

Junior Badminton 2013 – Annual Report

This season kicked off on the 6th of April, the Championships were held on the 31st of August and two additional Saturdays after the Championships were held because of popular demand! In all there were 17 Saturday afternoon sessions (including the Championships). The dates were somewhat affected by the transition to four school terms, a relatively early Easter break, fluctuating Federal Election date and the usual slew of tournaments and championships hosted by the STBA.

This year marked a new era for the Junior Badminton Roster as the previous stalwarts Kev Rothery and Christine Dennison stepped back from the previous high profile roles. It must be noted that Christine has only taken a small step back, and Kev has always been available as a mentor. Kev facilitated a smooth transition and handed over a very comprehensive and detailed set of files which has made our job much easier. In their place, the load has been much more broadly spread with the administration handled by Nathan Duhig and each of the four divisions was managed by either one regular supervisor, or more usually by two or more sharing the load. Assisting Nathan at the registration desk were Caitlin Duhig, Michelle Foale, Cathy McKeown and Stephanie Cooper and on the courts, Keetah McConchie, Christine Dennison, Michelle Foale, Virginia Ford, Kheng Ooi, Leah Rosebrook, Robyn Thomas, Naomi Green and Josh Honeyman took care of the players.

Speaking of the players, 87 players received medallions for taking part in 3 or more sessions, and over 130 players participated in at least one session. Two social pizza evenings were held in the second half of the season. Late last year saw the start of the Tasmanian Badminton Association Talent Identification Squad (TBATIS), which involved many of our juniors and Heather Rothery (U17), Siobhan Duhig (U17 and U15), Freya Cox (U15), Ben Oakley (U15), Alec Avellana (U17) and Laura Dennison (U17) have gone on to represent the state. Many former juniors have also represented the state at recent National U19 and Open Championships. Regardless of representative honours, many juniors have become regulars in the seasonal week-night rosters, playing in Divisions 5 up to 2.

The Championship Day was a great success (in spite of a clash with state U15 training), with over 75 players participating in singles, plates and doubles competitions across the four divisions. Many of the finals were tightly fought; round-robins determined by count-back and the highly prized Umpiring and Sportsmanship Awards were eagerly anticipated by all.

Whilst the new team were finding their feet this season, the usual 55-75 players per Saturday were more than enough to manage. However an obvious area for growth and participation is from the winter high school and college rosters. Primary schools in the greater Hobart area are also a largely untapped resource and consideration could be given to lifting the profile of badminton in this sector. Unlike previous years, no coaching was available for juniors on Saturdays, and any additional support in this area would be greatly appreciated in seasons to come.

Thanks must also be given to Alan Bottomley who designed a very valuable online Parent-Help form, and to the continued support of the STBA and the STBA Committee and office bearers in many and various ways. We also wish Marshall all the best for a speedy recovery so that he can return to his much appreciated role at the Canteen.

It is anticipated in coming years that the Junior Roster will occupy as much as possible of terms 2 and 3, meaning that for next season, we would ideally restart on the 10th of May and finish on the 20th of September 2014.