



Snooker & Billiards New South Wales Inc.



Established 1917

Billiards Annual Report

2023 was our first year post-covid that did not have overhanging events and was more or less a normal year, except that the Minici/Pearson duopoly was finally broken after a decade of sharing the lollies between them.

In the final event of 2022 we saw Roger Farebrother, perennial semi-finalist breakthrough for a maiden win in the State Major Timed event at Hornsby RSL, against an under-prepared Michael Pearson. While Michael looked below his spectacular best Roger rose to the occasion playing solid scoring billiards. Roger held his nerve to lift the Les Hayes Cup by a margin of 500-449

Continuing the roll call of semi-finalists that almost get there Andy De Haan finally put his hands on the Keith Lord Cup, the oldest trophy in our cabinet for the State Minors Billiards (timed). This storied trophy contains the names of every great Billiards players in NSW since 1956. You can only win it once so there are 67 names which will live on in the annals of top level billiards in this state. This was Andy's fourth final and he was wondering if he would ever get there. Dirk Hellenbroich pushed him all the way in what was a tense and close final, 321-299

At the same venue Central Coast Leagues Club we also hosted the Ladies State Minor Billiards won by a returning superstar of cue sports Tanya Harrison over Monica Brettle, both ladies in their first state level billiards final, 101-66.

Tanya went on to prove that this was no fluke by taking out the Minor/Major double in her first year of return to competitive play, defeating Kenny Chandra in the final. It was Kenny's first Billiards event and only Tanya's second, a testament to how the game is growing in popularity for women.

Joe Minici won the sports blue riband event, the State Major (timed) at Blacktown Worker's Club. This was his fifteenth win in this event. The win means he has won this event at least once in every decade for the last five decades, his first win coming in 1989. An achievement unequalled in any sport in NSW and possibly Australia. He defeated Hassan Kerde who en route to the final knocked off the other entrenched finalist Michael Pearson.

Guildford Leagues Club once again hosted the State Minor Point Score event. In an uncharacteristic display of consistency Peter Tankard entered the event as top seed, finished the round robin in first place and won the final against the best player yet to win a state title Gene Crossingham. It's a matter of when, not if, for Gene who is always thereabouts at the pointy end of billiards tournaments. In winning Peter has now completed the double of the Minor events, the fourth player to do so and joins the elite company of Ron Tulloch, George Chammas and Adwin Teh.

The final state level event for 2023 was the Major Point Score event, sponsored by STM Trucks and Machinery at Club Marconi. It produced one of the most remarkable sights in Billiards; both Joe Minici and Michael Pearson watching the final from the bleachers. It is the first time Michael has failed to reach the final since the inception of this event. The winner Todd Hayward claimed his first major State Title and he did it the hard way,

defeating three official Legends of NSW cue sports; Mike Pearson in the quarters, Joe Minici in the semis and defending champion Roger Farebrother in the final 401-349.

We now look forward to our international event the Sydney Open Billiards at Club Marconi on the first weekend of November. World number 1 Peter Gilchrist has confirmed his attendance and we expect he will once again show us that despite our best efforts we still have a lot to learn.

Billiards in NSW is flourishing and growing each year, with both men and women enjoying the competition and the social side of the game. There is a real fraternity amongst billiards players which does not exist in other cue sports with players helping each other to become their best while sharing banter and a laugh afterwards, or even during the games.

Special thanks to our Champion TD Steve Cowie without whom none of this would be possible. It's not a real tournament unless Steve shouts "You're on the clock"!

Submitted: 28 September 2023

Peter Tankard, Billiards Sub-Committee