**Squash & Racquetball Victoria Volunteer Award Winners**

Squash & Racquetball Victoria Volunteer Awards are designed to recognise the vital role volunteers play within the squash and racquetball community. Our 2014 Award winners are:

**Julie Blackie**

Julie has served on the Knox Squash & Racquetball Club committee for many years. She has filled the roles of Secretary and Match and Pennant often both at the same time. During this time she has also been heavily involved in the organising and running of many fund raising activities for the club and the junior program. Like a lot of volunteers in our game they go by unrecognised. To say Julie is a main stay of the Club at Knox is an understatement. If it was not for her efforts the committee would have folded some time ago.

**Valma Bourne**

Valma is a long standing member of both the Mountain District S&RC, Maroondah SC and Victorian Squash League committees including Ladies Match and Pennant coordinator for both committees. Valma was a committee member of Nunawading club prior to the amalgamation with Ringwood SC and is currently Coordinator of the VSL Friday morning competition. She has more than 50 years of engagement with squash as an administrator and a player.

**Elias Stergiopolous**

Long standing member of the Victorian Squash League committee and the Treasurer for more than 30 years. Elias continues to work for the VSL members and champion the cause of squash despite significant personal challenges over the last few years. He has had more than 50 years of engagement with squash as an administrator and a player.

**Greg Ikin**

Greg Ikin has volunteered countless hours to the Maffra Squash & Racquetball Club. He has been member for 38 years and held President & Vice President roles many times. Originally our club only had 2 courts. Greg assisted in the construction of an extension onto the existing courts, which has allowed us to host the Gippsland Open tournament for the past 10 years. Greg spends countless hours running this event, which has brought many people to Maffra, and which benefits our whole community. Greg is also actively involved with our juniors and 'takes them under his wing' , giving them coaching and guidance as they move up through each grade.

**Ken Jarrott**

Ken has been involved in ESRA’s junior racquetball program for the last three terms at Genesis Club in Wantirna. Ken leaves work early to be able to be at the courts for the 4pm start, returning to work late for the lost hour.

His enthusiasm knows no bounds and he has a lot of knowledge that he shares with passion and a lot of patience. Ken went the extra mile for a group of students, who prior to participating in a racquetball workshop at their school, had never been on a court before. With Ken’s coaching, tips and guidance, this team from Wantirna Primary School competed in the Primary School Racquetball competition final and came third overall.

**Liz Lopes**

Liz Lopes has played both Squash & Racquetball in the Albury – Wodonga region for many years. In recent years she obtained her coaching certificate and applied her skills to teaching both games to young and old in the region. Liz started the womens Tuesday morning squash and racquetball competitions at the Wodonga courts. Liz played an instrumental role in the rebirth of the Wodonga Squash and Racquetball club after the previous operator decided to close down the venture and it is now a vibrant club operating competitions four nights per week. She has recently moved to Queensland but since leaving, her junior charges have excelled to a level which could not have been imagined.

**Damien Maidment**

In 2008 the Goulburn Valley Squash Club, began the task of rebuilding squash as a viable game in the region. As part of these activities we held various working bees to help get the courts into shape and it was at these sessions that we first met Damien. At the time he wasn't playing the game but he dived straight in and became a regular helper at all our working sessions from that point on, soon becoming a regular at the club as he and his boys began playing in the competitions.

Damien was nominated as President shortly after and under his guidance the club has gone from strength to strength - He has helped foster a collaborative mentoring environment in which older more experienced juniors help to further develop younger or less experienced players. Damien has also sought to involve the club in the wider squash community, encouraging players to participate in tournaments across the state. As a direct result of his efforts, we now have junior players at high levels, including representation in the State squad and now host the Shepparton International tournament.

**Sylvia Tiet** (not present and has already collected her award)

In the 2.5 years that she has been playing squash, Sylvia is now president of the Melbourne University squash club and through her presidency, has grown the club by four pennant teams, two of which are women’s teams. The Squash & Racquetball Victoria Hits and Giggles program has been thoroughly successful under her watchful eye and she volunteers her time to go down to encourage new girls to join the sport and the club.

Sylvia has organised many tournaments, from our club championships (which had 54 participants this year, compared to mid-20’s in previous years), to the Squash & Racquetball Victoria University Cup, which encompasses multiple universities from across Victoria. 2014 was Sylvia’s second year attending the Australian University Games for squash. She has been team manager and captain both years and puts in countless hours organising our team and ensuring we are all ready to achieve at our highest level.