

Welcome to the tenth edition of our newsletter. This edition covers a very long period, but, due to the Corona Virus pretty well shutting down the whole world, previous attempts to publish anything meant that items planned for inclusion in a newsletter were out of date by the time it was written. Nevertheless, here is the news, at least as it stands on this day, so read on.

Annual General Meeting

The WCTC AGM will be held at the clubrooms on Saturday the 13th of February. There will be a free BBQ lunch at 1200 and the actual meeting will commence at 1300. Please come along to the meeting and find out what's ahead for the club. Perhaps you might even consider putting up your hand to be a part of the running of the club.

The meeting was deferred from its usual date due to COVID-19 restrictions severely limiting the number of participants allowed at meetings. Given the current changeable nature of the COVID-19 regulations, we'd better keep our fingers crossed.

Grounds 1, 2 & 3 Rehabilitation Process

The club has been working long and hard over recent years to get our three grounds fully functional and back to the level of operation we had prior to the EPA lead contamination shutdown in 2016.

The last 12 months in particular have seen a lot of behind the scenes planning and the committee has been working closely with The Rural City of Wangaratta (RCOW) to get the actual works under way. All that hard work is now starting to bear fruit and we are finally seeing real progress with the project. The RCOW's Project Manager expects the tender for the works to be advertised on the council's website by the middle of January, 2021.

What the RCOW refers to as the WCTC Site Rehabilitation will see all three grounds reconfigured to ensure no shot fallout on any of the adjacent properties. The rehabilitation works will allow the club to run DTL on all three grounds and Sporting Clays on Grounds 1 & 3. Unfortunately, due to the proximity of the North Wang. Recreation Reserve, we will never be able to shoot traditional skeet; however, the rehabilitation works will allow us to have Universal Skeet on Grounds 2 & 3. As discussed in earlier newsletters, Universal Skeet is a FITASC discipline run by Sporting Clays Australia (SCA). Further information can be found at the following links.

PDF: https://www.fitasc.com/upload/images/actualites/20191122_eng_communique_su_mailc.pdf

Animated video: <https://www.fitasc.com/fr/video/2139?TB...height=600>

There is also a possibility that the club may have Universal Trench (another discipline run by SCA) on Ground 2, but that is dependent on two main hurdles being cleared. Firstly, any such change would need to be approved by DELWP, the VicGov body responsible for overseeing the club's rehabilitation work. Secondly, that highest of all hurdles, money. Brian Reid recently completed an application for funding for the trench equipment under the Victorian Dept. of Sport & Rec's Shooting Sports Facilities Programme. As can be imagined, there are significant costs involved, so the outcome of that application will be critical in determining whether or not we get a trench layout.

There has been an incredible amount of work put into this rehabilitation project by the committee and by the RCOW. The club stands to be greatly enhanced by the works and some of the environmental improvements, the drainage for example, will also benefit the general community.

Another Grant Application

Brian Reid, our hard-working Vice President, has once again used his funding application skills to good effect and scored the club a Community Sport Sector Short-term Survival Package grant. The grants were sponsored by the Victorian Dept. of Sport & Recreation and awarded to help community sports groups to stay viable during the COVID-19 shutdown periods. The money from the grants is intended for use with day-to-day expenses and running costs. Although the amount of the grant was modest, it certainly did help our club to stay open and shooting during a period in which some community groups had no choice but to close down.

Beechworth Lawn Tennis Club Legal Action

Back in July 2020, the Beechworth Lawn Tennis Club (BLTC) engaged solicitors and brought an action against The Wangaratta Clay Target Club in the Federal Court. The BLTC objected to the fact that they did not receive a grant under the Federal Government's 2019 Community Sport Infrastructure Programme, whereas the WCTC did receive such a grant. As well as seeking to have the Australian Sports Commission reassess their original grant application, the BLTC also, "*...seeks to challenge the decision to give a grant to the Wangaratta Clay Target Club.*"

The matter was originally expected to be heard in the Federal Court by the end of 2020; however, the BLTC's lawyers were not ready to proceed and the case management hearing has been deferred to a date to be fixed.

EPA Update

The club's environmental issues drag on. All parties are keen to see an end to it, but the regulatory wheels turn slowly. As far back as May 2020, representatives of the RCOW expressed the hope that the situation would be over by the end of June. Here we are, seven months later and still waiting for the authorities to finalise their work.

The EPA did issue a Clean Up Plan (CUP) notice in late November 2020 and gave the club until the end of July 2021 to respond with details on how the clean-up and ongoing management is to be achieved.

An Environmental Management Plan (EMP) was also expected by now, but that is probably a few months away, as it can only be finalised after the CUP is in place and the EPA-assigned auditor has approved of the rehabilitation works. The whole process sometimes seems like trying to assemble a jigsaw puzzle on a slippery table top aboard a prawn trawler in heavy seas.

EPA Letter to Neighbours of WCTC

Finally, some good news from the EPA. A real highlight from the club's point of view and vindication of the committee's firmly held beliefs. In November 2020, the EPA sent a letter to residents in the vicinity of the club. The letter informed the local residents that our club is not responsible for any ground water pollution in the area. The EPA letter states that recent testing, "...shows the WCTC has not been contaminating groundwater..." (The EPA letter can be found on the club's website, under the [Enviro Archives](#) tab.)

Carry on Corona

It has been pretty well a year since the whole Corona Virus poo hit the fan and, here we are, carrying on, still open and still shooting. Our own good fortune should not stop us from feeling for those who have suffered, but nor should it stop us from feeling grateful. Practice sessions restarted as soon as government regulations allowed and, thanks to a core of dedicated volunteers (Thanks Ernie & Graham), have continued through an ever-changing regulatory environment.

There have been, and still are, those visitors who feel the need to buck the rules and make a fuss, but, overwhelmingly, the club has functioned well and has maintained its role as a place where like-minded people can gather to enjoy their sport and tell dodgy stories about it, too.

What can you do for your club?



JFK was a bit of a skeet shooter in his day. If he were around today, he'd probably say something like, "Ask not what Wang Clay Target Club can do for you, ask what can you do for Wang Clay Target Club." Well, the answer would be, get involved, come and help at practice days, put your hand up for a committee position, etc. Like John boy's legend, the list is endless.

We hope you've enjoyed our newsletter. We look forward to keeping you up to date with the latest developments at our club.

Anton Motha

President, on behalf of the Committee Wangaratta Clay Target Club