

Tash Bartlett, Campbells Bay Tennis Club President, Tennis Northern Chair (April 2023)

With a background in banking and finance, and a passion for tennis, I joined the Campbells Bay Tennis Club committee as a way of giving back to the sport I love as I thought my skill set could be useful. Sports clubs don't run without committed volunteers and a thriving club is essential for its members and the wider community. I'm definitely a "doer" so I have enjoyed implementing new initiatives for the club which has seen membership grow and people enjoying being part of a community. I'm especially proud of our SisterServe initiative which has senior female members "buddying" with our junior girls. Both groups are enjoying this interaction and even if it keeps just one teen girl in sport, it's worth it. I'm also pleased that we have a lot more events on the calendar which bring the community together for fun both on and off court.

Through my role as President, I have connected with other local clubs which face the same challenges and I've enjoyed discussing initiatives to help grow tennis in our region. Brimming with ideas, when a vacancy on the Tennis Northern Board opened, I saw it as an opportunity to bring these ideas to the table. Initially it is overwhelming but having completed the Sports NZ Governance Course and a Not For Profit Governance Course through the Institute of Directors, combined with the support of the CEO and fellow board members, I've quickly come up to speed on what challenges we face as a region. Some of these differ to those at club level so it's been insightful and I feel that my connections back to the clubs can help improve the communication of this.

The biggest challenge for me in governance is the line between "doing" and "governing". However, you are never going to come into a role knowing all there is to know, so I make sure I ask lots of questions and use the CEO and fellow board members as sounding boards. I step into Board Chair from 1 April 2023 which feels a little daunting. However, the key is having great open communication with everyone around me so I can support our CEO to move Tennis Northern from strength to strength.