



Across the Table

Newsletter of Table Tennis New Zealand

30 August 2008

Issue 4

Administration Changes for the National Body

The TTNZ Board has decided not to renew the lease of the Boulcott St Wellington National office which has been the headquarters of TTNZ for some years. The Board has been wrestling with a budget forecast which would see the organisation in deficit for a significant period early in 2009. Despite a reduction in expenditure this year there has been a reliance on grant funds to keep us in the black and even maintaining the current structure would see only very basic services provided and no support for the essential areas of participation, high performance, training camps or training of coaches and officials.

The office closure will also see the conclusion of the contract to provide administrative services to TTNZ by **Peter Chard**. Peter had very big shoes to fill following **Averil Roberts** departure and the Board appreciated his work in endeavouring to fill the gap which Averil left in our office. Substantial savings will be immediate and a significant improvement in TTNZ fiscal circumstances over the next six months will be the result.

During an interim period, a complete assessment of roles, job descriptions and expectations surrounding the administration of TTNZ is to be undertaken by Mrs **Gina Connell**. Gina will also be filling the role of administration manager while conducting this review. Gina has kindly offered the rent free use of her office at home to conduct the review and the business of TTNZ. It is hoped that an initial draft of her report will be available for comment and discussion at the AGM weekend, to be held in Palmerston North 16th & 17th of November. It is planned that the report be distributed to Associations prior to the AGM so that Association Committees can brief their delegates on their views.

The Board has also developed, and unanimously endorsed, a new four year strategic plan for adoption at the AGM. This plan will give new direction for TTNZ and provides a platform for Associations to take a very active role in areas such as high performance and participation. This document will be also distributed to Associations in time for their various management committees and boards to review before the AGM.

Ron Garrett will be working through to the end of September with Gina and his service as Executive Director will conclude on that date. From that time until the new structure of administration is phased in the executive functions will be carried out by the Board Chair, **Alan Moore**.

Contact details regarding post, email and telephone for TTNZ will remain the same and all entry forms and correspondence etc should be sent to Box 867 Wellington.

New Zealand Open Championships Wellington 1-11 October 2008

Details at:
<http://www.tabletennis.org.nz/nationalevents.htm>

If you live near, come and watch the
action at:
**Walter Nash Stadium
Tocker Street Taita
Lower Hutt**



Annual General Meeting 2008

This year's Annual General Meeting will be held at the Kingsgate Hotel, Fitzherbert Avenue, Palmerston North on Saturday and Sunday 15/16 November.

Workshops will be held on Saturday and the AGM on Sunday morning. Sunday afternoon following the AGM a TTNZ Board meeting will take place.

Table Tennis New Zealand is proud to be sponsored by:

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Farewell from the Executive Director

In the January issue this year I announced I would be stepping down from the role of Executive Director. From a three month appointment in May last year, to an expected departure in February, the 30 September date for leaving is final, final, final.



In May 2007 TTNZ was only surviving on grants, some contracts were in place which could not be sustained. We were in effect insolvent. Today we are in better position but we still have a way to go to be able to do what needs to be done. Ideally we should have in bank half our annual budget.

I have upset some people by cutting budgets, this mainly being in High Performance areas, and pruned back the budget this year across the board. I have had some interesting challenges and some issues I would rather not have dealt with, but that is life.

A full evaluation of all administration services is being undertaken to try and achieve cost savings and also use expertise within table tennis. Some services being done within office can be done outside and streamlined to save costs.

The proposed Strategic Plan to be debated at AGM sees a number of changes in participation and high performance areas with associations taking more responsibility for development. TTNZ can provide ideas, templates, but the actual growth can only be done at grass roots level. TTNZ has been one and half people (yes I was 20 hours paid a week) which is impossible to cover the whole country.

Also in the wind are proposed changes to tournaments throughout the country.

I will still be around and will help when it suits me, not because it has to be done.

Ron Garrett
Executive Director

Visit by top Korean player to Canterbury

Korean Kim Taek Soo, one of the outstanding world players of the last two decades, visited Christchurch recently at the invitation of resident Canterbury player-coach Jong-Eub Han.

Kim, 38, was third in the men's singles at the 1991 World Championships, a bronze medalist in the singles and doubles at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, third in the world doubles in 1993 and winner of the 1998 Asian Games.

Many people give up in pursuit of their goals, but he did not, he said. "Nobody can do it well from the beginning, but if they practise and have a goal, they can do it." Kim said that when players were at the same level, "mental attitude is more important ... concentration and confidence"

Kim coached Korea at the 2004 Athens Olympics, where team member Ryu Seung Min upset the top-rated Chinese star, Wang Hao, to win the gold medal.

For New Zealand to lift its standard, professional coaching, more international exposure and more school and city player management were needed. "If New Zealand started from now with a system, in 10 years it could have results, could improve," he said.

Alistair Armstrong

Oceania Championships – Tahiti (July)

The NZ team won the Oceania Under 18 Girls' team championships and will therefore represent Oceania in the World Junior Championships in Spain in December. The junior team was **Jenny Hung, Villa Yan, Jennifer Jin** and **Sally Ho**.

The NZ Women's team consisting of **Sun Yang, Jenny Hung, Sophie Shu** and **Jessica MacAskill** came second to Australia in the teams event.

LI Chunli was the coach for both teams.

Canterbury News

A feasibility study is being undertaken to upgrade facilities at 294 Blenheim Road Christchurch. The possible upgrade would include re-roofing the Stadium, addition of a mezzanine floor and a complete revamp of the changing rooms, toilets and kitchen area. Henry Redmond is co-ordinating this process in conjunction with Committee members. Henry has negotiated an excellent Sponsorship deal with Flexoplas Packaging, to cover the painting expenses of re-naming our Stadium "Flexoplas Table Tennis Stadium Canterbury" and a tidy \$5k pa. Other fundraising initiatives include the annual delivery of telephone books giving many local players the opportunity to get some extra exercise and give "something back" to TTC.

Since joining the Committee of TTC earlier last year, I have been very humbled by the number of unpaid hours and the amount of energy that other Committee members have dedicated to this sport for the enjoyment of others!

Russell Armstrong

Vets Champs Trivia!

Over 60 WD: Merle & Betty versus Merle & Betty! (Sneddon & Thompson v Trenwith & McNamara). Later on in the singles - Merle played Merle & Betty played Betty!

Governance in Table Tennis

With the Annual Meeting of Table Tennis New Zealand coming up in November and many Associations having their Annual Meetings at year end or prior to start of season, now is a good time to look at who runs the sport.

Before going any further let us be reminded that we are running/organizing table tennis for the players, be they beginners or elite players. This applies equally at NZ and Association level.

Good governance is needed at all levels. It's not about running a tournament, getting funds, doing coaching, looking after the interclub, social groups etc. That is done by people experienced and trained in that area. They don't want or need to come to meetings, they want to get on with the job. Training is available at Regional Sports Trusts throughout the country for this.

How often do you see all correspondence left to a meeting, members get handed a copy at meeting, or a committee member opens agenda at meeting, some go to sleep during meetings or have no interest in half the proceedings. Now, I ask you is that good use of time?

All Boards must have a broad mix of skills including in our case, sport and particularly table tennis knowledge. This does not mean everyone needs to have specific table tennis knowledge. It should be well balanced, with strengths in areas of governance, financial, legal, policy, marketing, high performance and business.

Each member needs to demonstrate independence of thought and contribute both inside and outside their area of expertise. Robust debate should be held to achieve agreement. And that is only possible with knowledge. There is no excuse for saying nothing, then leaving the meeting and making your views known. They must all act as a team.

The Board should set the direction, both long and short term, make adjustments if necessary but ensure that progress is made in the sport and above all ensure that resources are available before entering contracts. Board members should make it their business to understand the background in issues and not just accept what the CEO says.

There has been debate, which will no doubt go on for years, about having more women, more representation by larger associations, why should minor associations have say in high performance areas etc. etc. This is missing the point about what is good governance. It takes knowledge. Also if a well presented case is put forward it should succeed regardless of the voting strength of the presenter. If not it has been poorly explained and deserves to fail.

Remember the Board is where the buck stops.

Of course many Board members will have special expertise or interest. That is fine and can be carried out, outside of their Board role. This will be more applicable in small associations. A TTNZ Board member when carrying out his or her duties must only consider the interests of TTNZ and not someone else's interest.

In November this year at AGM two members come up for re-election. Nominations will be called for soon from associations.

Ron Garrett

To play or not to play ?

by Chris Little

Playing table tennis as a veteran is obviously not everyone's cup of tea. So why start playing again after 13 years out of the game? First, I've got some good friends in Melbourne who had always encouraged me to pick up the bat again. Second, my family had heard all about this past sporting career but had never seen any of it. Third, I was sick of sitting on the couch watching sport on TV rather than playing it myself.

So towards the end of 2006, I started having a few hits at the North Harbour Day Club – mainly doubles - in a relaxed, friendly spirit. Then, without any interclub or tournament play behind me, I fronted up at the 2007 NZ Vets in Auckland. I could now enter both 040 and 050 age groups.

Well, how strange it all felt at first . . . couldn't get used to the new scoring/serving system, had forgotten what you had to do to win points, felt very old and out of condition, lost my very first game after being 2-0 up, discovered an injury lying in wait, found it difficult to focus and generally felt a bit out of sorts. And I was very, very sore at the end of the four day event.

Continued bottom next page.

Individual Member Registration

All members must register through their associations.

Our web site page - <http://www.tabletennis.org.nz/registration.htm> gives details together with appropriate registration forms.

Be currently registered - it helps TTNZ and Associations.

Contributions to the Newsletter Welcome

We expect to publish bi-monthly

If this is your first issue of **Across the Table** it will because you have been registered by your association.

You can unsubscribe - see below.

Chris Little whose article concludes below is a former top Australasian player, winning the NZ Women's Singles titles in 1983, 1985 & 1986

Chairman makes plea for improved completion of entry forms

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all players of the following when entering championships.

- Read the conditions of entry carefully
- Take note of where to send your entry form.
- Ensure your entry is received BEFORE the closing date
- Ensure your entry meets the eligibility criteria.
- Ensure you send the correct entry fee.
- Ensure the person named as your partner in doubles is also entering the same event with you named as their partner.
- Write your address and email address details legibly.
- Ensure you supply the correct 5 digit IMR number.

What I would like all entrants to understand is that if you do your part well then everything that follows will be easier.

National events, in particular, have draws and timetables fixed well in advance to allow for a variety of things. These include posting of seedings on the web-site, draw committee meetings, publication of the programme and scheduling. Changes will not be made when you arrive at the tournament and realise that you are not in an event, or have no partner, because you have not done your part and followed the instructions contained in the entry form.

Thank you for reading through to this point, I hope that you will take careful notice and do your bit to help the tournament management team at your next tournament.

Make sure your entry is not declined due to improper completion of the entry form.

The last words for this article are: **READ ALL THE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE FILLING IN THE FORM**

Alan Moore (Chairman - Table Tennis New Zealand)

To play or not to play? *(continued from previous page)*

But our 040 Auckland women's team (with Hilary Low) finished second in the teams and I won the 050 singles on the Monday. Was my family proud? Oh yes. Was I aching? You bet, but thrilled at the same time. There were familiar faces and friends from different parts of NZ and from Australia too. Many have simply never stopped playing.

The next big event was the Australian Vets on the Gold Coast in September. This was a huge event with international players from Japan, Denmark, Malaysia, England, Hong Kong and a large NZ contingent. They play teams' events for 5 days! Three person teams rather than two, and two doubles per match. I didn't feel as prepared as I would have liked.

However, with Val Beaver, Tanya Sulimova & Averil Roberts, our NZ 050 women's team finished with a bronze medal and I won 19/21 games in that event. Val & Averil went on to win the 050 doubles and I scrambled home with the 050 singles. Sabine Westenra and I made the semi-final of the 040 doubles and went close to beating the eventual winners. It was a great tournament in so many ways. I was meeting up with old friends from all over Australia and caught up with my first coach from Adelaide - Bill Oatey. There was some wonderful table tennis too. Despite the heat, it was an exciting and enjoyable tournament with a great atmosphere and of course, a great location.

That was 2007 and it felt good to be playing again.

Produced by Robin Radford (with editing assistance from John Kiley) for:

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