

SFAG – What Tennis Seniors NT have been doing.

The work done so far

* Following requests from TSNT members to advocate for some Sand Filled Artificial Grass (sfag) Courts, TSNT met with Minister Moss which resulted in this commitment:

“I have requested that my Department of Tourism and Culture engage with Tennis NT and the Darwin Tennis Association to ensure consideration of covered, artificial grass courts as part of development plans, noting that the masterplan would need to be presented to government for funding consideration at a later date.” (10 Dec. 2019)

The Darwin Tennis Association would not talk with TSNT about the Minister’s offer.

* A request from TSNT to Steve Nugent, Minister Moss’s Adviser, to ascertain the policy position of TNT, revealed that TNT was not opposed to SFAG courts but had no plans to construct any. TNT suggested TSNT approach City of Darwin for support.

*TSNT spent the best part of 2020 engaging with its members to develop a plan to present to the City of Darwin. There was strong support for a proposal that the old net ball courts adjacent to the Parap Swimming Pool be developed with 4 SFAG courts (2 with shade) as part of a Multipurpose Sports Centre. Canteen, shower/ toilet facilities to be shared and a working relationship to be developed with the Pool Management.

A meeting with Council’s Executive Manager Leisure & Regulatory Services informed us of many unanticipated problems (no lights for night tennis because of new residential development and more). It was recommended Gardens TC was the best place.

* Work was done to present the advantages for Gardens TC and to address some perceived problems. We believe all perceived problems were in the past. A request from TSNT to meet with Gardens committee was made in February and granted in September 2021. In spite of a very good presentation, the Committee declined the proposition. TSNT was unclear what the problems were.

* TSNT then went back to Sport and Rec. We had a meeting with the new CEO TNT and Sasha Dennis, General Manager Sport and Rec. and Strategic infrastructure. In a very supportive and generous proposal, TSNT was asked to invite Gardens management to apply for funding for a new masterplan which was to include 2 SFAG courts with shade and other projects Management wanted.

* This we did without success. Again we were uncertain what the actual problem was.

Each year new committees with new leadership are elected and present new opportunities to work collaboratively with Tennis Seniors.

Advantages for Gardens TC to receive funding for a new masterplan.

- Such funding will enable decisions on perceived problems to be addressed with expertise
- With over 50 hardcourts available to the public, 2 SFAG courts will not pose a problem for those who like this surface but a choice of more friendly court surfaces will be welcome.
- Gardens TC, being the only TC with sfag courts will attract players who want a less demanding surface that lessens the likelihood of hip and knee replacements/ arthroscopy

Gardens TC, being a community-based association, needs advice from members. For those who support the proposal, please show your support by speaking with Committee members.