcoran.

The B ladies ended up with Forbes and Val's Gal's on 29 points each. A count back saw Forbes win. The team was Robyn, Rochelle, Dianne and thanks to the players who filled in for them during the weekend, Lindy and Cindy. Val' Gal's team was Val Gavin, Margaret Sellwood, Sue Metcalf (Lithgow) and Sue.

Congratulations to everyone who participated and made it a great weekend of tennis. A huge thank you to Cindy and her band of helpers who manned the kitchen. The food was fabulous. Also, to the helpers who had the courts and surrounds looking great.

Looking forward to the Cowra Seniors Tournament on 26-27 June.



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# Tennis Seniors ACT Calendar 2021/22

## TOURNAMENTS AND PENNANTS

**19-24 Sept 2021** Australian Tennis Seniors Individual Championships Gold Coast -(originally scheduled for Canberra in January 2021 but postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions)

**9-14 Jan 2022** Australian Tennis Seniors Team Carnival, Swan Hill, Victoria

**16-21 Jan 2022** Australian Tennis Seniors Individual Championships Swan Hill, Victoria

**Australian Seniors Championships:**  
Contact Pat Moloney (6262 3727)

**ACT Open Seniors Tournament:**  
Contact Pat Moloney (6262 3727)

## SUNDAY ROUND ROBIN TOURNAMENTS

The next tournament for 2021 is scheduled for a 9.15am start on 20 June at Weston Creek Tennis Club.

The dates for rest of the year are 18 July, 15 August, 19 September, 24 October and 21 November. Check the website closer to the date for any changes. All are a 9.15am start unless otherwise advised.

If you put your name down and find you cannot play on the day, please notify one of the organisers so that the other players are not inconvenienced.

**Contact: Colin Lyons (0434 531 449) or Warren Muller (0407 916 868)**

## DINNERS AND SPECIAL FUNCTIONS

**Lunch to celebrate the 80th Birthday for 8 of our members - 25 July 2021 - see page 8 for details**

This dinner covers 2020 and 2021 as 2020 was deferred due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Members booking for the dinners should be aware that if they cancel after the closing date they may be required to pay the cost if the caterer charges Tennis Seniors ACT.

**Contact Graham Smith (6161 5352)**

## Country and Interstate Tournament Calendar 2021/22

Some of the dates may change and some tournaments may be postponed or cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions. You should check the relevant State's website for any changes or restrictions on travel just prior to the relevant tournament.

### 2021

**11-14 Jun** TSV Claycourt Champs (S400)

**12-14 Jun** Gosford Mixed Teams

**19-20 Jun** Lake Macquarie Seniors

**25-28 Jun** Tweed Heads Pro-one Tennis (S200)

**26-27 Jun** Cowra Seniors R/R

**1-5 Jul** TSQ Championships (S700) Gold Coast

**9-11 Jul** Central Coast Wyong

**16-18 Jul** East Port Macquarie - **cancelled**

**30 Jul-2 Aug** Forster Seniors R/R

**7-8 Aug** Forbes Open Teams (tbc)

**13-15 Aug** Muswellbrook Park

**20-22 Aug** Batemans Bay R/R

**3-5 Sep** Cessnock Seniors R/R

**11-12 Sep** Manning River, Taree

**18-19 Sep** Orange Ex-Services R/R

**19-24 Sep** 2021 Australian Seniors Individual Champs (S1000)

Gold Coast, Queensland

**25-26 Sep** Gunnedah Seniors

**1-4 Oct** TSNSW State Champs (S700), Rochdale

**8-10 Oct** Kiama R/R

**15-17 Oct** Gosford Tennis Club R/R

**15-18 Oct** Merimbula Seniors

**22-24 Oct** Dubbo Paramount Seniors

**30 Oct-2 Nov** TSV Champs (S400), Kooyong

**5-7 Nov** Hawks Nest, Myall Park

**13-14 Nov** Bathurst Carillion City R/R

**14-16 Nov** TSSA State Champs (S100)

**26-29 Nov** TSV Grasscourt Champs (S700), Yarrowonga

**3-5 Dec** Nelson Bay Seniors

### 2022

**9-14 Jan** Australian Seniors Teams Carnival, Swan Hill, Victoria

**16-21 Jan** Australian Seniors Individual Champs, Swan Hill, Victoria

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## West Wyalong Teams Event by Tim Harris

Tim Harris is happy to report that all the TSACT members that participated in the West Wyalong Teams Event held from 20-21 March had a great weekend. Despite the forecast and eventual rain, play was possible up to midday Sunday before the heavens opened and the courts were literally flooded. As all but the last matches had been completed, results were still able to be determined and winning teams awarded.

Congratulations to Don Masters, Greg Hunt, Pat Dwyer (Wagga) and Paul Corcoran (Boorowa) for winning the men's B Grade.



Congratulations to Pauline Downes, Cathy Mayer, Karen Dunn, and Sue Metcalf (Cowra) for winning the women's A Grade.



Also, special mention to Joanne Adams, Rochelle Hogan, Margaret Sellwood, Robyn Armitage (Temora) and Lindy Cannon (Forbes) who came in third in the woman's A Grade.

This event, in the past, was impacted by a heat wave, then a dust storm, and this year torrential rain. That's strike three so it all looks good for next year's event!