



THE MASTER'S VOICE

The Official Organ of the VMSA Inc.

Postal Address: PO Box 1023, Newport Vic 3015

Mail contributions to: The Secretary, VMSA
mrowles@vmsasquash.com.au



Volume 11 No. 1
January 2014

THE PREZ SEZ

By Lou Morsch



2014 COMMITTEE:

PRESIDENT:

Louis Morsch: 0414 397 787

VICE PRESIDENTS:

Jillian Morsch: 0414 522 730

Mike Edney: 0419 584 550

SECRETARY:

Michelle Rowles: 0407 838 572

TREASURER:

Linda Wing: 0402 428 441

TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR:

Helena Morgan: 0417 579 311

PENNANT DIRECTOR:

John Donohoe: 0400 692 472

WEBMASTER:

Mark Thurkle: 0409 558 595

RESULTS OFFICER:

Clara Edney: 0419 376 843

MEMBERSHIP OFFICER:

Pam Park: 0439 308 093

NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Lynette Woodyard: 0422 874 825

GENERAL COMMITTEE:

Darren O'Neill: 0418 362 909

Ian Wyatt: 0409 369 048

Bert Hoveling: 0419 118 610

OUR WEBSITE IS HERE!!!

Need an extra
Entry Form?
See the newsletter in
colour
LOG ONTO YOUR
WEBSITE

www.vmsasquash.com.au



It's the Christmas/New Year period again so here's cheers to 2014 and best of health, wealth and happiness to

all members and readers of my column. I trust everyone is well rested and preparing for another big year of squash. We will again do our best to organize quality, entertaining tournaments with a bit on the side!! (dinner dances) as well as a strong pennant competition. But we need you and as many newcomers as we can find to maintain an enjoyable and competitive experience.

Tournaments are always well supported but it is becoming increasingly difficult to run our pennant competition due to the continual fall in numbers. As I write, the Autumn 2014 pennant is looking like missing another team or two. The match and pennant committee do not enjoy pushing teams up into higher grades and we do understand the stress this causes when this occurs and when complaints are made. Whinging about the gradings is something we cop all the time but this does nothing to achieve a better outcome. Quite simply – if there were more players and more teams entered, this matter would be resolved far more easily.

Some time ago, the VMSA instigated an incentive scheme to clubs. If team numbers are increased by the introduction of a new team and then maintained for two consecutive seasons, a re-imbusement of the entry fee for the newly introduced team would be made. I'm pleased to say this re-imbusement will be delivered at two clubs this year, however we need a lot more as numbers continue to leak from clubs elsewhere. Squash is a wonderful sport and I would like to refer to grand final remarks delivered by Tony Zinna at Westerfolds - we love the game, the people and the friendships created though the social aspect of it but we need to convince others.

If we could introduce one new player per person, we would ensure a healthy, strong pennant where grading were a lot fairer – especially at the top, but all the way down. I believe we are all passionate enough to act on this and pitch in to help increase pennant numbers again and to ensure our survival.

As we progress through the 2014 calendar another significant event will occur. June will witness the 10th anniversary of our Masters/Juniors tournament. This concept, initiated by the VMSA, has generated great awareness of the importance of introducing juniors into the game of squash. A tournament allowing mums and dads and their kids, or Masters players teaming with their junior partner to participate in a fun-filled weekend of competitive squash, has been a rewarding experience for everyone involved. The selection of a junior male and female as our Master's Apprentice each year comes with significant rewards for the deserving recipients.

Prizes of squash equipment from our major sponsor Grays, and financial support for coaching and tournament entry from the VMSA is all part of the prize as incentive to introduce younger people into our sport. Hopefully this way, they may prolong it's longevity and also that of the VMSA in their masters years! We believe this idea is a great way to promote squash into the future and along with Grays this event will continue for many more years. I'm hoping that by raising awareness of Masters/Juniors this early in the year, it will awaken interest to start planning for this enjoyable event.

Enough said for now. I welcome everyone back on the courts and hope you continue to enjoy your squash and play in the Masters spirit.

SQUASH IS GOD – I MEAN GOOD!!

Your Prez
Lou Morsch



TOURNAMENT REPORT

BALLARAT CHAMPIONSHIPS 2013

Helena has had a very full agenda recently so Lou has reported some information about another great tournament.

Congratulations to the 194 entrants who continue to make this event our largest each year and most successful. There were far more people than the 194 participants in attendance over the whole weekend and, although it's always pleasing to see many others supporting our events, it would be even better if we could see them playing and maybe keep numbers in excess of 200. Congratulations to our Tassie friends with 16 entrants (including many virgins) making their way over and playing in the event. Club entry from Melbourne was also strong with many teams coming as a playing group.

As usual, the Ballarat Squash club and it's committee were great hosts. The courts were clean and in very good condition and the food and drinks were plentiful. Masters tournaments would never be complete without a Warren Miller story. Warren achieved the ultimate in success by completing a second grand-slam of Masters victories in a calendar year. He was presented with a jacket and framed print of his achievements. He once again was also our Ballarat Masters Champion of 2014 but only after an almighty struggle against his old foe – Peter Gilbee.

To make the story complete Warren's wife, Cassie pulled off a rare double for the Millers by winning her Section event this year as well. It's a remarkable result when you consider Cassie struggled to even win a game when she first started playing. Cassie would tell you it's all natural talent but there could have been a bit of coaching involved as well – I think.

Helena's tournament committee again did an outstanding job. Thank you all.

The dinner dance was enjoyed by all who attended. The band was excellent and the earring competition provided some innovative ideas and quite a few laughs. Thank you to all who got into the spirit and participated in this show of affection for Kaye Kay.

Congratulations to the following players for reaching tournament milestones this weekend.

Brian Davey	25
Anne Fordham	25
Peter Gilbee	25
Merv Mee	25
Lou Morsch	50

WODONGA

Next tournament is already fast approaching and we will return to Wodonga in February. It'll be the second year in a row there as the previous experience was especially good. Be well hydrated though, because we all know it will be HOT HOT HOT!!! Pleeeeeease get your entries in early.

Looking forward to seeing you all there.

Lou – the Prez



Upcoming Tournaments

Wodonga	–	February 21 st to 23 rd 2014
Victorian Champs,		
Bendigo	-	April 4 th to 6th 2014
Masters Juniors,		
Moorabbin	-	May 31 st to June 1 st 2014
Shepparton	-	July 25th to 27 th 2014
Australian Champs,		
Bathurst	-	Sept 1 st to 12 th 2014
Grays Ballarat	-	September 1 st to 12 th 2014



Membership Nook

International News

Congratulations to Jill Mitchell who won a Bronze Medal in the 60-70 Pool A Section at the World Masters Games in Torino, Italy in August 2013, winning her final in 5. A great effort. Well done Jill.



I hope Santa bought everyone what they wished for and wish you all a very Happy New Year for 2014. Now it's time to work off all that Christmas Cheer and get back to squash.

Keep those entry forms and membership forms as legible as possible so that all information is entered correctly. If anyone wishes to contact me about their membership please feel free to do so especially if there is a change in your contact details.

Yours in squash,
Pam Park
Membership Coordinator



www.vmsasquash.com.au

YES! Our fabulous new website is up and running!!
More tournament photos and videos, information on upcoming tournaments as well as pennant fixtures, ladders & venues with maps are all at your fingertips.

In the very near future we will be expanding the website to include online entries to tournaments, access to our online shop for purchasing VMSA uniforms, stubby holders and membership renewal. The possibilities are endless so hop on line, have a look and send us your feedback.



VMSA OFFICIAL UNIFORMS



TO ORDER FILL OUT AN ORDER FORM
INCLUDED WITH THE NEWS LETTER





BALLARAT 2013 DINNER DANCE





Ballarat Master's Championships Winners



FOR A FULL LIST OF RESULTS, GO TO OUR WEBSITE - WWW.VMSASQUASH.COM.AU

To all members of the VMSA I hope that you all had a very Merry Christmas had a safe and enjoyable New Year.

2013 – In Retrospect

I guess the more innovative change in 2013 was to the “home and away” format whereby we introduced a dual grade format for the highest grade – effectively two divisions in the one grade. This was introduced due to the distinctive difference between the player skill levels between the top four teams and the bottom four teams. It also provided a catalyst in maintaining competitive interest for all teams and ensured all teams had the opportunity to contest a finals play off. It was well received and will feature again in the Autumn’14 season which is not that far away.

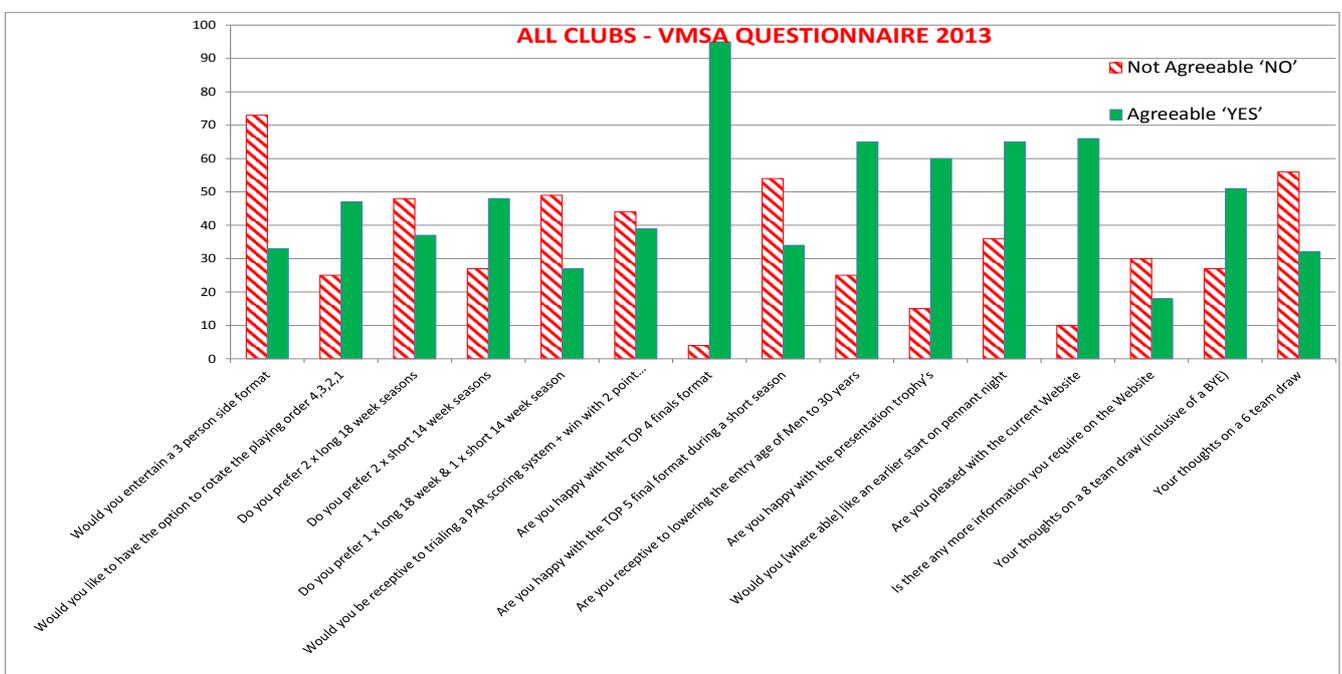
This time last year I mentioned that we were exploring a number of opportunities to spice up the competition, however we decided to hold off on some of these until we sought the views of the VMSA player base via a questionnaire. This now completed [or as well as it can be], please refer to the results tabled below:

Questionnaire 2013

(a) Form:

- Questionnaires were distributed to all participating clubs via the club co-ordinators.
- Results were tabled on a per club basis where responses received & aggregated for a total perspective.
- With 100.0% being the total possible responses, 45.7% were received premised upon 4 responses per team. This excluded two clubs which either did not respond or had a very poor response level which would have skewed the data.
- Responses were collated as either “Agreeable” or “Not Agreeable”.
- Responses noted as “Don’t Care” were interpreted as the member being content with how the VMSA competition was being currently run & were excluded from the results tabled below.
- Opportunity to offer up comments.

(b) Questions & Responses



No.	Question	Response	
		"NO"	"YES"
1	Would you entertain a 3 person side format	69%	31%
2	Would you like to have the option to rotate the playing order 4,3,2,1	35%	65%
3	Do you prefer 2 x long 18 week seasons	56%	44%
4	Do you prefer 2 x short 14 week seasons	36%	64%
5	Do you prefer 1 x long 18 week & 1 x short 14 week season	64%	36%
6	Would you be receptive to trialing a PAR scoring system + win with 2 point margin	53%	47%
7	Are you happy with the TOP 4 finals format	4%	96%
8	Are you happy with the TOP 5 final format during a short season	61%	39%
9	Are you receptive to lowering the entry age of Men to 30 years	28%	72%
10	Are you happy with the presentation trophies	20%	80%
11	Would you [where able] like an earlier start on pennant night	36%	64%
12	Are you pleased with the current Website	13%	87%
13	Is there any more information you require on the Website	63%	38%
14	Your thoughts on a 8 team draw (inclusive of a BYE)	35%	65%
15	Your thoughts on a 6 team draw	64%	36%

There are some notable responses with regard to the questionnaire:-

- Do not want 3 players per team
- Would like to formalize the playing order via rotation system
- Support for 2 short seasons
- Fairly close on trialing PAR
- Preference for top 4 final format regardless of season length
- Strong preference for lowering the entry age for men to 30 years
- Strong support of trophies format
- Preference for earlier starts
- Happy with website and content
- Receptive to an 8 team draw [inclusive of a BYE]

(c) Comments (comment bank as responded from members)

Comments:
Happy for whatever can be done to keep us going
PAR Scoring system for Grades 1 & 2 only
7:30 start time universal
Tournament on line entry
6 team draws for selective grades only to prevent unwarranted team being pushed up
Should have a ranking system to show results
Maybe short season can be PAR & long season can be Traditional
Trophys need to include the section & year played
Need to be more players willing to play higher grades.
Need to have experienced players assist inexperienced players during practice times
Possible a 7:30 start. Overall a well run competition
Finish finals before December
I like the idea of a 6 team draw & 15 week season
On line capability for tournaments entry is good
Don't mind playing long seasons if it helps court owners
Home team needs to provide both food & drink
To make sure that teams who nominate "early starts" be there.
Each member should have a members card for the VMSA for when it is doc or / and email so you can pay.
Dislike intensely having a BYE in a grade
In house Wednesday nights
Open on Saturdays so can practice in the afternoons
Monday night coaching for intermediate players
A 2 person side is good - play 1, ref 1 and go home
No suppers - no late nights and can also play more than once per week
Need fresh ideas to maintain Masters viability
Website to incorporate Club addresses
No BYE's in any grades
Website to include results & ladders for all previous rounds
Update ladders quickly
7:30 starts all round & 15 week rounds & 6 team draws
Join other comps & feed results into Squash Matrix & online results used as a grading tool
Results on website faster than last season
Prefer earlier start & earlier finish
7:00pm start and a commitment from captains to have 2 players there to start
Late nights is the major reason people leave Masters
Thanks for the great work you do.
Use Squash Matrix
The website is non-functional - use facebook
Switch to 3 seasons per year; start earlier [7:30] & remove suppers
Player stats on website
Need to flexible so the competition can continue
Need to ensure December is free of competition; incl finals as too many things happening at that time
Need to make navigation easier on website
Order of play happens anyway - if there is a match we play
3 person teams does not foster a "supporter" feel. 1 plays; 1 refs; 1 showers - No supporter
Presentation of "Flags" is not a benefit anymore
Lower the age of guys - so long as they are HOT
7:30pm start
4 man team, playing 3 times with NO Byes with normal points system is an ideal squash game
8 team draw + Bye should have only 2 rounds
6 team draw with no BYE's should have 3 rounds
Concerned that too many changes will drive "older" players away.
Please do no change FUNDAMENTALS of our game.
If it ain't broken, don't fix it.
Start time 7:30pm
Generally pretty happy with everthing.
Happy that the website is now kept up to date.
Definitely prefer a Final 4.
As number of players reduce and some clubs shrink further, there can be significant mismatch rubbers. Not sure how to fix it but should be considered.
If the competition goes the way of having a 8 team draw including a BYE, then a long season (18 weeks) is more appropriate.
If the competition goes the way of having a 6 team draw including a BYE, then a short season (14 weeks) is more appropriate.
A 6 team draw would open the possibility of a 15 week season.
I would like to see the VMSA join Squash Matrix.
I think we need a consolidated view of squash across various leagues. Fragmentation is not useful at a time when the sport is trying to remain relevant.

These responses and comments are your views and I would personally like to thank all those who took the time to contribute. The results will be discussed at committee level and at the pending Autumn '14 Club Co-ordinator's Meeting.

Enough said – I look forward to the Autumn '14 season and meeting many of you around the traps in 2014.

John Donohoe – Pennant Director

Latest News

Moorabbin Squash Centre is under new management as of the 1st January 2014. The new proprietor is Todd Bowden after the departure of Mike and Clara Edney. Todd has a strong involvement in squash especially in NSW and is looking forward to continuing the close working relationship with all members and especially the VMSA. Please be sure to

Referees Corner –

Congratulations to Steve Murray on his recent award of life membership to the VSRRA. Steve's dedication to the Referee's Association has seen him rise through the ranks and reach the level of National & Regional status. Steve has fulfilled many committee roles and has been an active presenter conducting refereeing lectures and clinics throughout his career. Steve instigated and has been the driving force behind "Rent A Ref", a service widely used by players, clubs & various bodies. He retains an easy going, happy-go-lucky nature with a great sense of humour and a very thick skin - an important ingredient to being a competent, knowledgeable ref amongst all the know-it-alls! Congratulations Steve - an award truly well deserved.

Other News

Farewell to Mike & Clara Edney from Moorabbin Squash Centre. Having lost the renewal to the lease at the centre, they officially departed the premises on 31st of December. We wish them very well and I'm sure we will miss their enormous involvement to squash, especially through their management at Moorabbin over the past 18 years. Fortunately they will remain involved in squash through their service to the VMSA Committee where Mike is a Life Member, Vice President & Pennant Co-ordinator. Clara handles the difficult job of Results Officer, assists in all matters relating to VMSA gradings and is a wonderful "behind the scenes" contributor to our Association in many other ways. The new venue operator is Todd Bowden and we wish him well as the new proprietor at Moorabbin.

BALLARAT 2013. - Been there, done that - but things you may have missed at the tournament.

1. We farewelled KK in grand style, especially at the dinner dance where her earrings will always be remembered (see article in this newsletter).
2. The Garden Gnomes (Allan Cowling and Lola Storer) along with Mark and Rhonda Stella turned up to renew an old association with some of their old Masters friends.
3. Terry Barlow & Rick Dintinosante celebrated 60 years of playing squash.....errrr I mean their 60th Birthdays!!!!
4. Peter Gilbee had the hide to try and spoil the Warren & Cassie Miller show. Peter lost an epic section 1 final to Warren 18-16 in the fifth. Cassie completed the show and upstaged her husband in the popularity stakes winning section 11 to the delight of a captive audience.
5. A massive contingent of 16 Tasmanian players invaded Ballarat with their eyes on glory. Fortunately, Miller & Gilbee scared off the challengers in Section 1 but not before copping a scare themselves from their Tassie opponents, Matthew McConnell & Rod Harker.
6. Jill Morsch took out Tassie Tigers, Annie Baker & Jenny Brown, on her way to the section 10 final, but was knocked over by "a virgin" from Victoria, Ange Cushiere.
7. Peter Miller from Horsham stood tallest taking out 3 Tassie challengers on his way to victory in section 11 defeating Anne Collins, Rachel Roberts and finally Susan Stegmann in a thrilling five set final.
8. Congratulations to our Tassie brothers & sisters who we love seeing at our tournaments. Let's see you all back next year for another go.
9. Thanks to the Ballarat bus driver who delivered us safely to the Golf Club, but decided to go to Bunninyong to pick us up at the end of the evening. A lot of "cold frogs" huddled together and waited patiently for him to return to the right place.
10. Ziggy got smashed - what's new!! Well, he did manage to get to the courts on time for his 8.30 match next morning.
11. Lauren Smart did a mischief to herself on the court (again) and ended up with a leg full of plaster. A bit hard to dance that way Loz.

And so ended another eventful year-end tournament. Bring on 2014!



JUDITH GOADBY AWARD



Congratulations to **Michelle Rowles** - our 2013 Judith Goadby Award winner.

Michelle was an outstanding choice for our award this year. Her appointment as secretary of the VMSA in 2008 came with the expectation of some very big shoes to fill after the departure of Wali Linhart.

The approaching 2009 Australian Championships in Melbourne meant the demands of the job were going to be massive. Michelle took up the challenge with little fuss and loads of commitment. Little did we know at the time, but we unearthed a gem. Michelle has made the position of secretary her own and for the past five years has dedicated herself to the service of the association. Her commitment to squash does not just extend to her role of secretary. She is a squash junkie who participates in numerous pennant competitions, tournaments and social activities associated with squash in general. Her organizational skills are brilliant (even though her timing may be a bit astray at times) but she gets the job done time and time again to the satisfaction of her friends and associates.

In her own words, Michelle was a little bit surprised to be chosen as our Judith Goadby Award winner after such a short period of time, but we look back further than just 2008 and her imprint has been recognized all over the place. That's what made her such a logical choice. Congratulations Michelle - a worthy recipient of this year's award.



Warren Miller has accomplished the prestigious title of the **Grand Slam of Victorian Masters Squash** for the second time by winning all of the Victorian Masters Tournaments in one calendar year (which starts with Ballarat). This comprised of Ballarat 2012, Wodonga 2013, VMSA Championships - Bendigo 2013, Shepparton 2013 and the AMSA Championships - ACT 2013, and then followed it up by winning Ballarat 2014.

Is this the start of another Grand Slam title? Warren has had some tough competition and this was evident in his epic final at Ballarat 2013 against Peter Gilbee, finally winning 18-16 in the fifth. A fantastic and gutsy effort. Good luck for 2014 Warren - you provide us with great entertaining squash that the rest of us can only dream of being able to play.



BELL TOWER

CUSTOM SQUASH
Powered by Squash.com.au

Grays, Hi-Tec, Karakal, Tecnifibre, Head, Dunlop & Many More
facebook.com/customsquash Phone: 0421 160 855

Exclusive Offer for VMSA Members

5% OFF ALL FULL PRICED ITEMS

Excludes restringing and other services
*Mention this add when purchasing any new racquet to receive this offer.
Expires: 3/3/14. Phone Andrew on 0421 160 855 to order.



International Squash News

World Masters Squash 2014 Hong Kong June 29th - July 13th

Package includes:

Return Flights
Accommodation (twin share)
Hotel transfers
Entry fee
Closing ceremony and gala dinner

(Players of all standards, partners and non-squash players welcome)

Optional extras:

Friendly challenge with a local club
Junk Trip & dinner (local chinese boat)
Shopping at the local markets
Peak Tram
Sha Tin horse races
Golf

Expressions of interest deadline Friday 17th January (prices to be finalised)

Please contact:

Sarah Fitz-Gerald: fitsquash@gmail.com
Lynley Solomon: lynley@solomonsabroad.com

For more information please refer to www.fitsquash.com



If you are interested in attending the World Masters Squash in Hong Kong this year (see poster left), Sarah Fitz-Gerald has organized a great package deal. For more details please contact Sarah at fitsquash@gmail.com or Linley Solomon at linleysolomonsabroad.com

The Australasian Police & Emergency Services Games will be held in Melbourne on 19-24th April. For more information visit their website apandesgames.com.au



Unfortunate Event in the life of Ron Glass

SAT 16/11/13 5:00pm

I am sitting here contemplating what might have been.

My left leg is in plaster and I have to see the orthopedic specialist on Tuesday to assess what has been diagnosed as "an acute tear of the achilles tendon". I was playing in a local squash tournament in Bristol this morning when it felt like someone walloped me with a piece of 4 x 2. I even thought some heavy object had fallen from the ceiling and hit me. As a 'squashie', you 'just know what this means' as you writhe around on the floor. I hear you ask: was there much pain? Yes! So I was bundled into the back of a car and off to the Bristol hospital. Two hours later, I have the plaster and the crutches.

Whether they operate or not, it is still 8 weeks on the crutches and the wheel chair, with very strict instructions to keep the weight of my left leg. The match had been going for about 10 minutes and we were 4 all. I made a 2 yard dash for a ball and that was it. Bang! After the hospital it was back to the squash courts to say 'thank-you's', and farewells. I've met some very nice people in the squash community over here - which as the squashies among you know, is the norm. I now live in hope that Phil will repay, all the kindnesses, all the tenderness, all the love and all the unstinting care that I have bestowed upon her these last 30 years, and as a minimum, learn how to apply the brake on the wheelchair. More news after Tuesday.

'The Glass' is shattered, but never broken.

Cheers

Ron

Reply from Philomena
Re: SQUASH INJURY

*Alas there are no brakes on the wheelchair and we're going downhill.....fast!! Good luck Ron.
Love from your 30 year old wife*

Around the Courts at Ballarat

