

All Thursday Metro Masters Representatives

From: David Burn

Date: 20th January, 2024

Our competition has received 34 team entries for the coming Autumn, 2024 season which is 2 teams up from the Spring, 2023 season and the same number as the Autumn, 2023 season.

Whilst we lost St.Christopher's from Section 2, Eltham Blue a new team of Section 1 and 4 players applied for Section 2, and Clifton Hill returned from playing 1 match in Spring, 2021 (Covid). Royal Park have also entered a Section 3 team for the first time since Autumn, 2017. We wish that all these new teams have a successful season, and perhaps convince other clubs and teams what they are missing.

With 34 teams there were many alternatives that could be considered but we decided to stick with 7 team sections in Section 1 & 2, 8 teams in Section 3 and 6 teams in Sections 4 & 5. Ideally if we can get enough extra teams in future we may be able to move to all 8 teams sections. To place teams in their appropriate sections it was decided to have byes in Section 1 & 2 (with an 8 team section), Section 3 (8 teams), and for Sections 4 & 5 to have 6 team sections. This will allow for future growth if required, and for teams in each section to be competitive.

Other sectional winners promoted were Eltham Black (Section 3), Koonung Park Red (Section 4). All these teams improved their UTR figures to justify the sections that they applied for except for Koonung Park Red who would have preferred to stay in their current section.

Clubs who had disappointing seasons were demoted i.e. Glen Waverley Threeze (Section 3), and East Croydon (Section 4) who only managed to win 2 matches in their respective sections, and they now have the opportunity to prove that their demotion was not warranted. The level of competition in Section 3 should guarantee that the Premiers, and or the Runners-Up would likely be promoted. Promotion to a higher section usually only occurs when teams accumulate a high number of points and %, and generally are premiers or runners-up with the reverse applying to teams demoted. Changes to teams that include adding players who considerably improve overall team performance is taken on board particularly if their UTR is known, and the necessary permission sought if they have not played before in Metro Masters in Sections 2-5.

It is hoped that this is an encouraging sign for the future, and with the demographics of our players generally becoming older it is once again in the interests of all teams and clubs to promote the benefits of playing in the Metro Masters competition particularly when playing in other competitions e.g. Eastern Region, NENTG etc. If this can occur we can envisage returning to over 40 teams in a fairly unique competition for players over 50 years old.

Most of the grades that were applied for were granted. The use of UTR figures (doubles) available for most players were in parallel to the grades given and this process enhances the selection of teams into appropriate grades.

It would advantage the Association if players were able to download the UTR app, and link any other Association competitions they play in together with filling in the relevant Competitive Player Profile. Whilst this is still currently a contentious issue with TROLS based competitions we will probably sign the Memorandum of Understanding which expects 50% of all players together with 50% of all new players to our competition within a 4 year period. For the 2024 TV Pennant Season players who have not completed the Competitive Player Profile and linked it with their UTR will not be accepted at the entry stage.

Downsides at the moment include incorrect spelling of Christian Names and Surnames, and players playing in other competitions not having the same UTR due in

part for playing for other clubs. The UTR's cover up to 30 matches or a year which ever occurs first on a rolling twelve months basis, and the more matches players play the more reliable these figures become – all players have separate singles and doubles UTR's if they play both formats. Once players have played more than 4 matches and play consistently well, and are in a well performed team usually their UTR is slightly higher, and can even be higher than players who play in a higher section. The downside at the moment is that when a player has not competed in any UTR competitions or tournaments in the previous 12 months his UTR will be 0.00. However if the player has played in Metro Masters before their level of play is known providing he/she has played some matches in the last 12 months.

It is pleasing to report that there were very few emergencies who played in matches who affected results, and very few of these players played in finals unlike a lot of other Associations who introduce emergencies who become the best players in their section, and distort ladder positions. The ability to use other emergencies from other teams is still a viable option for the Section 1 & 2 teams if and when the Bye occurs together with being able to play 5 players in a team.

With 6 and 8 team section draws (with a bye) we will avoid most of the usual draw problems as most clubs have preferred requests which we try to accommodate. Whilst it is acknowledged that some of the lower ranked players will struggle in the higher sections it is important to remember that grading is carried out in good faith, and that in the worst case scenario it will be only for one season. With players likely to risk overseas trips, injuries and possibly Covid situations will occur, and it would be appreciated if opposing teams can assist teams struggling to field teams by offering players if they are available and not required. This is particularly important in the case of teams that have nominated only 5-6 players.

Once the team players become available in Club Zone could you please check in the player summary of Club Zone to confirm that all the players are entered in their respective teams – there were at least 5 regular players who were not included in the team's entry who will have to play as an emergency but as such will not be tracked by myself as it has been confirmed that they should have been included. Any players not entered using the On-line team entry will be treated as emergencies. Could clubs also check the On-line information concerning their club contacts, convenors etc. as a lot of this information will have changed and requires updating – if you require id's and password to complete these changes please advise. The other important change is that Clubs Convenors should change the passwords to prevent security breaches that occurred with Optus and other databases. They should include an upper case letter, a lower case letter, a number and a symbol and should be at least 8 figure long. Also captains that have their own sign in for Results should also attend to this change. Also note that By-Law 3.7 and 3.10 states that the result from the Thursday afternoon matches must be entered into TROLS before 9.00am. There has also been a change in the addition of By-Law 5.5 which allows teams to use the 5th player when any of the players numbered 1 to 4 get injured in the first 2 sets – when this occurs the team format resumes to a 4 player team format, and the injury should be reported in the Match Comments. The fifth player was used on 159 occasion's through-out the season, and it is hoped that this rule change can keep older players in our competition, and can be used in matches where the weather is hotter. Teams and Clubs can start earlier preferably not before 12.00am if traffic or hot weather is likely to impact providing both captains agree – some clubs are

experiencing difficulties with coaches who want to start at 4.00pm, and we wish to avoid those problems if possible.

Attachments for the fixtures and revised scorecards will be included in the email.

The Grand Finals are planned to be played at North Ringwood on the 6th June, 2024. Players planning overseas and interstate trips are expected to note this date as the only possible change is inclement weather on the day of the Grand Final, and even then they must be completed before the following Thursday. We had our first Xmas Annual Function which was very successful with 81 players turning up, with the Association contributing substantially to the cost of the function. This is a great opportunity to mingle socially with other players with-out the usual competitive streak which occurs.

Attached to this email please find:-

- 1. A copy of draws for each section – please produce sufficient copies for the players in your team and/or your club or check on the trols website under the tab fixtures.**
- 2. A copy of the 2024 (in PDF Format) Result Sheets – PLEASE DESTROY ANY PREVIOUS RESULT SHEETS APART FROM THE VERSION THAT INCLUDES THE PROVISION OF INCLUDING A FIFTH PLAYER FOR THE MATCH WHICH SHOULD BE DECLARED TO THE OPPOSITION CAPTAIN AND WRITTEN ON THE RESULT SHEET PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MATCH.**

Results and ladders will be updated on our Trols website address as follows:-

<http://www.trols.org.au/metro> suggest you place in your Favourites.

To maintain regular ladders please enter results into Trols in a timely and legible manner.

Enjoy your tennis.

Regards

David Burn

RECORD SECRETARY – METRO MASTERS