

HENRY FARM TENNIS CLUB

President's report

October 15, 2022

I would like to welcome you all to our first post-Covid Annual General Meeting of the Club, the first since 2019.

2022 was another memorable year for many reasons which I will cover below.

But first, I would like to remind you all the Club is run by a group of unpaid volunteers on the Club Board who spend a lot of their personal time to make the Club the success that it is. I would like to introduce them all, and ask that you recognize their contributions.

Our Head Pro, Ed Wilson, has been with the Club for so long that I can't even remember. He is the heart and soul of the Club: teaching juniors and adults, managing the pros, running the NYTA league club team, organizing the year-end tournaments, managing our 3 monitors, ensuring that club supplies are replenished, and I am sure I forget a few. His advice and counsel on many issues was a great help to me. So please show your appreciation for all that Ed does.

Vijay Kandeth was our vice-president and was an invaluable support to me. He was our club "diplomat" in our relationship with the City staff and with Shelley Carroll's staff. His considerate approach won him many accolades and helped smooth the path for our major project this year, the court resurfacing. Thank you, Vijay.

Jose San Juan has been our Treasurer. In addition to managing the Club finances, including budgeting and updating our financial outlook, he helped support the Club Pros in dealing with the myriad complications arising from the camps and the various club programs. An effective and indispensable, if quiet, Board member. Thank you, Jose.

Raluca Costea joined the Club Board last year and has been looking after our membership. A tedious task that she learned to do very well, and with a smile. Thank you Raluca.

Kevon Regert looked after our facilities, repairing what needed to be repaired and generally looking after the good functioning of the club assets. Thank you Kevon.

Elena Osina led our Club team in the ICTA C league and this year, achieved the best result for our team in a long long while. Thank you Elena.

I wish to also recognize our other Pros: John Mowat ran our summer junior camp and supported Ed in the junior spring and fall programs. Stuart Perkins, who joined us this year ran a number of adult and junior programs that were well attended. Good job guys.

Lorraine Gray, long time Board member, helped with our social programs: breakfast at Wimbledon and the courts re-opening after re-surfacing. She was ably supported by Joseph Ceneda and David Wood. Well done everybody.

I also would like to welcome to the Board Will Ho, who will be looking after our digital tools, and Younghan Lee as a member at large.

I wish to also recognize our other NYTA team captain, Peter Chung and our House League organizers, Vijay Kandeth and Praveenkumar. Thank you all.

Finally, I'd like to recognize the many contributions of our three monitors: Ahmed, Avery and Chris. Without them, we would not have had a nice place to play. Thank you guys.

And now to a summary of our achievements this year.

Membership.

We had a record membership this year, 286 adults and 159 juniors for a total of 445 members. In my 12 years on the Board of the Club, I have never seen numbers this high. This phenomenon seems to be shared by most of the clubs in the city. How to explain it? Is this a post-Covid reaction to being locked up for so long? Is it the effect of so many Canadian players doing great on the ATP and WTA circuits? Probably a combination of both. Of course, increased membership is good for the Club, but it also creates its share of challenges; we will talk about this later.

Club finances

Our books will close at the end of December. The current outlook for the full year 2022 indicates another nice surplus. This would bring our reserve fund to around \$70,000. Since the reserve fund is not longer required to fund the courts resurfacing, we could use it for other improvements to the club.

Courts resurfacing project

After two years of efforts, our courts have been resurfaced, and you will agree with me that they look absolutely gorgeous. I need to thank all the Club members and residents of Henry Farm that voted for this project during the Participatory Budgeting process; I also need to recognize the contribution of Councillor Carroll who established the PB process and who pushed City staff to execute the project once it was voted on by the community; kudos also go to VP Vijay Kandeth who played "good cop" to my "bad cop". All in all, a successful outcome for all members.

Adult organized activities

Like last year, the Club organized a singles house league on Mondays and a mixed-gender doubles house league on Wednesdays. They were run effectively by, respectively, Praveenkumar and Vijay Kandeth. Both leagues were enthusiastically attended. The final matches were played in late September and early October. Thanks to both gentlemen.

Our Pro, Ed Wilson, organized a series of traditional year-end tournament for adults and juniors during October. They have just been completed.

I already mentioned our participation in external leagues: the ICTA C league captained by Elena Osina, and the 2 NYTA Saturday leagues captained by Ed Wilson and Peter Cheung.

At the beginning of the season, the Club offered free clinics to its members coached by E Ed Wilson, John Mowat and Stuart Perkins. They were well attended and appreciated.

Stuart Perkins joined our Pro team this year and run a number of adult programs: cardio tennis and the doubles clinic.

Junior programs

I believe that we had a very successful junior program season, thanks to our 3 pros, Ed Wilson, John Mowat and Stuart Perkins.

Our summer camp attracted 86 kid weeks, at little less than last year under the direction of John Mowat and supported by Pro Ed.

Ed also run the spring and the fall after school program. Always a challenge to manage with frequent rain-outs.

Stuart also introduced a new program targeting high performance juniors.

Similar to past years, the Club hosted at the end of August an OTA tournaments for juniors under the age of 14. About 60 boys and girls participated at the “transitional” level. Jose San Juan was the lead Club organizer supported by other Board members. This tournament required 3 courts for most of a week-end. I wish to thank our members for their understanding and for supporting our future champions.

All in all a busy and successful year.

Upcoming projects and challenges:

Despite our successes, there is still room for improvement. In the coming year, the Board will have to address a number of challenges we faced this year and that are likely to repeat in the future:

- You all recognize that night lighting is not very good. Arc lights are old technology and they need to be replaced with more modern and energy efficient LED lights. A quotation from a supplier/contractor showed a replacement cost of over \$100,000. Obviously, we cannot afford this kind of expenditure. But, in a discussion with Councillor Carroll, she mentioned that there is a City “green energy” fund that could be tapped for this project. We will engage the Councillor after the municipal elections and determine the exact specifics.
- We will need to review our web-based software that manage our finances and our various program; they are quite manpower intensive and with limited in capability. A review is under way for upgrades or replacements.
- Our increased membership has created a high demand for court time, particularly during prime time, evenings and week-ends. Despite entreaties to prevent them, abuses continued to happen: no shows on booked courts and excessively long bookings; we will need to develop a new way to prevent them, and provide fair court access to all members.
- Access to washrooms when monitors are not present: the Board is considering a couple of options to meet this need. The lead candidate is for the City to refurbish the outside washrooms, together with the playground rebuild project.
- The pergola outside the clubhouse is of little practical use; the Board requested from the City permission to install a roof for shade and rain protection. The City refused and proposed that they will do it themselves. We understand it is on their work list for 2023. We will see.
- A new gate lock will be installed for next season.

A lot of work on our plate for next season

Club Board Executive

A call for a new Board President was sent out in September. But nobody stepped forward. So, the Board composition for next year change as follows:

Officers
President

Vijay Kandeth

Past President
Treasurer
Secretary
Membership

Bernard Assouad
Jose San Juan
Vacant
Raluca Costea

Directors

Head Pro
Promotion and Communications
Webmaster
Grounds
Social
Member at Large

Ed Wilson
Vijay Kandeth
Will Ho
Kevon Regert
Wai Law
Lorraine Gray, Elena Osina, John Mowat,
YoungHan Lee

So, on behalf of all the members of the Club, heartfelt thanks to the Club Board.

Next year (2022)

As mentioned at the outset, this has been an exceptional year despite all the challenges. It has provided us a number of learnings that we will use going forward to make the Club and the programs offered even more attractive. Stay tuned as we will reconnect again in January.

In conclusion, I wish to thank again the members of the Executive for their dedication. I also wish everybody a pleasant and safe winter and I hope to see everybody back at the Club next year.

*Bernard Assouad, President
October 2022*