

All Thursday Metro Masters Representatives

From: David Burn

Date: 21st January 2020

The Spring 2020 Grand Finals were played at the team finishing higher on the ladder on various dates prior to the 28th November 2019 following the heat-out declared on Grand Final Day the 21st November 2019.

The results of the Spring, 2019 Grand Finals were as follows: -

Section 1: Grace Park HC Bun Boys d. East Croydon	By Forfeit
Section 2: North Balwyn Numero Uno d. North Ringwood Gold	4-2, 42-37
Section 3: Donvale Reds d. North Balwyn Tigers	3-2, 43-39
Section 4: Glen Iris Gold l. STC W'kend Hacks	2-4, 36-41
Section 5: Koonung Park Noir d. Fitzroy Gorillas	3-1, 36-24
Section 6: St.John's Crews l. Lum Reserve Bravo	1-4, 15-32

The ability to hold all the Grand Finals at the one location is one of the features of our competition and sets us aside from many other competitions. The viewing facilities at North Ringwood also add to the occasion. This is the first time in the history of the Association that the Grand Finals were cancelled due to a heat-out.

If early in the season players have concerns regarding the air quality particularly with the smoke from the bush fires could they be directed to members of the committee.

We had some forfeits during the season, – every attempt should be made for this not to occur, as it a distraction for the team receiving the forfeit. With byes in Sections 1,3,4 & 5 this season it should be possible to be avoid forfeits even if you have to play a player from the section below later in the season.

Our Xmas Luncheon was again be held at the end of the season on the 28th November 2019. It proved to be an outstanding success with over 100 people, and 3 women present, and I am sure that everyone who attended enjoyed the occasion, and it was a wonderful way to end a difficult season. For the first time that I can recall we had at least 2 Association cancelled heat-outs, and with round 14 cancelled there were possibly some teams who missed out on the four due to the cancellation.

Even though its costs our Association close to \$2000 in supporting the function it is rewarding that so many players want to attend, and adds to the social atmosphere of what I consider to be one of the better competitions for older players, and that we are actually all benefit out of the social interaction which many other competitions would be envious of.

Our competition is one of the few competitions around particularly veteran's competitions that is holding its own, and for the first time in a Autumn season we have received the same number of entries as the previous Autumn and one more team than the Spring season.

Once again some clubs did not fill in the proper Registration form which requires email addresses, phone numbers for captains etc and club details together with any draw requests – if you could attempt to improve this situation in the coming seasons as it is time consuming chasing this information up and making sure all the information is current.

Our competition received has received 42 team entries for the coming Autumn, 2020 season which is the same number as the previous Autumn season, and equals the record of 42 entries from Autumn, 2018. For the first time the Autumn and Spring team entry totals were 83 team entries with the previous record being a total of 82

team entries. We welcome back Karingal Drive (Sect.5), and additional teams from East Croydon and North Balwyn making them the biggest clubs with 5 teams each, and also Eltham now with 2 teams. We lost Kooyong (2) (Sect.1), and Norris Bank and Koonung Park Red (Sect.6).

In future there may be a chance of further teams from Koonung Park and Norris Bank.

Once again eleven females have been nominated in six different teams in Sections 2, 4 & 5, and certainly adds to the social atmosphere of our competition. - if you need emergencies the use of females may be an option for your club. We have already had two more females nominated as emergencies prior to the start of the season.

It was pleasing that the clubs generally complied with the request to submit all the players who were likely to play, and this has resulted in the average number of nominated players in each team being 7.95 (as against 8.1) for last season, which resolved a lot of the queries covering the use of emergencies. There were 334 nominated players for this season which is close to the record of 337 players. Whilst some of these players are only emergencies it does reduce the workload of Bruce Leister and myself in checking emergencies significantly if these players are nominated.

We have decided to stick to the 8 team sections with a bye in Sections 1, 3, 4 & 5 apart from Section 6 which has a 6 team section. Section 2 was made into a full 8 team section rather than having 7 teams in Section 6 which was a closely contested section last season with the third and fourth team playing off in the Grand Final. We have managed to receive 7 team entries Section 1, and we have added the winning Section 2 team North Balwyn Uno who has replaced Kooyong (2) who did not nominate. It is hoped that with the byes if you need to seek a player from the section below if most of the players in your section have played more than 4 matches it will make it easier to source a player. We were able to promote the premiers or outstanding teams from the section below in Sections 2, 3, 4 & 5 even though we know that maybe they will struggle in the higher section it was felt that they should be given the opportunity. There were 10 teams that had applied for Section 3 of which 2 of them are now in Section 2. St.John's Cric's and the flag winners Donvale Dauntless (Reds) were promoted to Section 2.

The Association once again used algorithm performance figures from TROLS to assist in Grading, and these were only adjusted where there was insufficient information on players who played previously or new players who were often given the team's average or an estimated ranking.

Where the computer model indicated that a team should be in a lower section we intervened when we knew the level of the players shown as average were actually better performers, and in general tried to comply with what clubs had requested. By having this information available we were able to spend more time on the clubs that were fairly evenly matched, and grading was a smoother process when all the information that been supplied, and if this information was complete the computer model generally took precedence unless the ladders from the previous season showed otherwise. Due to problems with the draws it was felt that the 6 team Section should still be Section 6 as only Koonung Park and St.Johns had a team in a higher section.

In Section 2 the only change was the promotion of the new North Balwyn Duo team who had played at that level before, and requested Section 2, and the addition of St.Johns and Donvale Dauntless.

In Section 3 with St.Johns and Donvale being promoted, and Fitzroy coming back from Section 2 there was only room for one more team, and it was felt that STC W'kend Hacks having won consecutive flags in Section 5 and then 4 deserved that

opportunity. Both MCC Glen Iris Gold and Norris Bank Sinners were considered but STC had beaten them both in the finals series, and were considered slightly stronger.

In Section 4 there were no demoted teams from Section 3, and as Koonung Park Noir had won Section 5 decisively they should be promoted. Also it was felt that the new Eltham Black team which included 3 section 3 players would be slightly stronger than the East Croydon team which was a mix of one player from Section 3 and the better players from the Section 5 team that were beaten in both finals. The North Ringwood Silver team were demoted to Section 5 with many injuries to their key players. The East Croydon (1) team now have the opportunity to have a successful season, and gain promotion to Section 4 if they can win the flag and/or finish on top. This decision was not taken lightly with robust discussion as to why they could not be included.

As stated previously we understand that clubs prefer 8 team sections, and as such we have complied with that request even though all those sections have only 7 teams in them.

In Section 5 we now have two East Croydon teams, and Karingal Drive returning to the Section 5 section after being absent for a season together with North Ringwood Silver, Fitzroy Gorillas, North Balwyn Jaguars and Donvale Dabblers it should present a competitive Section.

In Section 6 the remaining four clubs (after the withdrawal of Norris Bank and Koonung Park Red), are joined by St. John's Crops, and Koonung Park Green who have slightly weaker teams, and in all likelihood this section should also be very competitive.

The computer modelling depends on nomination of players and their performances from the previous season – some of the bigger clubs juggled their players in an attempt to gain an advantage however this is picked up by the computer modelling together with players who do not play sufficient matches. If your club/team wishes to be promoted it is a good idea to strengthen the team as the levels between each section are significant i.e. probably greater than the 15% that is applied to the computer modelling.

Relegated teams from the previous season who had strong seasons and played in the Spring Grand Finals i.e. in Sections 4, & 5 shows this to still be the case.

Most of the promoted teams may well struggle as it has been shown that there is significant differences between each section. When we grade we try to keep clubs with multiple teams in separate sections i.e. we were not able to achieve this with Glen Waverley in Section 3, East Croydon in Section 5, and Lum Reserve in Section 6 which in most cases is what the clubs applied for. With the many requests for dates in the draws we think we are sure that we have avoided any draw issues with only having the one 6 team section, and byes in 4 of the 5 remaining which make this possible. This is not always possible as clubs with multiple teams usually needing draw numbers 1 & 2 with the mix of 6 and 8 team sections.

Thanks to the members of the Grading Panel who once again had to make some difficult decisions which have been aided by the computer model and the previous seasons performances, and whilst these decisions will not please everyone – **it is important that we maintain the social atmosphere of our competition and at worst if your team is compromised it will probably only be for one season.**

For the first time in many seasons 4 of the flag winners in Section 2-5 were promoted, and it will be interesting at the end of the season to check their progress.

As a guide if you wish to be promoted it is easier for the Grading Panel if you win as many matches and finish in first place on the ladder with a high percentage and win the Grand Final, and try not to change the personnel of the team except to strengthen it. If you have strengthened your team give a complete detail of new players added, and an idea how often they will be regular players.

Conversely if you do not wish to be demoted win at least 5 matches and have a good percentage. Some of the higher placed teams particularly in the middle sections have been demoted due in a small part to changing the structure of the team which has weakened their team from the previous season which is picked up by computer modelling. Do not use injuries as an excuse for a poor season as most players struggle with some form of injury during the season.

The Grading of teams by using the computer model where appropriate avoids what in the past has been largely subjective, and thus they are largely based on last season's performance, players listed, and details provided for players new to the competition.

The season commences on Thursday the 6th February 2020 with the Grand Finals being played on the 5th June, 2020 – please make a note of these dates, and try to plan overseas trips etc. after these dates.

These dates are inflexible unlike a lot of other Associations, and if for any reason the Grand Finals cannot be played on the 4th June 2020 every attempt must be made to play the Grand Final on that date.

If you need to find emergency players from other clubs there are likely to be quite a few available particularly from Koonung Park, and maybe Norris Bank who were close to fielding teams – if you need emergencies please contact the appropriate captain from these clubs. Also, some clubs have nominated 9-10 players who I am sure would be willing to play for other teams in the section providing they have not played more than 4 matches for their own team, or any other team.

The need to seek permission to play emergency players during the season who have not played in the competition before is still a main requirement and four day's notice should be given along with the player's age, his playing level compared with other players in the team etc. except in Section 1.

Once again, the draws and result sheets have been emailed as it saves considerable time and the cost of postage. If you cannot print the draws, and result sheets from this email please advise, and I will forward these by mail – if you have a team mate who is computer savvy this would be preferable as they now cost \$2.00 each to mail or you can download your team's fixture from TROLS..

My thanks to the outstanding work by Bruce Leister in administering the TROLS website, and this has made grading somewhat simpler with the amount of data produced.

The computer input of results into Trols will continue this season– you will need a computer person in your team to complete this, and it is still important to complete a result sheet (just in case results need to be checked or verified) or are

not submitted in time i.e. Deadline is 6.00pm Friday following the Thursday match. Note either team can enter the match results (although the current by-laws state it should be the winning team). This deadline was achieved nearly every week, and we are probably one of the few Associations who have the results and ladders displayed in two to three days – thanks to all the captains. If there is a heat-out called by the Association and if the results cannot be entered on TROLS please send me a list of your players who would have played on that day, and I can add them manually to qualify for the finals if this is required – preferably nominated players. If you have any queries regarding this matter, please contact Bruce Leister on 9841 8102.

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 new Autumn, 2020 in Word Format Result Sheets – PLEASE DESTROY PREVIOUS RESULT SHEETS AS THIS LATEST VERSION GIVES DETAILS REQUIRED FOR ALL EMERGENCIES

Please check the nominated players in your teams, together with the fixtures to ensure that all the players have been entered and that the draw requests have been complied with where possible.

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