



19th September 2023

Dear Loyal Members,

Let me start this letter off by thanking you all for your ongoing support, and for your real care for your club. The Old Parks Sports Club continues in my humble opinion to offer you a superb environment, with many sporting options and many areas where one can just relax and engage with like minded people. Sure we may get a few things wrong here and there, but in essence we are as a Committee always looking to improve your experience and your space at the club so as to ensure our service and hospitality is as good as possible. In the body of this letter, you will be able to read all about what we are up to and how we are on a daily basis trying to make your space - a very special place! The last few months have been great, even in between SNOW believe it or not, but let me get on with some feedback for you...



“So What All Has Or Is Happening At Your Club”

1. Upgrades and Projects:

Your committees have recently approved quite a few new club upgrades and fixes and will be either investing the clubs own money (yours) - or have wonderfully we have been able to secure a few loyal sponsors. As our 'landlords' the OP Association (OPA) will also naturally get sight of our proposed structural and capital changes – as we do also require their sign off for such projects. Let us however have a look at what has been completed or what is still to come:

- Tipu Café – The Club has recently negotiated an extension contract with Tipu Café, as its catering provider for another 3 years once its current contract comes to an end. As part of the deal, we as a club will be investing and working with Tipu Café in a revamp of the restaurant and patio area which will include new patio paving, a new wood burning oven (already in place), a new waterproof roof structure with downlighting, improved lighting in other areas, dropdown side canvases for the wind and winter factors, and also a few small brick walls to cordon off the space.
- The Main Bar – For a long time now we have been wanting to somewhat revamp our main bar but have had to wait until we had enough funding to get things moving slowly but surely. As things now stand, we are busy planning and looking at options. In the coming month or two we plan to break through the front windows onto the patio - to open up the space with smart stacking doors. We will also as far as possible, revamp the actual inside bar area with a new look and feel, that will hopefully make all of our members proud of our club and bar. To help us and so as not to get too personal with everyone having an idea, we have enlisted an independent Interior Designer who is guiding us on the journey...

- The Men's Changeroom – The urinals in the change rooms have come to an end of their time, as the old style steel walls are coming apart and wasted a lot of water. As such, these are being replaced and modernised this coming week which will be great. The ceilings are also scraped and repainted, compliments a generous sponsorship by Marietjie Waller from Prominent Paints and paint contractor Jeff from Setsheni Group.
- The Main Hall – If you get a chance put your head into to the main hall, where you will see that along with a Prominent Paint sponsorship – we have been able to repaint and get rid of the damp in this space. It is now a lot brighter and pleasing on the eye for functions and events.
- The Wi-Fi System – The club has already had Wi-Fi coverage for some time, but the signal and general usage levels have been rather poor to be blunt. As such, we have now upgraded the Wi-Fi for you all to enjoy and extended it to the Bowls area – with this hopefully rolling officially out over the coming few days.
- New Cricket Roller – Quite wonderfully and after 25yrs use of the old cricket roller, the club has managed to get a brand new sponsored BOMAG Roller from Kanu Equipment. Without these sorts of good people and sponsor the likes of cricket clubs and sports club eventually will just not exist. On behalf of the main club and the cricket section, our huge thanks go to Stephen Smithyman, Kanu Equipment (www.kanuequipment.com), and their entire staff for saving the day – so please do as members spread the word and support Stephen and his company whenever and wherever possible in the future.



2. 'OUR' Staff:

Our wonderful staff continue to make our space that much better each and every day. Over the last few weeks we have advertised for a new barman as we are needing extra hands as the club is growing, and we also advertised for a replacement ground staff employee after Jan Morumbi chose to go on early retirement last month due to ill health. Just this last weekend, we also got the worrying news that Nonqaba Mtshali our valued Bar Manager had unfortunately suffered a stroke and heart attack at the same time – and is currently hospitalized in High Care. Please can I ask you all to join in with us in prayer and good wishes for 'Non' - for a speedy recovery in what is no doubt a very tough time for her and her family. Overall though, the staff are in a good space along with their recent annual staff increases. A few weeks they enjoyed a fun morning playing Ten Pin Bowling with lunch at Monte Casino, as a reward for their efforts and as a mini team builder.



3. **'OUR' Sports Sections:**

Our 'Sports Sections' remain the heart and soul of the club – with each and every section up and running with wonderful volunteers, who spend loads of time keeping their preferred sport available to all... Not very often do these Section Committee members get many thanks for all their efforts – so let me on behalf of ALL our of members sincerely thank you all as Section Committee Members for your time and dedication.

... The Bowls Section have just closed for their 'Spring Treatment', after so many top performances by their bowlers in various competitions – as well as many wonderful events and functions over the last few months. Quite simply, under the guidance of Chairman Bill Bowen, bowls is flying high and in a really good space with quality members enjoying their bowls on the greens.

... The Cricket Section is about to start their season after some off season shenanigans with players moving on – but, under the guidance of Chairman Ryan Wessels things have now settled down somewhat with a bright new future ahead. The section has a new Head Coach in Richard Wood, and there are a number of new faces who have joined the club in somewhat of a re-building phase. The Junior Section has also started its practices on Saturday mornings, and although numbers are currently rather low – I am quietly confident that they will increase as it does every year once the soccer season comes to an end.

... The Hockey Section in now being led by new Chairman Greg Gailey and have just recently held their end of season function at the club. Over the coming months I know that Greg and his Committee have a few new plans for the future, in terms of sustaining this wonderful section and even growing such over time. Look out for a few new innovative things to come from the Hockey men and ladies...

... The Soccer Section have come A LONG WAY this year under Chairlady Sylvania Sheppard, in that there was a whole new committee elected at the beginning of the year, after last year's structures somewhat went belly up, with the Director of Soccer also leaving the club. Slowly but surely, the new committee have fought hard to bring the section back to life – and to settle their finances and passed problems. It is fair to say through a collective effort it has been great to see how everyone has just climbed in and got things done – so much so that the soccer section seems to be more or less back on track, with some wonderful innovative and new ideas to come...



Busy bowling greens!!



Family soccer evenings!!



LPL Cricket Finals – with OPCC Cricket Section starting this month!!



Friday Evening Live Music with ALL sections and visitors enjoying!!

4. 'OUR' EXCO/MANCO:

Our EXCO and MANCO members continue to work really hard ever so quietly behind the scenes, with regular meetings and plenty of communication via Whatsapp and emails in between each meeting. The club is simply growing by the day which is exciting – but with growth comes many different challenges in terms of staffing and our somewhat out of date systems. The biggest challenge remains getting ourselves modernised as a club and to run ourselves as a business, even though we are a non-profit organization. This means us requiring expert advice in the forms of Taxation, Human Resources, Legal, Accounting, IT, Marketing, and so many other areas... Slowly but surely though, we are chipping away whilst seeing all this growth around us – so that down the line we will be fully compliant and modernised, and so that hopefully we can stop getting all these little surprises which pop up from time to time due some of our systems and decisions still living in the 80's and 90's... Rest assured it is a challenge – but one which our EXCO and MANCO are all working really hard on to keep things on track. I would also like to publicly THANK our EXCO/MANCO members again, as a ship is not run just by a few people – but by all of its sailors. This we have in our committees as each and every person in their own way contributes and keeps the ship on track...

5. 'OUR' CLUB':

Please find below some key areas:

i. Our Finances

- Doug Tuck our Treasurer, along with our Club Bookkeeper and Club Manager are I believe on top of our financial matters as best as possible. As things stand, we do have some cash flow for the first time in a long while – and as above we are being prudent but also trying to give back to you our valued members through various upgrades and items which need serious addressing.
- As a Club we still have the City of Johannesburg's (COJ) heavy rates bill and penalties hanging over our heads, to the tune of almost R2M. See below in point (ii) for the latest.

ii. City of Johannesburg - Zoning Application / Rates Dispute / Penalties Etc.

- Every few months we get told that our new Zoning Application has been approved and is imminent, yet as each and every month passes so we wait. A few months ago we again found out that there was again a delay due to someone in some COJ office capturing information incorrectly. As things stand, our Town Planner is busy following up on where things stand.
- In one of my last correspondences, I highlighted the fact that we had managed to get COJ to stop the monthly penalty fees for the incorrect zoning which has been hanging over the club's head for years. I also disclosed that we had submitted a formal and well documented dispute with the City of Johannesburg's Ombudsman over this matter. To date the investigation, so we are told is still open, and so we sit back and wait once again in the hope that together we can solve this very uncomfortable situation for the club.

iii. Our Valued Tenants

Our hard working tenants are all busy and are all extremely valuable to Old Parks. Please as always keep supporting them and sharing with all of your friends all that we have to offer at the Club. Let's have a look at what is happening in their space:

- Africa Padel – Padel Tennis continues to grow, and as the summer weather has shown its face – so the bookings have begun to increase and so too has our turnover in the main club. Hopefully in the coming month we will be able to come back to you all with a bit of a members deal – with our Club Manager is busy working on with Africa Padel as this is something you are all asking for...
- The Swing Shack – With summer basically here why not get your golf swing smoothed out at the Swing Shack? Wonderfully this facility has some of the best technology going – and an awesome PGA Qualified Coach to guide and assist you whilst having fun playing some of the best courses in the world... To date things look really good for what is a pretty new tenant – so please do get around.
- Deidre Ras Biokinetics & Physio – Our very own rehab centre continues to offer a superb service and is the place to be for any rehab or sports injury advice. Having such a facility on our property for our members and the wider public is superb and very convenient in a sporting environment.
- Rand Athletics Club – RAC continue to partner with Old Parks along with their regular Tuesday evening Time Trials and numerous weekday / weekend longer runs. The RAC Tough One marathon is coming up in November, so look out for a wonderful day at Old Parks – as this is always a big day on our clubs calendar.
- Fast Sports Fusion – Our 5-A-Side Soccer facility always seems to be busy these days which is great news. There are often many new and innovative events that are driven for not only the soccer lovers but also those who prefer netball – so look out for these and get involved if you have the time. Our shared bar at the venue is also operating really well, which indicates that post Covid patrons have all slowly but surely returned to a great vibe and quality sport.
- Robbie's Cycling & Fitness Centre – Cycling icon Robbie McIntosh, continues to operate out of Old Parks and runs some superb conditioning sessions and programmes. His expertise and knowledge are superb, so if you are a cyclist do not forget to also pick his brain and use his expertise in this area.
- Tipu Café – As mentioned above, Tipu Café is along with the club busy with a few upgrades – which will hopefully enhance the space and the club overall. Over the years Tipu Café has now become the local go to for many residents, as it is comfortable and offers superb food and drinks. As the club's Main Caterer we are lucky to have such dedicated people involved, and hopefully over the coming years this facility just goes from strength to strength.

iv. Property Sale for Development

The ongoing property/land sale for the development is believed it or not still making good progress. Post the Geotech Investigations there were a few matters to manage in terms of where building could take place and where it could not – as naturally piling in construction is rather costly. Nevertheless, matters have all now been settled and the agreement is currently in a 3 month due diligence period which is being managed by the developers and buyers of the land. We do hope that by early next year all the necessary due diligence matters are completed – so that the agreement can kick over to the next stage. In essence, I do not see any builds being started until 2025 – so there is still some way to go...

v. Club Security

Our club security has improved, even though yes, from time to time we have had a few incidents. There is as we all know NO SILVER BULLET as they say – but our camera systems, gate monitoring, and security details do cover as much as is possible at the moment. In the

future, we do plan to invest that much more and use the tenants security levies to really sharpen things up for all of our sakes as crime is not going to go away. Please keep being aware and safe in our space – and never let your guard down!

vi. Club Membership

Our year end is just around the corner, and very soon you will be receiving your new invoices for the new financial year. Wonderfully EXCO was able to keep increases to the minimum once again, with an across the board 4% increase on club memberships – which is equivalent to about a maximum of R10 extra every month. We sincerely hope that you will support your club and that you will please continue to be a valued member, so we can still keep our doors open for a very long time.

vii. Events and Functions

Over the last few months the Club has been very busy and has been inundated with various functions and events. There are also a few others coming up so let's take a look:

- The Parktown Centenary Family Day:

This day was for me definitely one of the highlights of the year. It was initially set up to be a Centenary Celebration of both the boys and the girls schools and its close association with the club which it was, but as the event got closer and closer - so it also became a local community day where everyone in the area along with many of the schools parents and students came down to what turned out to be an awesome family and fun filled day for all. Special thanks for the efforts here need to go to both of the schools and especially Malcolm Williams, Gail Davidson, Lizette Driescher & Old Parks Staff for the coordination of many hands and many ideas – which made this such a successful event. Already, there is talk of an annual 'Family Club Day' again where, together with the Club, our Members, the Schools and the local Community, we can get together and celebrate 'US' and all of our many allegiances.



- The Abcon Potjiekos Competition:

Once again, our middle field was covered a few weeks ago with Potjiekos Pots and the smells of some well cooked beef, lamb, and chicken meals. Events like these bring great foot traffic for the club and expose new people to our wonderful environment...

- The Standard Bank Run:

The Standard Bank Run was a huge success on a very cold Saturday morning – which had the coffee queues at their maximum, and some of the braver competitors slugging down a cold beer after the race. Once again, there were big numbers and an enjoyable day was had by all.

- The SuperSport United International Soccer Tournament:

This coming weekend we will be holding for the first time one of the biggest junior soccer tournaments around, in the SuperSport United International Soccer Tournament which will run from 22 to 25 September. The event will mean loads of coordination which I am sure our staff along with SuperSport will manage just perfectly...

- World Cup Rugby:
The club is currently abuzz with rugby, with each and every match being televised on our screens. As we get closer to the semi finals and final, wonderfully we will have a BIG SCREEN in place out on the patio area – which will allow for even more patrons to come and enjoy this spectacle. Hopefully our BOKS can keep on track and ‘bring it home’...

In closing, I would once again like to take this opportunity to thank you for your valued support! Please do keep on coming down to the Club over the next few months with summer on our doorsteps – as we now have a very active club with like-minded people who just love the community and family vibe of the Old Parks Sports Clubs.

As always - #KeepTheFaith

Yours in Sport,

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