



6 March 2018

Dear TTA members and friends

After a busy and fruitful start to 2018, I want to take this opportunity to ensure that everyone is kept abreast of TTA developments both on and off the court.

On the court, a host of national competitions and training camps have kickstarted the year. Our best players headed to the Gold Coast for the 2018 Qualification Tournament, where five men and five women qualified for the Commonwealth Games: Heming Hu, David Powell, Chris Yan, Trent Carter, Kane Townsend, Jian Fang Lay, Melissa Tapper, Tracy Feng, Miao Miao and Michelle Bromley. Our Men's and Women's Teams then headed to London for the ITTF World Team Cup, where although we were unable to progress from the group stage there were multiple positive achievements. Particularly Heming Hu taking games off world number 1 Dimitrij Ovtcharov and World Championships medallist Lee Sang Su, plus 14-year-old Parleen Kaur making her Women's Team debut. Currently both teams are in a Staging Camp in Melbourne, comprised of daily training and two Test Matches against Chinese training partners. The final competition prior to the Commonwealth Games is the ITTF-Oceania Championships on the Gold Coast next week. Overall, our National Team is maximising their preparations through competing, training and team bonding and no doubt they'll hit the ground running when the Commonwealth Games kicks off next month.

Our para players have also been busy. A major activity was the National HP Training Camp in Essendon in January. Para events will also be included at the 2018 Commonwealth Games and three of our players have been selected, namely Melissa Tapper and Andrea McDonnell in Class 6-10 Women's Singles and Barak Mizrachi in Class 6-10 Men's Singles. Other benchmark events coming up later this year include the 2018 National Para Championships and the 2018 World Para Individual Championships. With a heavy workload approaching, our players have been building up their training and preparations accordingly.

Our junior players have also had plenty of training and competition opportunities. The National Junior and Cadet Top 10 in January saw Benjamin Gould and Michelle Wu take out the junior events, while Finn Luu and Danni-Elle Townsend topped the podium in cadets. A National Junior Training camp followed, where existing and new members of the National Junior Squad came together for training and education. Both Rohan Dhooria and Michelle Wu competed at the ITTF World Junior Circuit Finals in Luxembourg and although they didn't progress from the group stage, no doubt they benefited from competing against some of the best junior players in the world. The 2018 National Hopes Week took place in Sunshine, with training and competition being organised under the guidance of Simon Gerada's Loops Table Tennis; Yvonne Liu and Jeffrey Guo took out the top prizes.

As TTA continues to undertake financial, operational and administrative reforms, it's pleasing to see that our players continue working hard in training and competition at every level. Our players are a top priority, as with no players there is no TTA. Ensuring that our players haven't been impacted by recent changes has been a key focus as we move forward.

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Away from the table progress continues. Last week State and Territory Associations voted through a new Constitution. Passing a new Constitution was the culmination of six months' work. Since the first draft was provided to State and Territory Associations in October 2017, ongoing correspondence took place with several drafts being developed to incorporate many requested amendments. The required 75% majority of State and Territory Associations voted in favour to enact the new Constitution, which takes effect from 1 March 2018. Subsequently, multiple other policies, documents and information require updating to align with the new Constitution, which will take place over the coming weeks.

The Governance Reform Working Party was announced yesterday. The Working Party is charged with reviewing TTA's current governance and oversight functions, identifying best practice governance and oversight functions, making clear and simple recommendations to enable any shortfalls to be addressed, and developing processes and procedures to implement any recommendations. The Governance Reform Working Party will sit for 6-9 months until all work is complete.

The next major piece of work on the agenda is the TTA AGM, to be held in Melbourne in May 2018. Key elements include a full TTA Board election will take place, the 2017 Annual Report and 2017 Financial Report will be tabled, plus two Australian table tennis icons will be considered for TTA Life Membership.

On a personal note, last week the TTA Board endorsed my appointment as TTA CEO, which came after serving as TTA Interim CEO for the past five months. I'm truly grateful for the opportunity and it's a genuine privilege to serve the Australian table tennis community. The amount of encouragement and support provided by our members and friends over the past five months demonstrates we have a community of passionate and dedicated people who want the best for our sport. This will remain front of mind as we continue to move forward in 2018 and beyond.

If you require any further information, please feel free to reach out at any time.

Yours sincerely,

Scott Houston  
TTA CEO

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