

WNX COMPETITION SECRETARY'S REPORT – 2026 AGM - 13TH OCTOBER 2026

General Update

Since the 2025 AGM, we have completed Spring 2025 and Autumn 2026 competitions and we are about halfway through the Spring 2026 competition (due to finish in December 2026). There has been a reasonably level standard of play across all divisions, with no team wholly undefeated and generally close matches, with occasional “upsets”. New teams have been able to play competitively and a good sense of camaraderie has been reported. Emphasis is placed on sportsmanship and enjoyment, rather than “winning at all costs”. This is consistent with the club's ethos of broad participation that is open to everyone.

In 2026, we have had 22 teams and a total of about 200 players involved (including the pool list reserves). Since a dip in early 2024, we continue to find new players and teams wanting to join the competition, which is encouraging. Some of these come from other clubs, some from other North West competitions, some from internal social groups, some from website or Pro Shop enquiries and a small but growing number from Voyager coaching. Word of mouth from players who enjoy the competition is a strong factor in all of these sources.

Attraction of these new players has unfortunately so far been matched by natural attrition, as about 5% of existing players in each competition find that life and/or work changes lead to an inability to continue with competitive tennis on a regular basis. This is not a particularly high level of drop-off but if not offset would lead to the competition eventually becoming unviable. This highlights the need to maintain focus on initiatives to attract new members and players, which is something the club has been dedicating increased resources and attention to. On a more positive note, community participation and desire to play is clearly still high and a lot of people are enjoying the fun and competitive tennis.

As noted by the club in other areas, the WNX competition is also facing a shortage of female players in forming new teams. While the pool list is still relatively balanced, with about 40% female reserves, it is more likely these players are unable to commit on a regular basis than their male counterparts. Initiatives to attract more female players are underway and will need to continue to grow and expand. Pleasingly, an increasing number of younger players of both sexes are being attracted to the competition. This is also an area of demographic growth that will be needed to maintain viability and vibrancy in our club.

Social Tennis

We have again held multiple social tennis nights over the year, since the last AGM. The first was a pre-Xmas social function and tennis night, with about 50 people attending. There were raffle prizes, a barbecue, food platters and drinks. The night was a big success and a good way to end the year. Further social nights were held during January, April and July holidays and these were also generally well attended. These nights are a good forum for the existing players to meet and socialise, as well as giving the irregular and new players an opportunity to experience first-hand what the club has to offer, leading to increased participation.

There has also been regular weekly social tennis on week nights, when spare courts have been available. These are gaining increased popularity and interest, with regular attendance of about 10 to 15 people, including new players. These will continue to be monitored.

Ongoing progress of the competition will be communicated in the monthly reports.

Rod Berry, WNX Competition Secretary