



Empire Newsletter

JUNE 2017

Welcome

Hello again everyone as you can see I'm trying to fulfil the promise of a newsletter every 2 months! Midweek, Monday and Friday night sessions all seem to be going well at present.

Obituaries

Sadly I'm writing that we have lost two people who have played an important role in our Club; **Chris Williams** and **Melanie Armstrong**. Table tennis was a "passion" for both of them. As promised in the email update here is a further tribute

Chrisone of a few people who has made an enormous contribution to Empire and to the wider table tennis community, and which is impossible to document. Chris's involvement started in about 1984, after he Norma and the girls settled in NZ. To quote Chris "Alf dragged" him down to the Club – possibly to assess his ability. This started a very long playing and administrative table tennis "career" in NZ.

Chris was not only involved with Empire admin but also Hutt Valley and Wellington and was a Vice-President of TTW. Latest admin work included rebuilding and maintaining the Empire Website, and Chris kept everyone well informed by keeping this up to date as well as adding a wealth of archive material.

As far as playing goes, Chris still played some matches of winter interclub in 2016 and had an average of 83.3%; an excellent playing record. The Alf Harding Cup for the best interclub percentage was hotly contested at times between Bruce and Chris. We are also proud to say the Interclub Trophy for the division Chris plays in is currently held by Empire – the team Tony Rutledge captained. Chris was passionate about Interclub and a few years ago sat down going through all the Club annual reports to record the matches played by everyone in winter interclub. He instituted certificates for every 50 appearance milestone and medals for players who reached 250. At the end of 2016 there were 7 people with medals – Tony Rutledge (428), Bruce Connolly (397), Chris Williams (305), Ian Talbot (266), Chris Talbot (260), Merv Allardyce (254) and Margaret Connolly (251). The legacy will be kept although it will be awhile before anyone else earns a medal!

Our condolences to Norma, Heather and Julia.

Chris – A Special Tribute from Bruce Connolly. Chris and I were good mates through table tennis and more recently Bowls. We met at the Empire Table Tennis Club and ended up playing together for many years. I'm not sure when we met but Chris won his first interclub title for Empire in 1985 and I was in the same team. He won his second interclub title ten years later and followed up with a further 9. We were in the same team for 9 of his 11 titles. He also added Wellington and Hutt Valley Opens to his list of achievements and I'm sure Norma has a large collection of certificates and medals.

Chris was a defensive player, as was I, so the opposition must have loved playing our team as we were always the last to finish our interclub matches late at night. We also played together at the NZ veterans champs held each Easter around the country and won a couple of team events over the years. Many top

Australians came over to play in these and competition was tough. The highlight for Chris was being selected to play for the NZ over 50's team in a test match against Australia at this event in 2006.

In recent years Chris and I instigated a Test match series in Bowls against each other. This year Chris was leading 2 matches to 1 and we joked about the fact that Chris would win the series if the last match was unable to be played before the end of the season. After a hospital stay, and a couple of days before Chris passed away he emailed Bruce *"I'm ok now although still very tired. As you can imagine, the Williams COD (Coefficient of Indomitability) has taken a bit of a hammering but we are rallying. I'll keep you posted. When I can see the wood for the trees I'll be in touch re the final bowls challenge."*

It turns out that Chris's final challenge was a great deal more than a game of bowls. Farewell Chris, I will miss you.

Melanie ...first came to the Club in the late 2000s playing on a Monday night. Melanie's involvement with the Club was over a much shorter time period than Chris but she made a substantial contribution to the running of the Club and she was a lovely person to have around. She soon grew to "love" her table tennis and moved to Midweek preferring to play in the daytime. Melanie did play a few games of Interclub in the evenings after going to Midweek.

Everything Melanie did in life always saw her put in that bit extra and give something back and table tennis was no exception - whether it was holding a paintbrush or running a Club session. In 2010 Melanie and Arthur increased the momentum around the Time Capsule project and ensured it was buried. It is scheduled to be opened in 2034 when the Club turns 100. Ron Menchi, another stalwart of the Club who is no longer with us played a role in this project ensuring there will be some interesting material to unearth.

In 2011 Melanie and Arthur won the Cup for Best Club member in recognition of their work running Midweek. They ran Midweek Club together from 2010 to 2013 when unfortunately the return to work meant Melanie had to give up her table tennis. Although she kept in touch with some Empire members and she and Wayne attended the Midweek Xmas lunch.

Our condolences to Wayne, Lauren, Adam and Sarah.

Empire TTC Website

As mentioned above Chris was our Website Manager. At present there are no updates to our Website, although we hope that the good work done by Chris will be able to continue. Ian Grace has volunteered to look into this, so watch this space.

Friday Night Club - Holidays

Just a reminder we will be closed over the next School Holidays – Fridays 14th and 21st July. We reopen again on **Friday 28th July**.

The noticeboard requesting parent help will be updated for the new term as soon as possible. Please help out where you can. Just a note can parents please ensure they come inside or at least to the door to collect children. We don't want children walking around outside as we are responsible for them during the Club session. The organisers are busy and can't always see what is happening. Thanks for this consideration and your support with this part of our Club.

Subscriptions

A reminder of the rates for these – at this time of the year most regular attendees have now paid. There are some people who prefer to pay the casual fee of \$8.00 each time and that is a good option for those who only come along occasionally.

Adult sub: \$60.00

Concession sub (over 65, tertiary students, beneficiaries): \$40.00

All members are able to purchase a multcard to use in any session – this costs \$50.00 for 12 sessions – a saving of \$10.00. This is a member only privilege ie for those who have paid a subscription. The only exception to this is school juniors, who can buy a card even although subs are not charged.

Fundraising

Raffle

This is underway and ticket sales have been steady. ***However it would be great if sales could go a little faster and we get to a sell out.*** How about those of you who have supported the raffle giving your friends and other players a little reminder along the lines “have you supported your club and bought a raffle ticket yet?” While our subs and fees cover most of our costs, we are still interested in building our bank account up so that one day the long awaited redevelopment of the building can begin. Hopefully we will be able to get some grants for this, although these are harder to get these days – a prerequisite of all grant applications is that organisations need to be seen to be helping themselves. Therefore we are also asking you to support our fundraising.

Empire at the Movies Night

Thank you to everyone who came along or supported our annual movie fundraiser to ***Going in Style*** at the Lighthouse Petone. The feedback heard from most people was that they enjoyed the night. Congratulations to those who won a lucky number prize, a bottle of wine or double ticket to another movie at the Lighthouse.

Results

Wanganui Open

A few players travelled up to Wanganui for this event on the 1st April. A couple of Empire players featured in the results.

Women’s Open doubles: Runner-up – Anita Crowe

Over 40 men’s singles: Runner-up – Paul Solt

Over 40 men’s doubles: Winner – Paul Solt

Over 50 men’s singles: Winner – Paul Solt

Over 50 men’s doubles: Winner – Paul Solt

TTW Wellington Autumn Open Tournament

Held Saturday / Sunday 29th/ 30th April at Empire, this was a successful tournament all round. It was great to see an Empire player Bruno Omizu taking out the singles in a closely fought final with Matt Ball

from Manawatu. Also of note was Depak Patel's loss in the over 45 singles – beaten in the 5th set 23-21 by long time rival Lindsay Ward. Well done all competitors and special congratulations to all the Empire winners here.

Open singles: Winner - Bruno Omizu
Open Doubles: Winner – Bruno Omizu
Over 25 singles: Runner-up – James Harter
Over 25 doubles: Runner-up – James Harter and Zhidong Yu
B grade singles: Runner-up – Darrell Brown
C Grade singles: Runner-up - Andrew Maguire
D grade singles: Runner-up – Om Thakur
Over 35 singles: Winner – Depak Patel
Over 35 singles: Runner-up - Martin Young
Over 35 doubles: Winner – Depak Patel
Over 35 doubles: Runner-up – Harry Chen and James Wang
Over 45 singles: Runner-up – Depak Patel
Over 45 doubles : Winner – Ian Talbot
Over 45 doubles: Runner-up – Depak Patel
Over 55 doubles: Winner - Ian Talbot
Over 55 doubles: Runner-up - Paul Solt and Zhidong Yu
Over 65 singles: Runner-up Tony Rutledge
Over 65 doubles: Winner – Kevin Haines
Over 65 doubles: Runner-up - Tony Rutledge and Wayne Upjohn
Under 14 singles: Runner-up - Yufeng Wang
Under 12 singles: Runner-up – Yufeng Wang
Over 45 consolation singles: Winner - Andrew Maguire
Over 45 consolation singles: Runner-up – Darrell Brown
Under 14 consolation singles: Runner-up - Jerry Zhao

Marlborough Open

A few Wellington players entered the Marlborough Open in Mid May with Tony having some success.

Over 40 singles: Runner-up – Tony Rutledge
Over 60 singles: Winner – Tony Rutledge
Over 60 doubles: Runner-up - Tony Rutledge

Junior Development

Several Empire juniors played in the first Junior Development Tournament of the year in Mid June. Some players experienced playing in their first tournament. **Empire successes:**

Under 14 singles: Runner-up - Yufeng Wang
Under 14 doubles: Winner – Yufeng Wang
Under 14 B Plate: Winner – Casey Pearson

Coming up

Wellington Open

The 2017 Wellington Open is to be held on the weekend Saturday 29th / Sunday 30th July at Empire. Hopefully this will be of interest to a good number of our players.

Details can be found on the TTW Website and by clicking below.

Entries close Wednesday 26th July.

<https://ttwellington.org.nz/2017/06/26/2017-new-world-wellington-city-table-tennis-wellington-open-championships-july-29-30/>

Series Two Interclub

It's still awhile away yet – we are still playing series 1 with Finals night coming up the first week of July – possibly about the time this goes to press.

It's never too early to start thinking about whether you would like to play in the series starting at the end of July. Grades are **Premier** and **Division 2** on Tuesday night, **Division 1** on Wednesday night. We are also calling for expressions of interest for a Junior Interclub **Division 3** on Wednesday nights.

Let Andrew ajm1170@gmail.com or Maggie maggie.dyer.nz@gmail.com know if you are interested.

Table Tennis Wellington website

Keep an eye on this for any news and updates. You will find information on a range of events and happenings including an article on Tony Rutledge, compiled by Malcolm Wong:

<https://ttwellington.org.nz/2017/04/27/tony-rutledge-the-evergreen-sportsman/>

Other events:

Further afield but may be of interest to some of our players:

Hawkes Bay Open

Saturday 8th July. Note it could be too late to enter!

North Island Individuals

Friday 14th – Sunday 16th July

Waikato Open

Saturday 5th – Sunday 6th August

Manawatu Open

Saturday 2nd – Sunday 3rd September - A bit closer to home so this is a good one to consider entering.

South Island Individual Champs

The 2017 South Island Individual Championships is to be held in Nelson on the 26 and 27th August. Entry form available:

<http://www.sporty.co.nz/2017southislandindividualchampionships>

And finally the endfrom your scribe *Maggie*