

## KWAZULU-NATAL TENNIS ASSOCIATION

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT – June 2021

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

Personal warm greetings to one and to all on this Saturday in June. Winter in Durban is such a pleasure. Special welcomes to the TSA President and our Immediate Past President Gavin Crookes, the President of the KZN Sports Confederation Thami Mchunu, our KZN Honorary Life Vice Presidents and Honorary Elected Vice President.

Once again, it is an honour for me to present the annual President's Report for the year under review. To say that the year has been somewhat different would be a total understatement. For those of us who recall, our last AGM was 2 months late due to the hard lock down and efforts to get our sport restarted. All activities events and calendars were subject to sudden changes – a case of on again or off again. I suppose the good news is that we are still here, have coped well and our sport has traversed this period of turmoil and 2 waves of infection of the pandemic during the past months – with the 3<sup>rd</sup> in progress as I speak. I think that we can claim to have come to grips with this new normal.

We started by arranging to have an “in person” AGM but the announcements by our State President in the last few weeks, placing the country on lockdown level 2 then shortly thereafter on level 3, necessitated us reverting to the virtual meeting option of the AGM. So, I thank everyone for their patience during these changes and to Sica's Guesthouse for the last-minute cancellation.

The Annual KZN Operations Tennis Report has been compiled as a record of the activities during this shortened year. I trust that you will find the contents accurate and may cover aspects that I may not have included in this report. My thanks to all District Presidents and the different portfolio Chairman who have obliged by submitting their reports in good time.

We have held regular monthly Executive meetings during 2020 and the first 5 months of 2021. The conversion to virtual meetings proved a challenge to the elderly folk like me 😊, but I am pleased to announce that we are in great form now. The meeting start time was changed to 7 pm in an attempt to promote attendance by the coaches. We have also added several portfolios to our executive so that they are kept in focus and do receive attention. These are: -

- a) Transformation
- b) Wheelchair Tennis
- c) Beach Tennis
- d) Tennis Legends

I thank the Exco members for their time, attendance, contributions, and support at these meetings. The annual Council meeting held in December was great, with the attendance of 4 of our 5 districts being present to update council on progress being made in their areas.

## KWAZULU-NATAL TENNIS ASSOCIATION

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT – June 2021

---

Tennis player registrations have been very brisk this year. This positive trend has been due to the following....

1. The return to coaching, competitive tennis, tournaments, and leagues.
2. The TSA state of disaster COVID 19 protocols affording players a sense of comfort and safety at affiliated tennis venues stipulating that all players partaking in the sport must be registered and supporting this with rigid behavioural protocols.
3. The Coaches COVID 19 Monthly License initiative requiring amongst other precautions, that all coaches are fully registered within their districts and provinces.

Below are the registration figures until mid-June 2021 and based on payments from Sporty HQ from November 2020.

	<u>June 2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>
• Registrations KZN	1550	1685	1382	2130	1551
• Rolling Registrations	2410				
• Sporty HQ – active database	4022	3440	2817	2798	2091

With the introduction of the 365-day registration by TSA last year all memberships don't expire at the 31<sup>st</sup> December each year, meaning that members registering later in the year only fall due for re registration on their membership anniversary. This does add complication to admin within clubs but is fair to the member and removes the urge within clubs to withhold / postpone registering new members, until the new calendar year. Hence the introduction of the rolling registrations measures above. The major portion of the difference between the "active database" and the rolling registrations are the schools' athletes who do not play at clubs or participate in tournament. As always, I would like to urge the KZN Schools and all tennis coaches to encourage tennis pupils to register on the Sporty HQ database – it is free. These athletes are the future of tennis, and the net needs to be spread wider. It would be a pleasure to complete the school's data required for the EPG report if this were so. Additionally, clubs with neighbouring schools should be promoting tennis there and inviting the players to join their membership.

The KZN Miniseries 1 Tournament staged before the onset of the COVID pandemic was declared in 2020, ran very well with a better-than-expected entry. Subsequent to the hard lockdown and when competitive sport was allowed to resume, tournament entries plummeted resulting in some of our tournaments running at a loss. The feasibility of continuing the planning of each tournament had to be carefully considered and the association had to often make the difficult decision to run tournaments at breakeven to allow players to get back to competitive tennis. Players and parents were reluctant to enter due to the restrictions around inter provincial travel, the no spectator rule and all the Covid protocols placed on the events. The need for these measures were often not understood or appreciated by parents who often tried to beat the system. This along with the additional COVID costs (more personal, consumables and equipment) added to the difficulty and stress to the already strained tournament budgets.

## KWAZULU-NATAL TENNIS ASSOCIATION

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT – June 2021

---

At the start of 2021 there seemed to have been a renewed spirit within competitive tennis. In the first 6 months of the year, we have already completed Mini 1, 2 and 3, and in total contrast to 2020, entries have exceeded our expectations surpassing the numbers at the same Mini's in 2019. The June Mini 3 had a final entry of more than 200 players. This is a record for the KZN Miniseries. Our heartfelt thanks must go to Natalie Grandin for the efficient way she and her team runs our tournaments. Very sadly though Natalie & Gary will be emigrating to Australia, most probably as soon as that country reopens its borders. She will be a great loss to us so may I on behalf of KZN Tennis wish them well in their future endeavours abroad.

Other sad news relating to tournaments and sponsors. The Wilson ball sponsorship of the KZN Miniseries was not renewed for 2021 and Trafalgar Properties withdrew their sponsorship of our Grand Prix Tournament normally run in September, annually.

Two grade 5 ITF Junior Tournaments were held back-to-back at the Westridge Tennis Stadium during January earlier this year. ETA rescued these two tournaments which did not have a venue that was ready for use and did a stirring job of preparing the venue at short notice and just after staff had returned from their annual break. Our appreciation to Dave Williams and the staff at the stadium. Both these international tournaments were won by Durban lad Luc Koenig, which given the quality of the field is an astounding achievement.

The upsizing of tournaments here in the province has exposed our shortage of referees and officials. We did have a course to upgrade our level 1 officials and thanks to those taking the initiative to this. However, we need new people in the chairs so it is essential that the officials committee is restarted and that this is a focus area going forward.

The TSA Junior Nationals for 2021 have been completed with all except the U18 sections being draws of 64. 47 KZN athletes were invited to Nationals with 14 athletes finishing in the top 20 of their age group. Notable results were from Kaitlyn Ramduth who was runner up in the Girls U16 and Siyabonga Jaca who lost in the final of the Boys U14. Connor Doij was placed 3<sup>rd</sup> Guy Vorwerk 5<sup>th</sup> Yenzo Dladla 6<sup>th</sup> John Bothma 10<sup>th</sup> Sophia Solodonovic 10<sup>th</sup> in their respective sections. Worth a special mention are the good performances of the 5 athletes from within our development squad systems Amahle Fihela 15<sup>th</sup> Lusanda Mngadi 57<sup>th</sup> Sanelisiwe Booibooi 45<sup>th</sup> (in a higher age group) Siyabonga Jaca 2<sup>nd</sup> and Simphiwe Ngwenya 36<sup>th</sup> – our congratulations to them all.

The KZN Lollipop ROG series has gone from strength to strength efficiently run by Kim and Karen – my thanks to you both for your efforts. I am positive that this grass roots programme is having a positive effect on our tournament entries in the province and with the passion shown at this developmental stage we will reap the benefits far into the future.

The KZN Seniors continues a stable course, and I must commend Dave Vincent, Maureen Davisworth and their committee for their tireless efforts to keep the KZN Seniors flag hoisted high. They have ensured full commitment to the programme as set out by the national Seniors dept. despite the pandemic and the challenges at national level in the past few months. KZN Teams have been sent to compete in the age specific Interprovincial

## **KWAZULU-NATAL TENNIS ASSOCIATION**

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT – June 2021**

---

tournaments wherever this has been possible, but one should applaud the all Black team that travelled to the Eastern Cape earlier this year. Another first for this committee was their application to the KZN Sports Confederation Colours Committee to recognise one of the Interpro Teams. I am sure that this will become a standard procedure in future enabling KZN Seniors teams to wear the new KZN logo on their tracksuits and equipment in future.

Schools Tennis was arguably the worst affected in 2020. Inter schools competition was stopped for the longest time and they not only had the general sports requirements and protocols to contend with but also those of the Dept of Education. The National Schools Interprovincial eventually had to be scrapped for 2020 and this after the KZN schools' trials had been completed and the Primary and High School teams were selected. This had to have been a great disappointment to the players. The 2021 KZN School's trials were played this past weekend to the monran system, and the teams are selected. I sincerely hope that the August date is not affected by the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave and that the teams are able to go to the Interprovincial this year. Heartfelt thanks to Sean Topper and the Schools Committee for your dedication during the year and I realise that we all have different thoughts on how we think things should be done but we need to cooperate for the common good.

KZN Coaches are currently in the regrouping phase. At last August's AGM I welcomed Mark Vorwerk as the new Coaches Committee Chairman and wished him well. Shortly thereafter Mark resigned for personal reasons and Jared Temlett stood in as interim Chairman and ensured that the KZN Coaches Annual Workshop took place in January this year. Shortly after their elections Chris Folker agreed to be co Chairman but has since withdrawn as he is due to emigrate to the UK shortly. I do trust that the need for a replacement Chairman is high on the agenda of the standing coaches committee and that a committed person will be appointed soon. The issuing of the Coaches Monthly COVID licences has continued for the entire year thus far, has experienced some glitches but in the main worked well. I appeal again to all coaches to ensure that they are compliant in this regard as it is unlawful to coach during this state of disaster without one. TSA finally conceded that the coaches provincial and district registrations are not included within their annual licence fee. Coaches paid their 2021 licences through Sporty HQ and registered to the province and district separately. This has been a point of departure for the past several years.

Junior Athlete Development here in KZN - the year's highlights: -

- The number of athletes from the development hubs being entered into KZN tournaments has been consistently around 30 and we have noticed that their results are improving year on year.
- The KZN candidates for the TSA Mentorship programme 2021 have already been accepted.
- Schools bursaries through the DSR for Kaitlyn Ramduth & Amahle Fihlela – applications made.
- The number of development hub athletes invited on merit to the Junior Nationals has doubled from 2020 to 6 for this year.

Our application to the Dept of Sport bore no fruit for 2020 despite our having been granted NPO status by the Dept of Social Development in January 2020. Our delayed application to SARS for tax exemption became the new main stumbling block. This has since been

## KWAZULU-NATAL TENNIS ASSOCIATION

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT – June 2021

---

resolved as well. The loss of this funding was a severe challenge. The federation had to allocate funding to keep our development programmes in place until the end of the year. We attended a DSR Workshop for an entire weekend during March. On the agenda was Transfer Payments to the Federations, advice on NPO applications and requirements and guidance for acquiring tax exemption.

A fresh Business Plan was submitted to the KZN DSR in April this year. Assistance was asked for in the following areas:-

- Administrative Assistance for KZN
- District Tournaments Support
- District Tennis Development Hub Support
- School Volley (Tennis) Introduction

Some good news is that a R250K allocation has been promised for KZN Tennis this past week which means that the above projects need to be trimmed to suit.

The KZN Sport Confederation held an “in person” QGM during the latter months of 2020 and we need to commend the President Thami Mchunu and his committee firstly for leading the organisation out of the doldrums during their first term and regaining the respect and confidence of SASCO, Dept of Sport and the federations. One merely needs to refer to membership growth during this term to gain a perspective of the degree of confidence shown. Then congratulations to them also for retaining their positions for a further term despite spirited opposition in the weeks before the QGM. We extend our good wishes for another successful term.

The KZN submissions for the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) Report were completed and sent to TSA by the deadline at the end of March. The report is used by Govt as a barometer of transformation within sport across the entire country and our tennis performance briefly is as follows,

- |   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| • % achieved – “One size fits all” Charter Barometer    | 17%              |
| • % achieved – “self-set & forward projected” Barometer | 53%              |
| • Barometer Target Ranking                              | 9 <sup>th</sup>  |
| • Transformation Charter Target Ranking                 | 14 <sup>th</sup> |

Tennis nationally scores poorly against our self-set targets in the following broad categories:

1. Medical & Scientific group demographic profile
2. Black Male & Female representative teams

Provinces need to assist with achieving point 2 and I believe that KZN is doing its bit within the younger age categories, but this will start impacting on the overall in due course.

Following the example of TSA and their concerted effort in promoting Transformation within the sport through initiatives like Anthony Moruthane’s “zoom roadshow” to gauge the “health” of transformation within our provinces and districts. We have formed a Transformation portfolio under the leadership of Anil Mooljee to guide and assist districts and clubs where possible to become more compliant in this area. The KZN survey for the province, districts, seniors, schools and coaches was completed and submitted to TSA by the 31<sup>st</sup> August. I must admit that I cannot recall being informed of the outcomes of this exercise. Although there have been some progress updates at our monthly meeting. I am

**KWAZULU-NATAL TENNIS ASSOCIATION**  
**PRESIDENT'S REPORT – June 2021**

---

sure that there will be a comprehensive report of progress at the council meeting and at the next AGM.

Finally, thank you to Lynda Oosthuizen our Secretary/Treasurer and Debashan Reddy our Development Officer for their hard work in the office during the past year. Besides COVID 19, short deadlines, internet outages, load shedding and a burglary all played out during the past months.

I must express my appreciation to Lennie Peters the Vice President, to the Executive Committee, thanks to – Dave Vincent, Maureen Davisworth, Lindsay North, Neil Khuzwayo, Tubby Govender, Kim Hayes, Sean Topper, Anil Mooljee, and to Natalie Grandin (our Tournament Director) – all your efforts are highly appreciated. Tubby Govender has been on special health leave for most of 2020. We all hope for his full recovery. Thanks also to the ETA staff, Kershaw Staff and all the individuals at the tennis venues where the KZN Tournaments are played.

Thanks to the District Presidents and to your committees for your efforts and continued support during 2020 and now into 2021.

Thank you.

Leonard Morgas