

VICTORIAN SENIORS STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Although Melbourne and the Glen Iris area was hit by a massive electrical storm and the courts subjected to damage on two occasions over the week-end, the open Victorian Seniors State Championships were concluded on time. After coping with wet courts on the Friday at Dendy Park Tennis Club and finishing under lights after 10.30 pm, the fierce hail storm which hit mid afternoon on the Saturday was unbelievable. But, with the help of volunteers and ground staff in making repairs, the courts were not only playable but in great condition for play on both the Sunday and Monday. Perhaps it's only on the 'red stuff' that we can be blessed with such excellent conditions after such a deluge.

Paul Kleverlaan, Rob Hughes and Keith Lavington did great work in organizing and getting the tournament through on time and received a vote of thanks from the players at the presentation for their commitment, patience and skill in making satisfactory arrangements. Margaret Mitchell and her staff of volunteers were also recognized for making food and refreshments available throughout the tournament.



(l to r) Rob Hughes (Treasurer, TSV), David Stobart (President of TV), Paul Kleverlaan (President TSV), Andrew Rae (winner, 55+ singles) and Bruce Osborne (runner-up)

In memory of Ward Hillier, who gave great support to Tennis Seniors in Australia and in Victoria in particular, a perpetual shield for the winner of the 70+ singles was inaugurated at this tournament. Peter Hillier, one of Ward and Nancy's sons, made the presentation to Peter Froelich, this year's winner. A small replica of the shield was given also to Peter Froelich for his keeping. In visiting the Hillier home later in the day with John and Margaret Mitchell and Judy, Nancy expressed her family's appreciation of the recognition given to Ward.

A visitor from Queensland was Gail Bates who accompanied husband Max. It was great to see Gail looking so well and sitting back and relaxing at the tennis. It was very rewarding for the organizers of the tournament that so many entries were received from interstate players like Max, many of who figured in the semi-finals and finals.



(l to r) Lea Whyte and Lou Griffith (winners, 60+ doubles) and Elizabeth Davidson and Katie Patterson

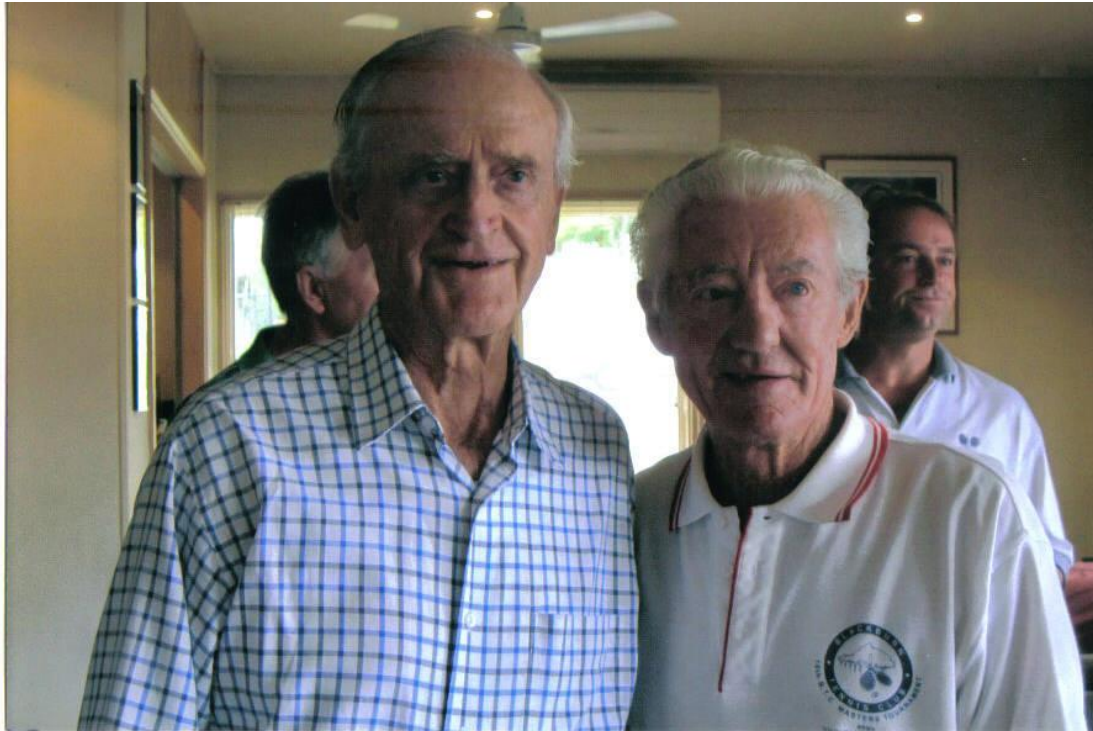
In the 35/40 women singles, Juliet Drew, making an appearance after a three year absence from the Championships due to tendon problems in her leg, defeated Karen Kleverlaan, 60, 63. Kerrie Douglas played exceptionally good tennis in her 3 and 0 win over Ros Balodis (ACT) in the women 45/50 singles. Theresa Carmichael defeated Elizabeth Davidson 64, 36, 63 in the 60+ singles. In the 65/70 women singles the tough matches were in the semis where Judy Hancy won the shoot-out of the forehands in her win over Nola Collins 5 and 3. In the other semi, Angie Arthurs outstayed Linda Pengelly in a long match to take the third set 64. Judy defeated Angie 1 and 0 in the final.



(l to r) Theresa Carmichael (winner, 60+ singles) and Elizabeth Davidson (runner-up)

There were many hard fought matches in the finals of the men singles although the scores often do not reflect the closeness of competition. In the 35+ singles, Brett Patten (WA) had to temper his power games at times to stay with the consistent and sometimes brilliant Rohan Kerr (Tas; a former Victorian). However, the talented WA player prevailed in the third set, 63, after a marathon battle. Hard hitting Marin Richards (SA) defeated Paul Kleverlaan (who managed to fit in some tennis in between organizing the event) in the 40+ singles; Martin won 63, 63. Simon Arms proved too strong and too consistent for Dean Ellis in winning the 45+ singles, 61 and 60. Eddie Myers produced some good tennis to give Glenn Busby some competition in the first set of the 50+ singles, but the world class player proved too strong and too talented in winning 63, 60. In the 55+ singles, Bruce Osborne produced some outstanding tennis to keep Andrew Rae honest in his play throughout the match, but the winner of so many world singles championships knows the court and his opponent so well to produce another talented display in winning 2 and 4.

In the super-senior events, Max Bates received some good competition from Wayne Hassett in the second set as he chalked up another win in the 60+ singles, 61 64. George Collins, battling niggling injuries, was back on the winners list in defending his win of last year in his match against Dennis Bindon (NSW) 61, 63 in the 65+ singles. Queenslander Peter Froelich was at home on the 'red stuff' as he produced great stroke making in his win over Don Biddle (NSW) who also grew up on entous-cas courts, in the 70+ event. It is great to see Peter back in tournaments and getting back into the form and condition that has made him a world class player. Peter won 2 and 1 and was most gracious in accepting the Hillier trophy. Another visitor from NSW, John O'Brien, was successful in the 75+singles, defeating Stan Kennett 60, 64. The 'young' 80+ Brian Stuart proved too strong for the 'evergreen' 88 year old Neville Halligan (Qld). Although Brian won the first set 61, he was challenged by a determined, strong hitting Neville who went down 57 in the second set.



(l to r) Neville Halligan (runner-up) and Brian Stuart (winner, 80+ singles)

Of the 28 finalist in the singles, ten were from interstate. To these players and others who made the trip for these championships, the Victorians thank you for coming and helping to make these championships an event of an excellent standard. In addition, the patronage of the better players in the nation is so important in helping to maintain the ITF grading of sanctioned tournaments. To the players who have used these matches as practice for their trip to Mexico for the ITF World Team and Individual Championships, we offer best wishes for great tennis and safe travel. We know you will do your best in representing Australia.



(l to r) Angie Arthurs (runner-up) and Judy Hancy (winner, 65/70 singles)

A full list of results can be found at www.92computing.com.au

Tom Hancy
March 10th, 2010.