

All Thursday Metro Masters Representatives

From: David Burn

Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2024

Our competition has received 36 team entries for the coming Spring, 2024 season which is 2 teams up from the Autumn, 2024 season and 4 more teams up on the Spring, 2024 season.

Whilst we lost North Balwyn from Section 1, we received 3 new additional teams from Clifton Hill (Section 3) and Greythorn Park Madpac and Kooyong (Section 4). \ We wish that all these new teams have a successful season, and the opposition clubs make them welcome and perhaps convince other clubs and teams what they are missing out on.

With 36 teams there were many alternatives that could be considered but we decided to stick with 6 team sections in Section 1 & 5, and 8 teams in Section 2, 3 & 4.

Ideally if we can get enough extra teams in future, we may be able to move to all 8 teams sections. By making this decision there are no byes in any sections. This will allow for future growth if required and for teams in each section to be competitive.

**We have also made the decision to use a revised fixture system to enable the 6 and 8 teams fixtures compatible – in other words in the 8 team fixtures the second rounds of home and away will not be the reverse of the first seven rounds of the home and away matches so particular attention must be applied after Round 6. We made this decision in light of the fact that the fixtures were easier to do, and that most of the club's preferences could now be applied i.e. if club's wanted certain teams home together this was for the first time achievable as all the fixture numbers 1-6 could be used to achieve this.**

Sectional winners promoted were Clifton Hill (Section 3), and Donvale Ditheres (Section 5). All these teams improved their UTR figures to justify the sections that they applied for. Clubs that escaped promotion were the winners Macleod (Section 2) and North Ringwood Silver (Section 4) who chose to remain in their current sections and would have struggled if promoted. However, if they win the sections again we may have to review the situation.

A club who had disappointing season were demoted i.e. Koonung Park Red (Section 4) whilst some of the other clubs that had disappointing seasons were lucky to stay in the same section. With the increased number of teams in Section 2, 3 & 4 it is expected that the competition will improve and that the winner of each section will in all likely hood b e promoted. Sometimes decisions are made on the age of the players, and as a team would not handle promotion – as such we do not have a prescribed promotion/demotion policy.

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 (and is valid) 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, Waverley Districts, 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. We have been advised by Tennis Victoria that we are the only TV affiliated competition for 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 as we have signed a Memorandum of Understanding that 50% of our total players and 50% of our emergencies will completed this in 2 years.**

Whilst this is still currently a contentious issue with TROLS based competitions. 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, and fines are being issued to club's for not completing this.

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-month 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 now 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.

If players link all the competitions, they play in the UTR becomes more reliable as pollination across competitions is an important consideration.

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 almost no emergencies who played in matches who affected results, and one 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 all Sections, and even more so as we have no byes this season.

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 still 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 a few 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 on the Friday following the match.

There has also been a change in the addition of By-Law 5.5 which allows teams to use the 5<sup>th</sup> 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 182 occasions' through-out last season (i.e over 40% of all matches), and it is hoped that this rule change can keep older players in our competition and can also 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 or earlier, 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 21<sup>st</sup> November, 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.**

**We also intend to create our own Website in the near future using Club Spark with photos if thought practical, and a link to the Trols website.**

**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