

IN THE SWING

Squash Wellington Newsletter

From the Chair

While Covid is still playing a major part in many Kiwis' lives, we have been fortunate to get back on court and see some tournaments played during October.

We know our friends in Auckland, Waikato and Northland are doing it tough and we continue to keep them all in our thoughts and hope to see them in a more relaxed setting soon enough.

Congratulations to our 2021 Skillsoft Wellington Masters Champions, Nicky Gibbs and Matt Green. It was great to be able to run the tournament on the 3rd attempt. Our thanks to Skillsoft, Mana Squash Club and all the participants for the work and effort that went into running the tournament.

Over the past weekend some clubs kicked off their Club Champs for the year (while others have already concluded and some still to follow). Congrats to all the winners and good luck to those yet to play for Club bragging rights!

Please do check out Martin Krafft's article on tournament management software he's created and kindly made available to our clubs. With the extended playing season due to Covid, we've run out of weekends on which to host another club hui this season, but this kind of tool would be great to demo at the next one. Get in touch if you have other things to add to the kōrero.

Last but not least, a massive congratulations to Evan Williams and Kaitlyn Watts, newly crowned Oliver Sport NZ Squash Classic. What a fantastic weekend of squash on display at Hutt City. Thanks to everyone who made it possible.



OLIVER SPORT NZ SQUASH CLASSIC

Williams and Watts continued their major event title wins over the weekend taking out the Oliver Sport NZ Squash Classic 2021. The dynamic duo continue their dominance on the domestic scene with this win notching up yet another Open title, their second National title following the NZ Mixed Doubles earlier this year. Let's not forget their other Championship wins, Waikato, Panmure and Wellington Opens.

For Evan, he continues his unbeaten winning streak for over a year now. Pretty phenomenal with one more domestic national event scheduled for later this month before he heads off to Malaysia to join the rest of the NZ Mens team.

Congratulations also to all the Wellington based players that competed hard over the weekend.

Mens draw: Jonathan Barnett, Sam Atkins, Brian Tapurau, Luke Tough, Cameron Scott, Connor Plumley, Oliver Dunbar

Womens draw: Diana Galloway, Maiden-Lee Coe, Hannah Grimmett, Sam Douglas, Mackenzie Tait, Emma Thorpe and Emma Sanchez-Brown.



SKILLSOFT WELLINGTON MASTERS WRAPUP

Congratulations to the 2021 Skillsoft Wellington Masters Champions, Nicki Gibbs (Kāpiti) and Matt Green (Tawa). Shout-outs also to their very worthy opposition, the Runner Ups, Claire Coleman (Tawa) and Cam Scott (Kāpiti). The finals were epic and had us all on the edge of our seats! Tu meke!

Thank you to our tournament sponsor, Skillsoft Digital Learning. We are grateful for companies like Skillsoft who get behind local sport events. This support is invaluable and appreciated by everyone involved.

Thank you to the Mana Magic team for the exceptional hosting, as always. Well done to Scott, Tanya, Nick and the team for the smooth running of the tournament over the weekend and the kitchen crew, including all the members who provided free kai over the entire weekend .

Lastly, respect to all the players who put in the hard yards. Who says Masters can't slip and slide on court? Great action on court and no less importantly, great laughs had by all on and off court!



RUSSELL IN REVIEW

It's been a little over a month since I began my temporary post as District Administrator, and I wanted to take this opportunity to say hi to those who I have not yet met, and thank those I've had the pleasure of meeting for welcoming me so warmly to the Wellington squash scene.

Of course, I'm not entirely new to the squash scene here; when I first came to Wellington from the UK at the start of 2018, I was unfit and in need of a lifestyle change. Having played a tiny bit of squash many years ago as a junior at Inverness Tennis & Squash Club (hosts of the 2021 Scottish Squash Open, no less!), I decided to mosey down to Island Bay for its club night. Before I knew it, I was on the grading list and playing Autumn Interclub. I found that playing squash was a tremendous way to meet friendly people, improve fitness, and most importantly, have fun.

It certainly feels like I'm stepping into big shoes here at Squash Wellington; Willie Bicknell has been an integral part of squash in the region for such a long time, and I appreciate the excellent work he accomplished during his tenure as District Manager. I hope to build on Willie's good work, and will work hard for squash in the Wellington region during my tenure, ensuring that all players and all clubs have a voice when it comes to progressing our favourite sport.

It's been a busy and challenging time of late, what with the logistical challenges faced by the organisers of the Thorndon Sin City Open, and the Wellington Masters, hosted by Mana, all of whom had to find a way to successfully run tournaments at Alert Level 2. At the time of press, we are eagerly anticipating the Oliver Sport NZ Squash Classic, to be hosted by Hutt City Squash. My hat goes off to all of the people involved in running these events, and I want to acknowledge the vast amount of time and effort required to run tournaments in these times.

Finally, I'd like to thank everyone who sent in nominations for the annual Squash Wellington Awards. It is set to be a glitzy affair this year, and I can't wait to see you there. It is exciting to join the team at Squash Wellington during the build-up to such a significant event, and high point in the season, so please come and say hello and help me to put more faces to names.

In the meantime, feel free to get in touch, and let me know if there's anything you wish to discuss, any ideas you wish to share, or points you wish to raise which can help to continue the excellent work done by so many of you to foster the sport of squash in our part of the world.

- Russell Henderson

MASTERS UPDATE

TotalFlow Master of Masters Series

Recently Mana hosted the 5th (penultimate) round of the series, the Skillssoft Wellington Masters, which was held in great spirit, competitiveness and fun.

Congratulations to Matt Green and Nicki Gibbs for their title wins.

Thank you to Kath from Skillssoft Digital Learning for their title sponsorship of the tournament, and Richie from TotalFlow Plumbing for his continued support of the series.

With just 1 round to go (Kapiti Masters on 5-6 Nov), the series points lead is extremely close, remembering too that 5 tournaments count towards points, so if you play all 6 tournaments your lowest round score will be dropped - that may change results a little.

If there is a tie for 1st place after the last round and after the lowest round is dropped, there will be a countback on number of games won (greater number wins) and games lost (lesser number wins).

Women:

Michelle Burns 1st - 63
Riana Rossouw 2nd - 61
Penny Tait 3rd - 59

Men:

Kent Hawkins 1st - 67
John Woodall 2nd - 63
Bryan Smith 3rd - 61



CLUB HAPS

Mana Women's changing room upgrade

Some serious renos have been happening at Mana with the Women's changing room getting a makeover.

As well as the new sauna, it was put into good use at the Skillsoft Wellington Masters recently.

Double thumbs up to the team at Mana. I understand some long hours and graft went on to get it looking fabulous! (Ed – the electric wobble board contraption better still be there. Someone's best late night teleshopping mistake ever!).



Sin City Open @ Thorndon

October started out with the "Sin City Open" hosted at Thorndon, with squash-deprived folks travelling from as far as Rotorua and Queenstown just to be able to compete among the total of 96 keen players. Food and prize money didn't quite match Thorndon's usual (very high) standards due to COVID19 throwing spanners in the works, but the vibe certainly was. "It was a shame that we couldn't go ahead with the costume party as planned, but it seemed more important to everyone to be able to get back on court for points anyway," said tournament organiser and Club Captain, Martin Krafft. Following a Thursday start, and 144 matches later, it was 3rd seed Maiden-Lee Coe of Mana who won the Women's Open over top seed Diana Galloway in a grueling 5 setter. The Men's Open final saw two Thorndon boys battle it out, with top seed Sam Atkins taking out 3rd seed Lucas Rosa. Congratulations to the winners of all divisions, and everyone else who played hard, fair and had fun!

On the COVID 19 Level 2 restrictions, Krafft commented, "we were glued to the screen following the COVID19 news. If there had been any suspicion of community transmission anywhere near, or close to where players came from, we would have called it off without blinking an eye. But we were lucky, and managed to pull through with everyone staying safe, thanks to the extra protocols and precautions we had in place."

Whether next year will see another "Sin City Open" is yet to be decided.

The Thorndon Club would like to thank its sponsors ARDEX New Zealand, DataCraft Analytics, Oliver New Zealand, and New World Thorndon for their support.

Automated tournament control

Thorndon have released a number of tools designed to facilitate running tournaments. All tools have been released under a free licence, and while they likely require a bit of tinkering and a bit of a technical understanding to get working, the benefits should make it worth a try. Starting with a spreadsheet designed to make it easy to combine tournament registrations and a waiting list when assigning players to draws, a set of scripts can then create and seed the draws on iSquash, and later enter results there, all without manual interaction. Gone are the repetitive and error-prone hours previously spent on that! You also get fancy draw posters, entry fee records, and even the ability to recruit players for the tournament. For example you can instruct it to "chuck all male players in Wellington between 2250 and 2520 points onto the waiting list" and use that mailing list to reach out to them. Have a look at the videos at <https://vimeo.com/tctools> which explains how to use the tools. Results entry currently depends on the use of TournamentControl by DTKapiti, which most clubs use. Other tournament software may be integrated in the future. These tools are available for download at <https://github.com/madduck/tctools>. - Martin Krafft

WORLD SQUASH DAY

Congratulations to all the clubs that got behind World Squash Day. There were some great activities held across clubs in our district.

Great to see the old rackets come out at Island Bay and Khandallah, disco inferno moves at Khandallah and an allegedly non-competitive (well...) team relay at Hutt City. All three clubs ran a 12 hour squashathon alongside these fun activities and fundraised some much needed coin for the Mental Health Foundation. Ka pai everyone!

A word from SquashNZ!

New Zealand squash clubs and districts did themselves proud raising money for Mental Health Foundation NZ with activities around World Squash Day on Saturday 9 October.

A wide range of squash fun ideas from one end of the country to the other saw the targeted \$20,000 surpassed and this was despite clubs in Northland, Auckland and Waikato under Alert Level 3.

Many clubs use World Squash Day as a way to connect with their members during difficult times and come together and keep in touch online with different activities and challenges.

Other clubs around the country had squashathons, while bake sales in places such as Mackenzie Squash Club in the south island and Makerawa Squash Club in the deep south bought their club together.

COMING SOON

November

- Wellington Junior Open & Kapiti Masters (Kapiti) 03-05 November
- Island Bay Doubles 05-06 November
- Upper Hutt Doubles 13-15 November
- Squash Wellington Awards - 19 November
- Thorndon Doubles 19-20 November
- NZ Inter-district teams (Hutt City) 26-27 November
- Tawa Doubles 26-27 November

SW Awards Night - RSVP

Have you confirmed your attendance to the awards this year? If not there's still time.

Email Russell Henderson at admin@squashwellington.org.nz by Tues 9th November. Tickets are \$20 per person and includes a supper. Pre award drinks will start from 6:30pm with the awards scheduled to start at 7:00pm.

