

**Tuesday 2 August, 2011**

## **Tennis Legends in Townsville to celebrate 100 years of Tennis!**

Tennis Townsville is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> year of tennis in 2011 and is getting ready for a big celebration this weekend!

On the eve of the 6<sup>th</sup> of August the Gala Event and Reunion will be held on the Tennis Courts at Tennis Townsville. This will be the formal event of the weekend and will be a great opportunity for members, past members and people of the community to reflect on the changes in the game, learn some of the history of the club and reminisce. Tennis Townsville have secured a special guest to attend the Gala Evening, John Fitzgerald! John Fitzgerald is an Australian sporting icon. As a player, his greatest career highlights came during the 11 years he represented Australia in the Davis Cup. During this time he put his stamp on Australian tennis. He proved to be an integral part of the team, playing in 3 finals and playing a major role in defeating Sweden in both the 1983 and 1986 finals at Kooyong. In 1983 John won a key singles match on the opening day, while 1968 saw him team with Pat Cash to give the Aussies a crucial 2 –1 lead over the Swedes.



John took the honours on a number of occasions and his career was filled with many fist pumping triumphs. He held the Number 1 ranking in Australia, represented his country in 2 Olympic Games (Seoul and Barcelona), won 6 ATP TOUR singles titles, won 30 ATP TOUR doubles titles (which included 7 GRAND SLAM titles) and received the Order of Australia Medal in 1993 for services to tennis. He completed a career Grand Slam in men's doubles (Australian Open, French Open, Wimbledon and US Open) between 1983 and 1989, and was ranked World No 1 doubles player in 1991.

Since his retirement, John has joined the Seven Network providing expert commentary on the Australian Open and Wimbledon.

Ashley Cooper, another Tennis Legend will also be attending the Gala Evening. Ashley is a former tennis player from Australia, who was World No. 1 in the late 1950s. Ashley Cooper was an Australian Davis Cup player as the team won the cup from '56 and '57, and finalists in '58, he turned professional in 1958. 1958 was Cooper's big year where he became one of only ten men to date to win three of the four Grand Slam events in the same year. He won singles at the Australian, British and American Championships and was a semi-finalist at the French Championship, losing to Luis Ayala 11-9, 6-4, 4-6, 2-6, 5-7. Upon retiring as a player, Ashley has served as a tennis player development administrator with Tennis Queensland, where he has been based for forty years. He presently also sits on the Board of Directors for Tennis Australia.

"The Gala Evening and Reunion is sure to be a wonderful night with plenty of old friends catching up. We have quite a few people coming from interstate!" said Michael Kern, Vice-President and Head of Centenary Celebrations Committee, "A publication has also been put together to mark this special event. The publication includes a compilation of Tennis Townsville's history together with photos and memorabilia and will be launched on the Gala Evening."



On Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> August a Veterans Tennis Tournament will be held from 11am. This will give the Vets a chance to show the crowd their tennis skills. A Celebrity Tennis Tournament will be on from 2.00pm-3.00pm Our celebs include CK & Blake, Breakfast crew from 106.3FM, Ray Gartrell, local councilor, Michael Cedar & Ben Allen, Townsville Crocodiles Basketball players, Stephen Duffie, Editor of Sports Lifestyle Magazine and Kathleen Skene, Editor of Savvy (Townsville Bulletin). Not all of these celebrities have played tennis before, so the crowd is in for some entertaining matches. Sunday will be a great day for the family to come along, Tennis Townsville has plenty of activities organized such as; the Fastest Serve Machine which measures the speed of your serve, hit the targets tennis games, face painting and a jumping castle! Bring the family down for a fun day of tennis on Sunday from 12pm-3pm.

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**Bernie Lanigan Optometrist Tennis Townsville Championships 17 & 18 September**  
**Ergon Energy North Queensland Junior Age Championships 25 - 27 September**

For further information visit

[www.tennistownsville.org](http://www.tennistownsville.org)

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