

## Open Grade Report 2015-16 Season

Another very successful season for Mid Canterbury Tennis as far as Open Grade goes, with the highlight being the successful defence of the Browning Shield, and subsequent selection of the team as Mid Canterbury Team of the Year. Many thanks to all of those players who sacrificed a weekend in January for the cause, and those who attended the Mid Canterbury Sports Awards dinner to accept our trophy! This season the competition will be held on the last weekend in February, either at Kaiapoi or here at the Ashburton Trust Tennis Centre.

Interclub numbers were pleasing, with six A Grade teams and a good pool of reserves, but only four A Reserve teams. Methven was dominant in A Grade, while Hampstead had good depth to win the A Reserve and combined trophies. Competitions will resume next season on 8 October, the last Saturday of the school holidays.

In the Gala Cup competition, Rhys Cromie made it Men's Singles title number eight, and we gained a new Ladies' champion in Tessa McCann. Entries were very good, and it seems November is a popular time to hold the event.

Masters Mixed has continued on the grass courts at Allenton with steady numbers, although it could do with a few more over-35 players to keep it viable. Pauline Taylor and her helpers deserve a vote of thanks.

Twilight Tennis continues to thrive on Wednesday nights, and there are a few spaces in this semi-social fun competition. Many thanks to Peter Yates for his support in running the Wednesdays.

Sunset Doubles on Thursdays is running at capacity, so teams have to be in early, and Murray Amyes is doing a wonderful job in keeping his customers happy. The pizzas which get delivered to help restore players' energy is a wonderful innovation. Our Thursday night barman, Phil Crozier, needs a big thank-you also, and now that he and Judith have moved into town, we hope that this will prove to be good for his tennis as well as our good fortune to have him helping us.

The new Tuesday night Fast 4's created some excitement for local players, giving them a chance to compete for Configure Ranking Points in singles and doubles, with matches being started around 6pm, and finishing around 7pm or shortly after. Many thanks to Koji and Terrace Downs Resort for their support in this quick fire competitive weekly fixture.

Mid Canterbury's top players are being included in Canterbury Country Rep teams, particularly the quadrangular in April, where Country performed with distinction against some of the top players in the South Island. Our players are also playing in club Premier teams in Christchurch, and also Division 1 and 2 in dedicated Canterbury Country Men's and Ladies' teams. The aim is to progress these teams into higher divisions and back into Premiers to give our top players top level play under the Country banner.

The EA Networks Centre has two indoor courts on the wooden floor in the stadium, and this will be hosting the inaugural Mid Canterbury Indoor Doubles Championship in a few weeks' time, so stay tuned for further information. It will only be open to eight pairs, played over time slots, and with the softer "green-dot" balls due to the ultra-fast surface and the constraints of court hire, etc.

Many thanks to all of the other people who have been able to help me when my work roster meant I had to be elsewhere instead of here, particularly Peter Leonard, and Connor, who stepped up when I wasn't able to be around. I hope the coming season sees even more happy players around the courts of Mid Canterbury and beyond.

Thank you.