

## **Danby Cup** January, 2017

By Howard McMorris

For this fourth playing of the Danby Over '70's event, 20 hardy souls met in Hobart, Tasmania, for three matches on Jan. 21-23, before flying to Melbourne for a farewell dinner for all three teams at the Melbourne Cricket Club on the 23rd. USA and UK each had 6 players, while the Aussies fielded 8. A fun observation!: The Masters Rules for the three team events outline in agonizing detail how to accommodate teams failing to field the normal number of required players, whether 8, 7, or 6. These rules are completely silent, however, on what to do when local enthusiasm adds extra bodies! Since participation is the most important element, we all happily accepted the additional Aussies, provided that they followed handicap order-which they did!

As the Masters has grown, it is no longer possible to hold the team and individual events in the same location-last time for that was NY R&T in 2008. The Danby was played in Tuxedo in 2013, and Prested Hall in 2015. A new element now in 2017 was a team event separated by a plane flight from the others! Bostwick in Ballarat and Cockram in Melbourne.

The USA team, following handicap was: 1) Jonathan Pardee/Alex Walsh, 2) Richard Brickley/Tom Rowe, 3) Dick Tanfield/Howard McMorris. Alex Walsh deserves mention as the most enthusiastic traveler, having spent three weeks with Cindy visiting many spots throughout Asia, before flying through the night from Bali, to reach Hobart for our practice day!

USA played UK on day one. Walsh/Pardee lost to S. De Halbert (#1 seed in '70's singles)/J. East, 6/2, 6/5, getting much closer as they hit harder in the second set. Tanfield/McMorris then evened the score, defeating D. Bevan-Thomas/M. Seymour, 3/6, 6/4, 6/1. Brickley/Rowe next played R. Barlowe/Paul Danby, losing 6/3, 6/5, with multiple deuces at 4-all in the second set.

Day two was USA vs. Australia. G. Holloway/J. Faull were simply too strong at #1, 6/0, 6/1. Tanfield/McMorris then defeated A. Willingham/T. Poolman, 6/5, 6/3. In the deciding match against T. Hurburgh/G. Richardson, D. Brickley/T. Rowe made the second set truly exciting, with each team having something like 8 match/set points! Eventually, the home team won 6/3, 6/5.

Directly after the USA match, the new #3 Australian team of Paul Wheeler/Ron Booth took the court at 4:00PM to play D. Bevan-Thomas/Michael Seymour, with the British team prevailing 6/3, 6/5. The critical match started at 9:15 the next morning, with Australian captain Graeme Holloway/J. Faull narrowly defeating S. De Halpert/J. East 4/6, 6/4, 6/4 in the #1 match. In the final competition of the 2017 Danby, T. Hurburgh/G. Richardson were too steady for R. Barlow/P. Danby, thereby giving all 8 Australian players the enjoyment of gathering on the court to celebrate! This improvised format of playing only two matches on the third day allowed these teams to race to the airport for the afternoon flight to Melbourne.

We all enjoyed spending time in Hobart, as well as appreciating the wonderful atmosphere of the Hobart Real Tennis Club, built in 1875. Highlights included a Friday drinks party on the court, as well as a special Saturday dinner upstairs for players and their hosts. During the drinks party, Rob Fahey and Barry Toates were made honorary members of the Hobart Club, presided over by Rob's older sister, Christine, the current President! Rob's mother, two sisters

and brother still live in Hobart. The Saturday dinner was a wonderful evening, with Hobart members helping to prepare and serve the meal. Tom Rowe thanked Graeme Holloway for organizing us all by presenting him with a tie from the Tennis Hall of Fame in Newport., R.I.. At the very end, Howard McMorris called for a moment of silence, to honor Michael Flynn, who was determined to captain the Danby team in May of 2015, before succumbing to cancer that September. Many players from the other teams had known Michael for years, and expressed their appreciation for this.