



**VICTORIAN COMMUNITY  
TENNIS AWARDS  
2024**

*The Finalists*

## EXCELLENCE IN OFFICIATING

This award recognises an official who has made an outstanding contribution to tennis officiating in Australia through their dedication, skill, attitude, and knowledge. Their performances set them apart from their peers at either a domestic or international level and they have been a positive role model for other tennis officials.

### *Congratulations* TO THE 2024 FINALISTS



#### **MAX FISHER**

Max devotes himself to tournaments and events both locally and nationally and across multiple disciplines. He treats all tournaments equally, from elite to grassroots. He has an excellent attitude towards the sport and a true passion to serve the game and extend his knowledge to players and peers. Max achieved his ITF White Badge in Officiating in 2023 and worked as a Chair Umpire at the Australian Open 2024. He went on to be a Chair Umpire for his first ATP Challenger in Burnie 2024. He was then selected for Spanish and Japanese tournaments. Max displays role model behaviour and represents the values of Excellence, Humility, Collaboration and Imagination both on and off the court.



#### **ANDE HUTCHINSON**

Ande, known to many as Hutch, has been an Official for 40 years. This includes 105 Grand Slam events, a role as National Coach and numerous positions held on Boards. Ande has coached all levels of Officiating, upskilling the next generation of Officials. He has been an ITF badge holder for 17 years. Ande is an Official that all look up to. He treats all with respect and explain matters in a way that all will understand. Ande has been a referee with the AO KIA Armature for five years.



#### **LIZ ROSS**

Liz continues to show excellence in her Officiating as an Australian Open Match Assistant, Court Supervisor, Lines Person and Coach of Court Monitors. Competent and experienced across all her levels, she is regularly a designated team leader. With an amiable personality, she provides guidance and support for her peers. She has been selected for many Summer of Tennis Events including December Showdown, Australian Open Adelaide & Brisbane events, Burnie Challenger and ITF & Pro Tour Events, contributing to events locally and at a Grand Slam level.

## MOST OUTSTANDING TOURNAMENT

This award goes to an outstanding Tennis Victoria approved event that is innovative and successful. It undertakes media and promotional activities and implements strategies to engage the local community. The team behind the tournament are proactive and dedicated to providing a positive and thriving tournament atmosphere for the players. The tournament engages sponsors and provides a high standard of player amenities and social activities.

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#### **2024 OPEN 3K RYE TENNIS CLUB 45TH ANNUAL AUSTRALIA DAY EVENT**

For the first time in the 45 years of the events history, it was delivered across two venues - Rye and Dromana Tennis Clubs – due to a substantial increase in players and entries. Along with the increased entries and venues, the volunteers and staff engaged to deliver also increased to provide player amenities and court monitoring. Social media marketing was utilised, local MPs and Councillor's engaged with, and the local newspaper provided coverage - all raising the profile of the event. The event engages multiple sponsors who receive court advertising, event naming and presentation invitations.



#### **SWAN HILL INTERNATIONAL #2**

The Swan Hill Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club showed a high level of proactivity in creating a great atmosphere for the pro tour players at the Swan Hill International #2. From accommodation assistance and cantenn facilities to court services, ball kids and car shuttles provided, the club ensured a welcoming and friendly experience. Advertising on social media and engaging local media raised the profile of the event. Club sponsors increased their support for the event and were treated to a corporate box experience.



#### **2024 OC JC NANDM ID & AUTISM TOURNAMENTS**

Held at Hurstbridge Tennis Club, these monthly community endorsed events are for athletes with Intellectual Impairment. Players are targeted through various promotional channels such as Special Olympics Victoria and the Tennis websites. The small playing group provides a safe and welcoming environment for athletes, which for some is their first event experience. These events form an important first step in the tournament pathway before going on to State and National Ranking opportunities.

## MOST OUTSTANDING SCHOOL

This award goes to an outstanding school that embraces tennis into the school environment. It is a part of the National School Partnership Program or has a strong relationship with a Tennis Australia qualified coach and/or Tennis Victoria affiliated local club. It delivers Hot Shots Tennis and/or Cardio Tennis or provides a tennis program for students as part of the school curriculum. The school provides a tennis pathway for students including community and competition opportunities.

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### HEATHERWOOD SCHOOL

A Secondary School for students with mild intellectual disabilities, tennis is included from year 7-12 in the Physical Education program. The school attends an annual Interschool tennis gala day and encourages students to pursue tennis in the wider community. The school has engaged local clubs and coaches to provide quality programs at the school and explore the area of all abilities. The school has also extended their program to visit local clubs, supporting the students transition to external tennis opportunities. The school competes in the MDF Cup and SSSSA Come and Try Tennis Day.



### LIGHTHOUSE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

The Lighthouse Christian College has just completed its 10th year of partnership with Cranbourne Tennis Club. The school includes tennis in the curriculum, transporting approximately 200 students each week to the club for lessons, match play and social hitting. The school covers the costs of transport and provision of equipment to eliminate the barriers to participation. An end of term tournament is held in Terms 1 (doubles) and 4 (singles) with the focus on participation.

### ROCHESTER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Proactive at incorporating tennis into the curriculum, the Rochester Primary School has over 150 participants from Foundation - Year 6. The school encourages transition to the local club and association competition. The school has been able to provide a tennis playing opportunity that students may not have had access to while recovering from the impact of the floods. The school competes in SSV 5/6 inter school red ball competition and thrives in the Campaspe Division of the SSV competition structure.

**ROCHESTER  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



## MOST OUTSTANDING INCLUSION INITIATIVE

This award goes to an outstanding inclusion initiative within the Victorian tennis community. It is a Tennis Victoria affiliate, partner program of Tennis Victoria, Local Government Authority or Tennis Australia qualified coach, who go above and beyond to create and support inclusive tennis environments for underrepresented groups.

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### A GAY DAY ON THE GREEN - BACCHUS MARSH LAWN TENNIS CLUB

A Gay Day on the Green provides a safe and welcoming environment for all residents of Bacchus Marsh and beyond, especially those of the LGBTQIA+ community. Sanctioned by the Gay and Lesbian Tennis Association, this event is an annual event and part of their World Tour. The inaugural event had 62 participants and numerous spectators in attendance. The focus is not just on playing but aims to improve social connection for otherwise isolated and/or vulnerable residents. The club and event engaged with tennis organisations for support and resources. They utilised local organisations and groups to connect to community. It was also well supported by local councillors and politicians.



### ALL ABILITIES CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS - FERNTREE GULLY TENNIS CLUB

The Ferntree Gully Tennis Club implemented a unified doubles and singles category for all abilities players to their annual club championships. This provides a pathway for players out of the weekly program, providing a competitive option and preparation for competing against other clubs or at external events such as the Special Olympics. A modified format and round robin draw ensured plenty of tennis for participants. The event connects the players to the wider playing group at the club.



### ADVANTAGE AUTISM - SLAMIN TENNIS & FITNESS

The Advantage Autism program extends beyond participants with autism and caters for players individual needs based on their intellectual impairment and comorbidity. The program provides physically accessible and affordable tennis programs for participants, including sensory overload venues – venues where light, sound and temperature can be controlled for the comfort of participants. The Slamin Tennis Advantage Autism program partnered with Ferntree Gully Tennis Club to provide a social match play for participants, building skills on and off the court.

## COACHING EXCELLENCE – CLUB OR CENTRE

This award is to recognise an excellent coach who delivers quality coaching programs and pathways that cater for the needs of players within their community. They are a qualified Hot Shots Tennis Coach and provide pathways to transition players from schools to club and from coaching to competition. They have a strong relationship with their club or facility committee/management and are actively involved in growing the game of tennis. They are organised, innovative, dedicated and efficient.

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#### **BTS COACHING ACADEMY**

The BTS Coaching Academy commenced in 2022, and has grown from zero participants to over 125 players. BTS provides a range of programs from Hot Shots to Cardio and Adult Lessons to meet the needs of the local community at Fawkner Tennis Club. BTS also identified the opportunity to implement a High-Performance program and support athletes who compete in local and interstate tournaments. The participation pathway for the Fawkner Tennis Club and the juniors is also an important focus for BTS Coaching Academy who drive team culture through competition from local association to Tennis Victoria Pennant and State Grade. The Fawkner Tennis Club has seen a 265% increase in membership since BTS commenced. BTS have offered tennis at the Australian International Academy, a Muslim teaching school, increasing the participation in Hot Shots both at the school and at the club.



#### **CAMERON MEAGHER**

Head coach of the Wodonga Tennis Centre, Cameron Meagher delivers a variety of programs catering for the whole community. Identifying a gap in the transition from junior to senior competition opportunities, Cam developed a Saturday afternoon competition to support the more advanced players to gain match play and be ready for senior competition. Cam provides a tournament program for elite players. He has also received funding to initiate a wheelchair tennis program and he coaches wheelchair tennis player Harrison Dudley who competes at ITF Wheelchair tournaments. Cam and his team of coaches provide tennis opportunities in several schools and support the transition to the Wodonga Tennis Centre. Cam has also initiated a girls squad to help retain young girls in tennis and five of the eight coaches working for the academy are female.



#### **VICKY LEE**

Operating at Doncaster Tennis Club, Vicky Lee's Slamin Tennis and Fitness provides a wide range of programs and services for all ages and abilities. Working closely with local schools and the club, Vicky tailors the tennis experience to the needs of the participant. From free trials to assessments and recommendations for next steps in the pathway, Vicky supports every player's journey. Recently awarded for 20 years of service by Doncaster Tennis Club, Vicky commits to the club beyond her coaching business. A digitally enabled business with online booking systems and social media presence, Slamin Tennis & Fitness puts the customer first.



## MOST OUTSTANDING CLUB OR CENTRE

This award recognises an outstanding Tennis Victoria affiliated club or centre that is dedicated to enhancing and promoting the game of tennis to the wider community. They provide a welcoming, inclusive and accessible environment. They implement and utilise Tennis Australia and Tennis Victoria programs and services and engage qualified and registered coaches.

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#### **KEW TENNIS CLUB**

With four courts and a healthy membership base of over 350, the Kew Tennis Club has gone through a significant transformation in the past 12 months. This includes increasing female participation, more junior competition teams and the introduction of Peak Tennis Academy to deliver Hot Shots, squads and Cardio Tennis. The club has a thriving social tennis program which is most new members first introduction. The Kew TC has transformed a club from court bookings to engaged and thriving, providing tennis for all ages and abilities.



#### **MOUNT BEAUTY TENNIS CLUB**

Four courts located in the Upper Kiewa Valley, the Mount Beauty Tennis Club has a growing membership and provides social mixed, night mixed, ladies social, pennant, coaching and Hot Shots for the community. The club also engages with local schools who use the facility for PE. The club is proactive in developing coaches with two female members completing the Trainee Coaching Course and another member going from Trainee course to Level 1. The club recognise the positive outcomes for the club and community from this support. The club have recently received funding to upgrade the lighting to LED.



#### **WARRNAMBOOL LAWN TENNIS CLUB**

With 34 courts in Victoria's Southwest, the Warrnambool Lawn Tennis Club has undergone a period of innovation; transforming the club's management model, developing the facilities and planning for the future. A partnership with Beachside Tennis Academy provides coaching from preschool age to adults including support for the transition of participants to club-based competitions and programs. The club delivers three community endorsed events each summer – the Grass court Classic, Seaside Tennis Carnival and the famous Warrnambool Lawn Open which sells out in hours. The club joined forces with neighbours Port Fairy and Hamilton to host a three-day series for junior development players.

## VOLUNTEER ACHIEVEMENT

This award recognises an outstanding volunteer who has provided highly commendable service to Tennis Victoria, and/or one or more of its affiliates for a minimum of three years. They have made a considerable contribution to the sport, specifically in the area of encouraging more active players. They have leadership qualities shown in building and/or maintaining facilities and/or operating procedures.

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### **HUGH BERGIN**

Hugh is 11 years old and is a player and volunteer who is far beyond his years. He is passionate about everything tennis in his community. Hugh supports the delivery of the Hot Shots Community Play program and played a role in the Bushfire Recovery AO Trophy tour at the Wahgunyah Tennis Club. Hugh developed the idea and delivered a tennis tournament to raise money for breast cancer – the Racquets Against Breast Cancer tournament. Hugh engaged with his local community to gain sponsorship and raffle prizes. In two years the event has raised \$6,500.



### **CRAIG DOUGLAS**

President for over eight years of Scoresby Tennis Centre, Craig has shown unwavering commitment and leadership which has resulted in both financial and membership growth. Craig fosters a welcoming and inclusive environment for tennis enthusiasts of all ages. His proactive efforts have led to substantial improvements in the clubs facilities, including the procurement of new hardcourts, the implementation of an automated booking court system and upgrades to lighting, seating, shade sails and pavilion amenities. Craig is also President of Tennis Knox and involved on the Knox Council's Recreation and Leisure committee, highlighting his commitment to enhancing community sports and leisure activities. Craig has been instrumental in building the club's Hot Shots program and weekend competitions and he helped establish the Indigenous Tennis Academy.

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### **COURTNEY MURRAY**

An asset to the Meredith Tennis Club, Courtney has supported the implementation of new programs for participants of all ages and abilities including running a free coaching program. A member of the general committee, Courtney has fostered relationships with local council, and is a committee member of the Recreation Reserve, working to ensure improved facilities and services. The Meredith Tennis Club has been reinvigorated in the past five years and a large part of that success is Courtney's willingness to get kids on court. Courtney also implemented after tennis dinners once a week for eight weeks, raising money for the club and providing a social environment for families.



### **LOUISE THORNTON**

Involved at the Yackandandah Tennis Club for eight years, and on the committee since 2017, Louise's passion for her community and the club is abundant. Louise have grown the junior and female participation through the delivery of Community Play Hot Shots and has piloted Cardio Tennis. Louise's role includes ensuring the club meets safeguarding needs and she was involved in the funding process for resurfacing and lighting upgrades. In 2023, Louise completed the Women in Leadership course with Tennis Australia, as part of which she built a program to encourage more females to participate at the club; breaking down the barriers between competition and social play to deliver a welcoming environment.

