



## Nipissing Ridge Tennis Club Report from the Board

Our focus in 2023 was to **establish a framework** for our Club. This included:

- Confirming usage of Nipissing Ridge courts and the new annual fee with TBM;
- Preparing Club By-Laws, Rules and Regulations;
- Establishing the membership fee;
- Preparing 2022 Financials and 2023 Budget;
- Purchasing insurance (GL, D&O);
- Opening a bank account;
- Holding the AGM and conducting Board Elections; and
- Introducing policies (Abuse Policy) and protocols (Incident and Safety) required by our insurance provider.

We focused on **improved communications** and a **better membership experience** by:

- Creating a website;
- Establishing club email addresses (general communications and membership);
- Introducing online membership application, waiver, e-signing and etransfers;
- Initiating monthly e-blasts to members;
- Developing a logo; and
- Surveying members to ascertain interest in new programs.

We strove to **improve the player experience**:

- We introduced online court booking through Skedda. This proved to be very popular and unique among the public tennis clubs in the area. 146 of our members (58%) signed up on Skedda. The courts were well booked especially on Club hours during the week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday).
- We piloted a guest pro approach for private and semi-private lessons requiring Pros to be accredited by TPA (Tennis Professionals Association), to register with NRTC and supply a copy of their TPA certification, insurance certificate and proof of police check.
- John Long, TPA Level 3 registered as a Pro and provided clinics for different skill levels. Nineteen sessions were attended by 93 registrants through June, July and August.
- We continued our popular weekly drop-ins (women's, men's and mixed). Offered five times per week, they provided an opportunity to meet other members and playing partners.
- We hosted Spring Fling, Retro Summer and Fall Fiesta socials. Members participated in round robin play, tennis clinics, and enjoyed refreshments and socializing.

### **Future Activities Survey**

We conducted a member survey at the end of the tennis season. We had 100 respondents to our survey representing 42% of our membership. The responses suggest that we are mostly an older group: 50 - 75 years old (78%) or over 75 (22%) — and retired (84%).

There was interest expressed in two new activities: organized social play (called leagues in the survey) from 70% of respondents and doubles tournaments (about half of respondents). There was continued interest expressed for drop-ins, especially women's (90%) and mixed (80%). A majority of respondents (60%) were interested in clinics on a variety of days. We also asked about expanding club hours to accommodate new activities and 60% of respondents wanted to see Tuesday and Thursday mornings added.

## **2024 Plans**

We were very pleased that the Town agreed to **expand NRTC hours** to include Tuesday and Thursday mornings from dawn to 1pm. This expansion will allow us to introduce organized social play and offer more clinics.

**Organized social play** will provide members with fun, social games with other players of a similar ability with four players on court (no waiting around on the bench). Tennis balls will be provided. It is booked for Tuesday mornings (women), Wednesday afternoons (men) and Sunday afternoons (TBD based on registration). 2024 members will be invited to register and indicate their level of play and availability after which a roster of play will be developed. We will also be seeking volunteers to help coordinate play. This new program will be introduced as a pilot for eight weeks beginning in June after which we will review the program and make any necessary adjustments for next year.

We are pleased to report that our **Pro**, John Long, is returning to NRTC this year. He will be offering **clinics** on Thursdays from 9am to 11am and Sundays from noon to 2pm. We are also introducing a **Spring Tune-up** series of ten clinics from May 13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> with Quality Ball Striking at 9am and Doubles Strategies at 11am. Clinics are \$20/person/hour and members may sign up for as many of those clinics as they wish.

We will continue to offer women's **drop-ins** on Mondays and Fridays from 10am to noon. Mixed drop-ins will continue on Mondays and Fridays from 3pm to 5pm. Tennis balls will be provided and we will be seeking volunteers to help arrange this. Note: We are introducing Organized Social Play on Wednesday afternoons in lieu of men's drop-ins with the hope of encouraging more men to participate by providing two levels of play.

We will continue to offer **Socials** periodically through the summer. Our first date will be Saturday May 25<sup>th</sup> (rain date on Sunday May 26<sup>th</sup>).

We hope to introduce **Tournaments** this year subject to securing appropriate insurance coverage and finalizing the agreement with the Town.

## **Administration**

Town of the Blue Mountains approved its budget on April 2<sup>nd</sup> once again establishing **NRTC's fee** at \$10/member. As a result, our **membership fee** of \$40 remains unchanged for 2024 and we have opened membership applications.

We developed a draft **agreement** with the Town of the Blue Mountains for use of the courts in Fall 2022. It has undergone review and revision and as of now, we are still awaiting clarification of TBM's insurance clauses, including coverage of tournaments. While not yet signed, both NRTC and TBM acted within the intent of the agreement throughout the 2023 season. We are hopeful to finalize the agreement this spring.

We have edited the **By-Laws** (subject to approval at the AGM) to simplify the structure and facilitate Board succession. Specifically, we have revised the Vice-President and Secretary duties and identified tasks which may be carried out by other Directors or non-Board volunteers. We hope this structure will expand the pool of NRTC members engaged in various aspects of managing the club.

This **Board's term** is over at next year's AGM (2025) and we hope to encourage others to run. In the meantime, Kim Eckersley and Marty Kilby have stepped down and Shelley Young will be ending her term on September 1st. We thank them for their generous contributions of time, expertise and insight.

Respectfully submitted,  
NRTC Board