**LIGHTHOUSE CINEMA PRESIDENTS TENNIS Round 1, Sunday 29th January, 2017**

A flurry of last minute phone calls on Saturday evening saw another minor milestone reached with Presidents Grade in Hutt Valley Tennis Interclub. That is, the expansion of the competition to 16 teams, after the earlier expansion to 14 teams in October 2016.

Visits to the Australian Tennis Open, the distraction of an open air concert in Taupo, the international Rugby 7’s in Wellington, plus the plethora of health issues with team members, saw the optimism of the organisers, Paddy Wells and Dick Werry, severely tested. In the finish, the two new teams Avalon 2 and Pinehaven 2 hit the courts running. The latter recording a win on debut.

Brief results for the day, Round 1:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Division 1** |  |  |  |  |
| Pinehaven  (Margaret Young) | 6 | beat | Avalon  (Jeff Guppy) | 0 |
| Wainuiomata 1  (Antz Rivett) | 5 | beat | Maungaraki 1  (Audrey Daly) | 1 |
| Upper Hutt 1  (Lauren Riley) | 4 | beat | Lower Hutt 2 (Alex Bridger) | 2 |
| Lower Hutt 1  (Jacky Albert) | 4 | beat | Petone 1  (Kathryn Young) | 2 |
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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Division 2** |  |  |  |  |
| Maungaraki 3  (Jim Buysman-Bakkum) | 4 | beat | Maungaraki 2  (Souradeep Gupta) | 2 |
| Wainuiomata 2  (Roland Nock) | 3W | beat | Lower Hutt 2  (Owen Norriss) | 3 L |
| Upper Hutt 2  (Estelle Marshall) | 6 | beat | Lower Hutt 4  (Dick Werry) | 0 |
| Pinehaven 2  (Terry Poynter) | 4 | beat | Petone 2  (Carol Eckersley) | 2 |

Results in Division 1 went in accordance with seedings. Pinehaven 1 and Wainuiomata 1 lead Section A. Upper Hutt 1 and Wainuiomata 1 lead Section A. Upper Hutt 1 and Lower Hutt 1 lead Section 2. These four teams look likely to face each other in the semi-final play offs.

Pre-Christmas Division 1 winnersz, Pinehaven 1 (Margaret Young) dealt harshly to the new team Avalon (Jeff Guppy). Will Christine Michaels make a difference when she takes her place in the team for Round 2? Long time Maungaraki member, Larry Mahn, was looking for an easy game in his debut in the old-timers grade, but had his feet shot from under him and his team-mates by the solid Wainuiomata 1 side under Antz Rivett, but not before Wainui softball legend, Darren McVey, pulled up lame not long out from the starting stalls, to be replaced by a very able substitute in Adam Smith, himself fresh from a hard match in the local club champs the day before. Jenny Mae Keall also stood out for the Wainui side.

Playing through runners-up Upper Hutt 1 (Lauren Riley) arrived at the venue minus their star player Simon Osborne resting after a gruelling interclub match the day before. The prospect of playing promoted Division 2 side Lower Hutt 2, (Alex Bridger) gave them some confidence. Losing the Mens Doubles sent a twitter of panic through the camp before Lauren Riley stepped up to win 3 of 3, to guide the ship home.

Lower Hutt 1 (Jacky Albert) were evenly poised, 2 matches-all against Petone 1 (Kathryn Young) before the last Mixed Doubles, where the pairing of Joe Easthope and Kim Da Silva and Craig Eves and Jacky Albert pulled away to win 4-2 overall.

**Division 1 Section A Championship**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Pinehaven 1 | 8 points |
| Wainuiomata 1 | 7 points |
| Maungaraki 1 | 1 points |
| Avalon | 0 Points |

**Division 1 Section B Championship**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Upper Hutt 1 | 6 points |
| Lower Hutt 1 | 6 points |
| Petone 1 | 2 points |
| Lower Hutt 2 | 2 Points |

The last minute unavailability of Geoff and Rachel Inglis from the Maungaraki 2 side saw the return of Roland Nock and a new recruit, Turena Campbell to the hillside club. In a tight match against Lower Hutt 3 (Owen Norriss), Turena proved a match winner winning all three of her matches.

In the absence of normal captain, Paul Olsthoorn for the Maungaraki 3 side, Jim Buysman-Bakkum stepped up to the plate to lead the team to a solid 4-2 win against Maungaraki 2 weakened by the absence of Souradeep Gupta.

Upper Hutt 2 (Estelle Marshall) strengthened by the debut of Peter Silao and Mark Hurly were too strong for contenders for last season’s Most Improved Team, Lower Hutt 4 (Dick Werry) rolling them 6-0. Upper Hutt 2 must already be looking ahead to leading Division 2 and possible promotion to Division 1 next summer.

Our second new team, Pinehaven 2, featuring occasional Division 1 players, Terry Poynter and Lloyd Kelly turned out against traditional Division 2 title-contenders, Petone 2 (Carol Eckersley) and surprised themselves with a comfortable 4-2 win. Terry Poynter setting the stage with 3 wins, 9-1, 9-5, 9-6.

**Division 2 Section A Championship**

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| --- | --- |
| Maungaraki 3 | 6 points |
| Wainuiomata 2 | 5 points |
| Lower Hutt 3 | 3 points |
| Maungaraki 2 | 2 Points |

**Division 2 Section B Championship**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Upper Hutt 2 | 8 points |
| Pinehaven 2 | 6 points |
| Petone 2 | 2 points |
| Lower Hutt 4 | 0 Points |

**Snippets**

* Alex Bridger: His early tennis coach should have told him that when it is blowing a gale. Do not throw the ball so high when serving.
* It makes commonsense to me that when you stand 5’2” in your tennis socks, you should not try to smash an 8 foot bouncing ball. Bad luck, Jenny Mae Keall.
* Murray Wright: Don’t try to take on a fizzed up promoted Div 2 side without Simon Osborne in your team.
* Ray Short: Don’t tempt Audrey Daly by leaving a gap down the tram-lines. She will pass you every time.
* Welcome to the two new teams, Avalon (Jeff Guppy, as captain, Tony Rutledge, Kirsty Alexander and Mona Hawkins, soon to be joined by Christine Michaels and possibly Barry Bishop) and Pinehaven 2 (with Jennie Turner and Carole Beams to be joined by two regular men).
* Welcome to other first-time players, Larry Mahn, Ray Heenan, Mark Hurly and Peter Silao. May you enjoy many more years in Presidents Grade. I started in 1980 and had to give up in 2015 after a serious back injury. That gave me 35 enjoyable years in the grade. Dick Werry started soon after me and is still playing today.
* It might pay to start on time. Two teams were still on courts at Mitchell Park at 1.30 pm!!

**NEXT ROUND**

* No play this coming weekend February 4/5, Waitangi weekend.
* Round 2 is on **Sunday 12th February.**
* Early warning “away games” in Round 2 will be ….

Division 1: Lower Hutt 1 (Jacky Albert) vs Lower Hutt 2 (Alex Bridger) at Lower Hutt Club Courts

Division 2: Petone 2 (Carol Eckersley) vs Lower Hutt 4 (Kathy Brabin) at Petone Club Courts.

**For HV Tennis Association**

Paddy Wells, Dick Werry, Carol Eckersley, Paul Olsthoorn, Estelle Marshall.