



TENNIS SENIORS AUSTRALIA INC

BUSINESS PLAN 2013-15 (to be updated annually)

Mission

- To promote and enhance a healthy lifestyle and provide social interaction opportunities through tennis for players over 35.

Vision

- Our vision is increasing participation numbers across all 35+ age groups, all standards of play and across a range of appealing competitions and events, in all States.

Objectives/Aspirations/Observations

- We want to have 4500 registered 35+ members across all States and Territories by 2015.
- We want to support and play our part in the vision of Tennis Australia of having 4m people playing tennis by 2015
- Research has shown that over 70% of senior players would prefer a "pay for play" model to access tennis courts, rather than pay an annual membership fee. Our view is that there is therefore a valid basis on which to conclude that senior players could also prefer a "pay for play" model to access tennis playing opportunities. We are conducting a "pay for play" trial in NSW and the ACT to test its acceptance. Indications at this stage are that it has been accepted by many players, although there have been negative comments. The major difficulty has been one of implementation, administration and management, and getting the co-operation of the clubs running the smaller events. In addition, there have been some negative comments from some players who play many of the country tournaments, about the total cost they now incur.
- By and large, we offer enough tournaments although there are still opportunities to increase the number in some States e.g. WA. The major growth opportunity lies in increasing the number of socially inclined team competitions/social days.
- We would like to see more social tennis days and get-togethers in some States, but we must rely on them to do this as it is beyond our scope or control.

- We want to offer all senior participants value in terms of event entry fees, with low uniform (across States) membership fees, in line with the needs and expectations of our participants, while maintaining financial viability.
- We are of the view that higher State Seniors membership fees are a “barrier to entry” – at what level they cease to be so is debatable but we think it is around the \$15 mark
- Based on anecdotal evidence predominantly in most States, there appears to be “desire to belong” particularly amongst older senior members, which reflects in a willingness to pay a small membership fee
- We want to select the best teams possible, in as many age groups as possible, to represent Australia annually at the World Seniors and Super Seniors Team and Individual Championships. We look to the continued financial support of TA to fund these teams in the medium term.
- We acknowledge and understand that our target market is two-fold viz. the more elite tournament and competition player and the more social event inclined player. We desire to meet the needs of both markets, and our objective therefore is to develop separate strategies to engage the “elite” and the “social”
- We therefore wish to remain aligned to the ITF and offer our elite players the opportunity to earn international ranking points, preferably in both singles and doubles.
- We want to ensure that the administration of events is as easy and seamless as possible for Tournament Directors, acknowledging that we need to cater to the requirements of the ITF and/or TA.
- We would prefer all of our member and participant details to be on one common database, which can be used for marketing and promotion purposes. As the MYTENNIS database is owned by the MA’s, a sound and productive working relationship with TA and the MA’s is critical.
- Our objective is to market to 35+ members in Member Association databases, and entice them to join the State Seniors Division, provided that the latter have an acceptable range of competitive and social tennis offerings, and that membership of the State Seniors Division is priced at an acceptable level.
- Our objective is to work with the MA’s and the States in an effort to keep operating costs of Seniors Divisions as low as possible – lower operating costs should translate into lower membership fees.
- Our observation from speaking to members is that they are confused about the number of fees they pay – a club/association fee, an affiliation fee to their State MA, and a Seniors membership fee. We acknowledge that the new affiliation model being introduced by MA’s will mean that the affiliation fee paid currently by players to their MA will disappear over time.
- Our observation is that members expect any/some of the accumulated funds of State Senior Divisions will ultimately be used to provide them with additional benefits, or to be used for the betterment of Seniors tennis.

SWOT or Situational analysis

- In order to assist us to develop strategies and a business model for the future, we consider it useful to conduct a situational analysis examining our strengths and weaknesses, and our opportunities and threats
- The implications of these should be taken account of in any future plan

Strengths

Strengths	Implications
Support of TA	Ensure that we maintain a sound and productive association with TA, and we discuss and desirably agree on all of our strategic plans or initiatives or any that have a direct bearing on TA. Strive to meet the requirements of our Service Agreement with them.
Relationship with ITF	Despite some of the challenges presented by some ITF initiatives, our relationship with them is good. We should continue to discuss our concerns with them, and attempt to make their required processes as seamless as possible for local conditions
35+ Seniors brand	Well accepted brand with marketing appeal. Ensure consistency in use of the branding across all communications
Committed TSA Executive	The Executive of TSA is committed and energetic, and is prepared to put in the hard yards to make progress in the interests of growing Seniors tennis. Continue to focus on the broader strategic goals, while continuing to professionally manage the day to day operational requirements. Ensure the Executive continues to possess a broad range of skills other than tennis.
Financial viability	Across TSA and all State Senior Divisions, there are considerable funds to promote initiatives and growth opportunities if they can be persuaded to do so

Weaknesses

Weaknesses	Implications
Volunteer base	The TSA Executive and all State Senior Divisions committees are composed of volunteers. We need to temper our expectations to take account of this
Governance structure	The "federal" structure of TSA and State based affiliates does not allow TSA to impose direction. There is a necessity to discuss all strategic plans and directions with the States, share understanding and agreement, and hopefully achieve agreement. We wish to avoid confrontation or the necessity to seek Constitutional change, acknowledging that this may become an alternative. Ideally we want agreed not imposed direction.
Participation of TA "hierarchy" in our planning	There is a view that some of our planning is done in a "vacuum" without strategic discussion and support from higher TA management. We need to discuss our plans with TA management to ensure that it is congruent with their strategic direction
Lower membership numbers in younger age groups 35-40	Include in our marketing plans, a campaign to entice this age group to our playing ranks. The input for this should come largely from members of these age groups.
Reliance on TA for operational support	We are reliant on TA for operational support in areas such as legal, marketing and maybe to a lesser extent systems and IT, which may have other demands on their time. We need to be professional and specific about our requirements, so as not to extend timelines
Club based "distribution" system	In respect of some initiatives, such as the PFP, we are likely to be partly reliant on clubs/associations for implementation. Many may have parochial views. We need to be aware of this in our communications with them – our requests of them must be easy to follow and easy to implement. Our experience with the PFP for example, has shown how difficult it would be to implement this initiative in its current form, on a national basis
Lack of automated event management system use	This results in difficulty and time in updating results for ranking points etc. We need ideally to promote the adoption and use of a single automated system for this purpose

Opportunities

Opportunities	Implications
MA databases – 35+ names would form the majority	It is estimated that there are 170,000 names on various MA databases. If 40% of these are 35+, that represents 68000 names. TSA State membership is 3000. The growth and marketing potential is enormous if we can offer the right products at the right price, and market the proposition effectively
MYTENNIS	It would be significant if MYTENNIS could prove to be a robust and effective database that could be utilized for marketing and promotion, as well as the collection and distribution of fees. Out of TSA control
Abundant facilities in some States	Some States, notably Victoria, WA and SA, have wonderful tennis facilities that provide opportunities for further expansion of events. Identify these and work with the States to capitalize on these
TA vision of 4m tennis players by 2015	Be part of this – with Seniors representing such a large portion of potential players, we must work with TA to ensure that we are part of the growth opportunity this represents
Community Tennis Officers (CTO's)	We need to further educate the CTO's about the needs of 35+ tennis and gain the support of MA's in harnessing their assistance. If we do this well, CTO's could be very beneficial in identifying additional 35+ playing opportunities, promoting membership, and also participation in 35+ activities

Threats

Threats	Implications
Resistance to change, particularly amongst older players	We must communicate effectively and often with members and States, articulating reasons for changes. Accept that we are not going to satisfy everyone all of the time. A particular threat in this area is the need to implement new ITF requirements.
Further changes in regulations and processes by the ITF re IPIN etc	Continue contact with the ITF to make processes as seamless as possible, acknowledging that we wish to continue our ITF alignment. Continue to explain the benefits of ITF association and their processes such as IPIN to members in all communications
Lack of support from MA's	Lack of support from MA's (if this were to be the case) could reflect in not assisting States to reduce costs, and most importantly reduce our opportunities to market via MYTENNIS databases. TSA and every State needs to continue to build their relationship with MA's, explaining our objectives and plans
Non- cooperation from the States	State Senior Divisions could decide not to support our initiatives for change. Again, change process needs continuous explanation and communication, discussion and debate.
MYTENNIS	MYTENNIS is a threat in the respect that if it does not deliver on its promises and potential as a robust database and payment mechanism, it could seriously disrupt our marketing initiatives. Seek continuous feedback from TA on the MYTENNIS development.

Strategies and Action Plans for 2013

So, in summary and taking account of our strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats, as well as our objectives, observations and aspirations, our suggested strategies and action plans for 2013-15 are as follows:

Strategy	Action Plan
Deliver a range of appealing and engaging competitions/events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand our tournament offerings, if possible to include an additional ITF event in each of WA, NSW and SA (calendars, facility availability need to be considered) • Maintain the current number of National Ranking Tournaments and other "country" tournaments • Expand our team events to include an additional "Berri" type event in each of WA, VIC and Qld (if facilities allow) • Consider ways to further enhance the appeal and international standing of the Australian Individual Championships and Claycourt titles, and also all other ITF events – format, timing, promotion, branding (possibly Platinum, Gold etc) partly to attract more younger age group players
Present the best teams/individuals possible to represent Australia at international events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that our selection criteria allows us to select the best teams in every age category – Seniors and Super Seniors • Review/ investigate the current funding model for Australian representative players
Reduce "barriers to entry" such as membership fees and keep entry fees affordable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All States and ACT to reduce their membership fee to a uniform \$15 (net of GST) from 1 July 2013. The financial modeling done by the Treasurer TSA indicates that with membership fees at this level, and taking account of current other income and expenses, all States with the exception of Vic, will at least break even (SA analysis not done as they have not released their accounts to TSA) This analysis will be available for discussion at the P & S meeting in January 2013 • No portion of membership fee to be paid to Tennis Seniors Australia • WA and SA to have a 2 tier fee structure – membership of Seniors only at \$15, and/or membership of Robertson Park/South Parklands

Facilitate a “pay for play” (PFP) model where possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue the PFP trial in NSW and ACT to June 2013, with a full review of the pilot in the first quarter of 2013 • Subject to that review, consider the imposition of a standard levy of possibly \$2 per participation, in all ITF and NRT events only, from July 2013, to partly fund TSA
Provide opportunities for social players to enjoy the game through organized access to competitions/events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with each State to expand social play opportunities, acknowledging that increasing participation is the key – participation will lead to membership at the right price. • Develop a “Join Seniors” invitation pack for all participants in an attempt to convert them to membership
Create a tennis community by promoting a “sense of belonging” to people who are over 35 and are currently playing, or want to play, tennis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with the membership philosophy (hence retaining a reduced membership fee not a “nil” fee) • Work with all States to develop a “value proposition” – what value/package are members being offered for their membership
Work with TA and the ITF to provide the best opportunities for our players to achieve their aspirations and highest possible international ranking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to engage /consult with TA and the ITF • Involve TA and MA’s in our planning so as to derive benefit from their experience, knowledge and expertise • Ensure there are sufficient playing opportunities for our elite players • Discuss and promote possible refinements to the ITF/IPIN system with the ITF to facilitate participation for all players
Work with TA and the State based Member Associations to create operating efficiencies so that membership fees can be affordably reduced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that Service Agreements are in place in each State, and that proposed strategies for joint consideration are continuously reviewed. • Ensure that TA briefs the MA’s on our need for assistance in this area • Continue to seek ways to reduce costs in State Senior divisions, and in TSA
Utilise IT to engage participants via TA membership tools and the MYTENNIS database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and run a “Join Seniors Tennis” promotion as a trail in two States where a good range of both social and competitive events are on offer – possibly VIC and SA. Utilise the MA MYTENNIS database for this purpose

<p>Deliver support and training for Tournament Directors (TD's)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to consult with TA and the ITF to implement and/or reduce the payment gateway cost of using Tournament Planner (TP), or to increase the benefits of use to compensate • Consult with TA on possible training for TD's in TP • Subject to the above, develop a plan and set an objective to migrate tournaments to TP, thus facilitating tournament entry processes and possible future ranking processes
<p>Create productive relationships with TA and between our Senior State divisions and their respective MA's</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to reinforce our commitment to assisting TA with their vision of 4M. Involve them in our planning. • TSA to visit State MA's and Senior divisions on a regular basis to update them on our plans, aspirations and progress • Seek opportunities to brief CTO's on 35+ tennis, and gain their support to promote new 35+ activities, membership and participation.

TSA Executive – January 2013