

BTA Report by the President for the Year 2021 (given at AGM March 26, 2022)

The year 2021 started with a membership Drive for our Association. This went very well and as at Dec 31, 2021 we had 73 members (49) adults and (24) juniors. For those of you who have renewed your membership for this year (2022) we thank you, for those who have not, we encourage you to do so. This should happen in January of each year but it's never too late. Currently for this year we have 37 members eligible to vote at this AGM.

Our AGM for 2021 was done virtually on February 27, 2021- (we just read the minutes which are also attached).

In early part of 2021 we had interest from one of our members, Sharon Ross to start up a tennis Club in Cayo especially for kids. While this did not get off the ground in 2021 due to issues beyond her control, Ms. Ross is still committed and I have seen the recent formation of the Cayo Lawn Tennis Club. She plans to have tennis classes for the kids and Mr. Musa Sr. has agreed that she can use the Golden Orange tennis court in San Ignacio for the junior training. So that should be starting soon.

Our website which we had been working on for a while was finally launched in the early part of last year 2021 and we urge you to visit it often.

In February, 2021 the company, Canchas Deportivas from Salvador, came back finally to refurbish our tennis courts located at the Pickwick Club compound. It was finally completed in the late part of March 2021- The nice US open looking courts (with its Blue playing area) has caused marked improvement in the way the game is played. Thanks to the ITF for a grant toward this and to many of you who contributed financially.

Two of our main goals are to have more tennis coaches and more tennis court facilities in the country. This is the only way we will develop the sport. We have many who want to learn to play tennis, but we don't have enough coaches or facilities. Currently we have a waiting list for kids who want to learn the sport, but our coaches can only take on so much. Regarding facilities we have been in constant and consistent communication with the National Sports Council to get two tennis courts built at the Marion Jones Stadium and to have the Courts across from Princess leased to us to manage so we can get grants to upgrade it (if we do get a formal arrangement in place we can also ensure the Courts are not misused for anything else other than for playing tennis as it should be). I think we are making progress in this regard and we hope to have some good news about this next time we report to you. We also hope to improve the Orange Walk tennis court and maybe even have more courts built there Further we shall be ambitious and strive to increase tennis facilities in Belmopan and each District.

On June 19th, 2021 we managed to have a Junior Orange level team event. And on that same day we also had a full court Junior competition. The results: Daniel Musa 1st, Zach Musa 2nd, Laksh Kishanchand 3rd, and Sakir Pott- 4th. I must mention that throughout 2021 we continued our Junior Training both in Belize City and Belmopan despite not having an additional coach from Cuba for the whole of last year. Thanks to our local coaches Felix Peralta and Mike Sosa, and to our BOCGA, who sponsored the payment of these local coaches.

Around the end of June 2021- we also manage to squeeze in the Brodies RFG men's doubles tournament. I say squeeze in because if you recall there was a small window between June and August

last year when regulations allowed sport events (without spectators)... then I think right after that amended regulations prevented events. We planned the women doubles too but did not have sufficient entries- only one doubles pair entered. Results of that event: Champs Stefan Sosa and Mike Sosa defended their title and runners up were Blake Lee and Ralph Tatum.

In July last year we had an u18 qualifier to see who would attend the Junior Panam Games in Cali Colombia. We thought it would've been 2 players (we were told it would be 2) and so we sent in the top 2 names Blake Lee and Samron Pott but only one was allowed and so Blake Lee went. He will be sharing his experience with us some time soon.

We introduced Ladder competitions in 2021 starting in Belmopan in February, 2021. This ran until around May and then in September 2021 we had a ladder for Belize City. Then in the latter part of last year we had a ladder competition in Belize City by levels for A group, B group, and C group, A group being more advanced players. Results were posted on our Social Media Platforms.

In August, 2021, we attended the COTECC AGM in Cancun. We take the opportunity to attend these meetings only when the location is near enough and travel is not as expensive. The exchanges at these events with other nations similar to ours are excellent sources of ideas and motivation and opportunity to collaborate. We made links with our Mexican counterparts who are willing to involve us in their junior events in Cancun.

We rebuilt an equipment room for the equipment used in the JTI Belize City Program around August, 2021. Thanks to Nicolas Sacksick and his company who assisted us by donating some materials.

We re-commenced work on a strategic plan for the next 4 years and I am happy to say we have completed it. We need as many people or drivers to help us to achieve these goals. We will be sharing our Strategic Plan at another meeting which will be just for the launch of that.

In October, 2021 we reminded Belize Olympic & Commonwealth Games Association of our request for them to fund a coach from Cuba or from anywhere for the New Year (2022). Our main coach, Mike Sosa is stationed in Belmopan and Belize City Junior program would have suffered greatly without a coach. Our own Level 1 coach from Belize City, Felix Peralta is moving away from junior coaching for his own reasons. Thankfully our request was granted as we welcomed our new coach from Cuba earlier this year in the person of Rudy Palacios, who arrived at the end of January, 2022.

In November, 2021 we sent out a notice asking for volunteers to serve on a tournament committee (for open tournaments) and we are happy to have formed that committee consisting of :-- Dr. Luis Ramirez, Tessa Matus, Samron Pott, Richard Huang and Sonny Meighan.

We also prepared a template contract for a JTI Coordinator. We will need a JTI Coordinator as a requirement to continue to benefit from equipment and funding to help us with the Junior Program. We hope to fill this post in this year.

Over all we had a productive year even though we could not have as many events due to Covid. I think the Strategic Plan is a big step in mapping where we want to go and how we will accomplish our goals which all lead to development of the sport. We hope to actually achieve our plans and so I ask again for volunteers. We need you!

Lastly, we extend our gratitude to YOU-all our tennis family- and our volunteers, and sponsors. We thank you for your support throughout the year 2021 and we hope for a better 2022. From what I see we are off to a great start with an event last weekend (the U18) and again this weekend (the team Tournament sponsored by Harry's Imports).

Plans for 2022

Basically we will concentrate on trying to implement our strategic plan with a focus on increasing facilities and increasing our number of coaches as only in this way we can grow the game. At the same time we will continue improvement of our JTI program- On this I think this is the year Cayo with help of Sharon Ross can play a role in getting some junior players from that district playing this wonderful sport. I must add here that I would like to see how we can increase our number of female players as there is a huge disparity. With the help from our tournament committee, we plan to keep the events going (Open tournaments). We still plan to do a separate junior events calendar and the coaches and development officer will work on that. Petén Tennis has asked to be invited to some of our junior events and so we plan to do so. The Cuban coach for this year (Rudy Palacios) has been working with Belize City juniors. Mike Sosa continues to work with our juniors in Belmopan. We will also identify perhaps a couple regional events our juniors can train to attend (so that they have a higher goal to train for).

Thank you.