Anyone for TSS Tennis?

Tennis was becoming popular in the summer of 1903 and the Headmaster, Horace Dixon, decided to erect a roughly put together net and call it a tennis court. It was outside the Dixon residence, so Horace could keep an eye on the boys whilst he sipped tea on his verandah.

By 1909 tennis tournaments were common events between McKinley and Thorold Houses and TSS now boasted three tennis courts.

Left: TSS tennis courts in 1912; the first tuckshop to the right and the bridge over Pong Creek. The tennis courts were located in close proximity to where they are currently situated today.

Right: 1912, the headmaster’s wife, Florence Dixon, opened the new tennis courts by firing a ball over the new nets with a splendid serve.
By 1918, GPS tennis had commenced and the boys would now compete for trophies against rival schools, the likes of Churchie and BBGS, instead of just House, intra-school and local tournaments.

Brisbane Boys Grammar School won the first GPS Championship. It would take TSS until 1924 to be awarded the coveted GPS J.N. Radcliffe Championship Trophy.

Right: The TSS GPS Tennis winning team in 1924.

The J. N. Radcliffe Trophy

The Premiership Trophy for the GPS Tennis season is awarded to the First IV competition only. The School with the highest number of competition points at the end of nine rounds is determined as the Champion School.

One of Brisbane Grammar School’s best tennis players was J.N. (Jack) Radcliffe, who was school champion in 1908, 1910 and 1911. Jack excelled in cricket, tennis and rowing early in his life, and later, in golf. He represented Oxford University at tennis in 1920 and 1921, and was the Queensland singles champion in 1921. One of the finest golfers the state has known, he had the distinction of winning the Queensland Open Championship as an amateur in 1933, being the state’s first amateur to do so.

Jack was awarded a Military Cross in World War 1. He was selected as a Queensland Rhodes Scholar in 1915 and later became Headmaster of The Southport School in 1940.