

Port Pirie Squash Club

Annual General Meeting

President's Report

10 October 2019

Port Pirie's first squash pennant in three years was played in the autumn of 2019. The pennant was played in amazing facilities. It began on February 6, 2019 and so did the renaissance of a club.

This year has been an historical moment for Port Pirie squash. We all walked into an extraordinary Centre. It was truly beautiful and around 50 people connected to something special about its invitation to play. The expertise of a builder and the inspiration of an architect created something exceptional. Now the skills of our game will develop as will the club.

People have connected to courts and the Sporting Precinct over the year. Balls are being hit and people are hiring courts. There is now a President, a Committee and a new Constitution. There are pennant teams and tournaments, a new logo, trendy club apparel and a wave of enthusiasm. The pennant launched with seven teams of five and we worked to recreate the fun of our previous social life.

I congratulate all members because you began and were loyal. You connected to a legacy and created our own style, our particular Port Pirie way of making squash happen. You began again or tried it for the first time and you tried your best.

In this transformation time we recognize the vision of the Port Pirie Council. This year our special game has grown through the facilities and through the Council loyalty to a group of players who said that squash is too good to let die. The Council did put up with a few letters and impatient knocks on the door from us. It is working.

We started again and I feel very grateful. Individuals need to be mentioned:

I acknowledge Terry McGinnis from Belgravia who is concerned to help us thrive. His support and guidance are appreciated. His understanding of a group of sporting people and what they need is insightful.

I thank the Clare Squash Club and Bentley Hotel for their support of us and the creation of a town rivalry that began with a contest in between pennant seasons. Clare won the 'Broken Racquets Trophy' on this first occasion. Thanks to Tony Iannetta for his organisation.

I do appreciate the visit from Squash SA and their support and advice. We are still to use their expertise more fully. I recognise Paul Laube and his work with Jim Watson from Whyalla.

I recognise the generosity and creativity of David and Lyndal White from Pirie Signs and Designs as they developed apparel. Club colours have been established and we look quite smart. Thanks to Anthony Spadavecchia for his driving persistence.

I appreciate the work and time of Phil Radley and Sonia Clarke for the development of the SA Masters Tournament. It was a great weekend of squash.

I acknowledge the Port Pirie Bowling Club for their hospitality. The social dimension of squash has thrived on their premises. There is a good connection between the two clubs. Particular thanks to Tony and Josh for responsible service of drinks and ordering pizzas that even contain pineapple.

I especially want to recognise the work of Tony Iannetta. He is extraordinarily generous and purposeful in overseeing the welfare of our club. He remains its heartbeat and great patron.

There was a successful pennant Grand Final and the evening was filled with people and competitive squash. It was a highlight of a successful pennant. The idea to have a Life Member to present the trophies and then award of Player of the Final seemed worthwhile. Thanks to Bill Hewton and congratulations to Marty Pepe who took the honours that night as Best Player and Anthony Spadavecchia led the Indians out of their tepees and into glory.

The Committee is filled with people who want to do the service, roll up their sleeves and make it happen. I thank the committee for building the foundations of a renewed club. Paul Laube as Secretary (and driving force behind the creation of the Constitution), Leigh Hajisavva as Treasurer, Simon Oehms as Pennant Director, Sonia Clarke in Publicity and regular Recorder correspondent, Marty Pepe (Equipment and Plant) and Anthony Spadavecchia (liaison officer in charge of being charming and ambassadorial) all did a dozen jobs. And so we purchased a whiteboard and a laptop, paid insurance, created a flyer, negotiated storage, developed a logo, constructed seating, created a window display, advertised and supported new players. We held regular meetings and tried to be conscious of the needs of players and the opportunities of the future. There is still work to do but much was done. Now we have plans for the Juniors and accommodating a range of ability levels.

The Port Pirie Squash Committee met on October 16th, 2018 and it all really began. We spoke about goals and hopes for squash as we set about rebuilding and recreating the Club. We wrote together a vision for the year. The words are now a measure of achievement and a reflection of hope. They are worth remembering:

We love squash. We have played it for a long time. We want to see this Club grow and find itself at a new level. As a group, we bring a passion for the game and a commitment to the Club. We want to see it successful. We want to try new things and create and grow the sport in the town. We know the importance of the game because of what it has done for us; for our fitness and love of sport. We see the potential in a huge number of juniors that just need to get onto the court. We commit ourselves to getting them on the court.

We believe that our game is strong because of our longevity in the game. We have experience and great memories of what the Club can become and now we have a vision to recreate that. We recognise the importance of our friendships and that this is an important part of our future success. We know that this is a family game and we will create a welcoming and inclusive family environment. We love the battles on the court and celebrate the mateship and effort. It is the mateship and the effort that will sustain this Club.

I feel confident that the future is sound.

Greg Hay
10.10.19