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Dear Friends

NEW YEAR MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I will take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy New Year and hope that 2020 will be a great year in Tennis for all of our constituents.

“What kind of man would live where there is no daring? I don’t believe in taking foolish chances, but nothing can be accomplished without taking any chance at all...” to quote Charles Augustus Lindbergh, American Aviator, author, inventor and activist.

Our similar bold tennis advocate, International Tennis Federation (ITF) President, Mr David Haggerty was re-elected for a second four year term in Lisbon, Portugal in September last year. He had successfully engaged member nations during his first term by attending all the Regional AGMs and listening to their concerns and needs. The number of nations represented on ITF committees and commissions was also increased by over 75% and subsidies were put in place to encourage more nations to attend the ITF AGM in 2019.

There was also a successful implementation of Davis Cup and Fed Cup reforms which unlocked US\$25 million in new funding that was distributed to member nations in 2019. As a result, the promise to double development spending was realised.

Tennis must continue to be a leader in integrity. The Barbados Tennis Association, as an important stakeholder, must continue to work on the Tennis Anti-Doping and Anti-Corruption programmes with the assistance of the ITF’s Integrity Unit, to ensure that what happens in the boardroom, meeting room and on the court is above reproach and also embraces the comprehensive policies to safeguard both children and adults.

The ITF is committed to safeguarding all children and adults throughout tennis tournaments, events, projects and programmes at all levels. Embedding safeguarding best practices in all activities is key to achieving the ambitious goal of “Delivering Tennis for future generations”. In addition, all members should note that there are set procedures for reporting concerns, recognising types/indicators of concerns and managing reports, allegations and whistleblowing. Do let me know if you have concerns in these areas.

Tennis in Barbados had moderate success during 2019 when compared to other sports. There were a few encouraging results on the junior tournament circuit as Hannah Chambers and Kaipō Marshall won ITF Grade 5 singles events in St Lucia and St Vincent, and St Vincent respectively. There were also doubles title winners and finalists in some of these ITF junior events as well.

Our number one ranked professional player, Darian King was not able to add to his tally of ATP Challenger Singles titles in 2019, but he did win two doubles titles during the year, and as a result reached a career high in doubles of #156. He also narrowly missed out on qualifying for Grand Slam main draw births in Australia and the United States, and with other good wins, he ended 2019 ranked at #166.

Once again coverage of many local events in the printed press proved challenging, in spite of reports and results regularly submitted. There were no home Davis Cup ties held during the year but we had a very hard away tie against Brazil last September. However, two international junior events were staged in Barbados; an ITF Grade 4 tournament in April and an ITF Grade 5 tournament in October which gave our local juniors opportunities to gain ranking points.

It is noted that the new focus of the Barbados Olympic Association to fund a smaller pool of athletes so that the elite tier could access greater financing, will no doubt have a deleterious effect on many emerging athletes.

The Association is still awaiting a meeting with the National Sports Council to understand the latter's new focus. No funding was sourced in 2019 from this entity towards any emerging athletes or any traditional team events, (ITF or COTECC - Central American and Caribbean Tennis Confederation), which the Association takes part in annually. The Association therefore had to rely on other Grants, Donations and Fund Raising events to finance many projects during the year.

"We Gatherin' Barbados 2020" is a national event to attract visitors to our shores, with aims to motivate entrepreneurship in all eleven parishes and various communities. Hopefully it will stimulate the economic growth of the nation as well as culture and sport, including tennis.

However, all sports are judged by their results whether on the local, regional or international arena and without the necessary financial resources, progress will always be limited. It is obvious from the aforementioned and the continuing challenging economic climate, that the Barbados Tennis Association can no longer rely on its traditional partners and must find new funding alternatives.

I therefore ask all Members who have ideas to increase the Association's revenue during 2020 to come forward to assist us with realising our visions, continuing our mandate to develop the Sport of Tennis at all levels in the island, as well as maintaining the prominence of our sport during this new decade.

Yours truly



Dr Raymond Forde
President