

MINUTES OF THE BECKENHAM LAWN TENNIS CLUB AGM

SATURDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER 2015

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Gladys Paine, Chris Lamb, Gill Box-Grainger, Hanna Buddell, Rica Dearman, Tom Simpson, Angela Hughes, Charles Darby, John Watton.

2. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2014 AGM

Minutes Approved

3. MATTERS ARISING

None

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Welcome to the 134th Tennis Section A.G.M. at Beckenham Cricket Club. Thank you to everybody for attending.

I will be addressing matters relating to our section, the wider Club over the past 12 months and plans for 2016, which marks the 150th anniversary of sport played at Foxgrove Road.

Membership, State Of Tennis Section

Our adult membership, which stood at 165 in April 2014, has now increased to 275. The current total is an increase of 36 since the A.G.M. last year.

In May, the General Committee approved the tennis section offering new recruits 25 per cent off annual membership (355 pounds) year-round, through May 2016. Holding four Open Days this year, in January, April, May and June, led to 52 new members and also a further 18 new members for our 'sister' sections. A greater emphasis was also put on junior promotion, including a successful event on Beckenham Green in July.

Anika Jones, who began a new chapter in her life with the birth of Saskia on 15 September, has led the recruitment drive and her role as membership secretary with distinction. Two months ago, I nominated her on behalf of Beckenham Cricket Club for a Sports Bromley Volunteer of the Year award. Sports Bromley informed me this week that she has been "Highly Commended". On behalf of the section, I would like to thank Anika for her dedication as a committee member over the past five years, including her entertaining newsletters.

Alexia Capsomidis, who also assists in the Club's office on Saturday mornings; Don Sperring, who once again secured posters on Beckenham Junction's train station platform in May and June; Josh Brooks, who designed the leaflets, and all those who distributed them, manned welcome desks and encouraged new visitors have played a big part in the recruitment drive.

Many of the 36 tennis clubs within a five-mile radius, including nearby heavyweights Park Langley and David Lloyd, have become slicker in their promotion of Open Days. Yet, it is sobering to note that despite Andy Murray's performances, the sport's participation numbers in the United Kingdom have continued to decline since 2006.

(A report published in May, highlighted that there were one million monthly and 530,000 weekly players in 2009. This year, the figures are 694,000 and 384,000, respectively. Kent has 38,000 weekly tennis participants and is one of few county's that have bucked the trend.)

For the 150th anniversary in 2016, the Club is offering 15 per cent off the annual membership of other sections. The tennis section will once again play its part in driving up membership.

Section Evolution

With the section's increase in membership it needed to evolve and the Committee has implemented a number of changes and additions over the past 12 months, including:

- Standardising Wednesday and Saturday club play scoring to ensure a regular turnaround on our seven premium courts, with up to 40 members taking part.
- A change to a six-week cycle of coaching individual strokes and match play situations on the Saturday afternoon beginner/improver session. (Tony Martin and Matt Brolly will now oversee these sessions, to provide members with different perspectives).
- The coaches took on a greater responsibility in assessing player performances levels and encouraging the integration of members approved for Saturday's club play. (Moving forwards, Peter Kiss and Matt will begin to rotate in leading these sessions).
- There were tournament additions: the Autumn/Winter Championships (in October to February) and Grass-Court Championships (July to August). Over the past 12 months, more than 1,300 pounds has been taken in tournament entry fees. (I would like to thank Anika for organising the Feat of Clay in April, Gary Eldridge for organising the Brian Dodsworth Tournament, opening our grass-court season in May, and also Peter Clegg and Sue Buddell for organising the Memorial Tournament in June.)
- The online Singles Ladder, which began two years ago, has benefited from the addition of match play afternoons and, next month, a first year-end Masters event. (I would like to thank John Pedevilla, who will also assist me in tournament organisation).
- A new website was launched in March (for the cost of two Wimbledon tickets) and this has provided a significant stream of new membership and junior coaching enquiries. (I would like to thank my former ATP colleague Rachel Pikus and Simon Gregory for their design assistance and Terry Benson for his professional photography skills).
- Public Facebook and Google Plus pages were created and our efforts on Twitter increased, complementing the website for further year-round promotion. Our Twitter audience has increased as a result of getting involved in the Beckenham and Bromley Business Associations. (I would like to thank Anika for her assistance).
- The Court Booking System, supported by ClubSys, originally set to launch in April, will be launched on Monday, 19 October. It will enable members to book courts online from home, or via the touchscreen in the hallway of the main clubhouse. If you have not been sent a username and password, please get in touch with Jackie in the office. (It has certainly been a frustrating wait).
- Behind the scenes, the promotion of what we offer, beyond the Open Days, has also improved with links made at King's Language School, Clare House, Langley Park schools and Bellissima nursery (which my son, William, attends) plus via Streetlife, Mumsnet websites. In our partnership with Sports Bromley and Bromley Pro Active, which provided funding for free five-or-eight week coaching to our new members in 2014-15. I would like to thank Alexia, again, for her assistance in compiling funding paperwork.

More participants entered our junior LTA Ratings tournaments, the BBS Beckenham Junior Open (which will be held 26-30 October), supported by Steve Philpott, and the AMOSCA Beckenham Junior Open (in late July). Goodacre Property Services Limited, which had sponsored the July tournament since 2006, stepped down as title sponsor in late November, and I am grateful to Noel Gorvett and AMOSCA for coming on board as a supporter of junior tennis. While having the AMOSCA become a part of the LTA-backed Quorn Family Tennis Cup

helped, it is essential that the section continues to rebuild for a return to Grade 3 status. I would like to thank John Watton, Tony Martin, Kerrin Cross and Jane Gorvett for their work.

Junior Section Developments

As a lifelong member, I am only too aware that it has been 20 years since the junior section thrived. I would like to thank Matt Brolly for being open and responsive to change as greater efforts are made to build up the junior section. Matt and I have met on average every six weeks, and, I feel by working together; by bringing forward deadlines on programme planning, the section has been able to better promote its junior activities.

The Committee encouraged the organisation of Junior Match Play events in February and March, the staging of bigger summer camps, plus a Junior Open Morning earlier this month, to welcome new and old participants to our programme. In January and April next year, at the start of school terms, Open Mornings will be organised. The next goal will be to look at adult coaching opportunities. Matt will explain more in his report later.

With a transient Beckenham population and fewer families as members at the Club, I have worked on drawing together the other sections, particularly our links with cricket, hockey and squash, in order to share contacts and schools links to promote the Club. As a result our reach will increase. I will be permitting the Squash section, which recruited approximately 60 junior members and brought in a coach earlier this year, to publish a few pages on our tennis section website. A tennis noticeboard was re-instated in the main pavilion in October last year.

Being able to retain as many of last year's intake (78), and continue the section's efforts to attract new adult members in 2015 (a further 57), was of great importance to me 12 months ago. The priorities of the Committee have been, and will continue to be, to encourage our tennis membership to play regularly, by getting them involved in our coaching, club play sessions, tournaments and social efforts. I would like to thank every member of the Committee for the commitment to their roles, particularly Mus Kemal for his organisation of Wednesday club play, which we will both now look to transition.

On my trips this year to Clubs in deepest Kent, the common concern was that participants involved in club play sessions are on the decline, with a rise in singles ladder, informal play. At Beckenham, we are fortunate to offer a range of playing options, but I recognise the need for further restructuring and will keep working with Matt in 2015/16.

The Future

The tennis section has benefited from significant financial backing over the past five years. The loan on the artificial clays is being paid back, while the second half of the acrylic payment is being withheld until Plexipave return to undertake further remedial work on Courts 1, 3 and 4.

The goal now is to build funds to redevelop the three macadam courts, to ensure we have 10 premium courts year-round, and also plan for the provision of switching court by court to LED Lighting in future.

In January and February, I made a point of looking at the tennis areas and obtaining quotes for future work. The renewal of three macadams will cost 39,000 pounds, artificial grass 50,000 pounds and artificial clay 60,000 pounds. Each option, gives a 15-year lifespan. In researching artificial grass at clubs in south-east London, I noted a large spate of injuries and therefore I am in favour of artificial clay. But I welcome the views of the membership. The total cost of switching our seven courts to LED Lighting, used by only five clubs in the UK, is 180,000 pounds plus VAT, while the levelling of land and building two Mini Tennis courts in the triangular area of grass by the macadams is at 90,000.

A structural survey on the Summer Pavilion will soon be carried out. The reason behind our floodlight outages late last year, centred on the fact that the sewerage system in the House,

was connected up to the groundsman's irrigation system, rather than be installed in the house itself five years ago. This matter has been addressed.

In 2015/16, there will be a number of investments, including:

- The refurbishment of the bar and changing rooms in the main pavilion (December).
- There is potential for real change in the hockey section, with their own astroturf pitch, for the first time since grass hockey matches ended 20 years ago (2016).
- The renovation of the outside toilet in The Summer Pavilion will be undertaken.

Beckenham Cricket Club, for its 150th year, will be producing a calendar to be published in November; a brochure chronicling the history of each section and the international tournament will be published on 1 January 2016, and each section will organise a playing and social events. I would like to thank Gill Box-Grainger and Lizzie Grumbach for their involvement in the organising committee.

Thank You

I would like to conclude my report by thanking:

- Every member of the Committee for all their hard work this year, particularly Jane Gorvett who has been working on our LTA ClubMark status;
- My Mum, Sue Buddell, for her oversight of the Tea Fund and Wimbledon Tickets Draw, ordering 36 dozen tennis balls every six weeks and Summer Pavilion upkeep;
- Gary Eldridge, who stood down as Club President in February, and Noel Gorvett for their support and advice;
- Chris Lamb for his dedication as fixtures secretary, and,
- Kate Ting, who will also continue her role as the Tea Rota organiser.

Tony Wood will be standing down from the Committee after 10 years. Tony has played a major part in the funding of the artificial clay and acrylic court upgrades, and, for the past five years, he has been the Finance Representative. At one time he also organised singles box leagues, the forerunner of the online singles ladder, and he continues to captain a men's team. On behalf of the tennis membership, please accept this gift as a token of our appreciation.

James Buddell
Chairman

5. REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE

a. MEN'S AND MIXED CAPTAIN

Firstly, I would like to thank all the Captains for the past year, and the new ones for the forthcoming year. I know it is a difficult task to do.

It was a quiet summer on the trophy front, the only success being Mixed 4, Captained extremely well by Anika, and winning their Divisional Final.

The same again in the winter, with only Vets 1 reaching their final but losing only through one player having to retire injured.

We have lost many players though injury and this has affected the teams but we do have a new lot of players coming through the ranks and also Peter Kisses' juniors, so the future looks positive.

Mus Kemal

Men's and Mixed Captain

b. LADIES CAPTAIN

Thank you to all the ladies who have supported the teams over the past year and a special thanks to the captains who often have a difficult time organising matches.

Thanks also to Chris Lamb our Fixtures secretary and Sue Buddell who ensures our courts are booked for all home matches.

Winter results

Ladies 1 came 1st in Division 1A and went on to win the divisional final and were therefore Kent Champions again.

Ladies 4 came 1st in their division and were promoted

Summer results

Fielding our full strength teams was a problem this season and all sides struggled with the exception of Ladies 4 who again won their division and, as in the winter, were promoted. This was especially pleasing as the team consisted of mainly new players who have joined the Club over the last couple of years.

For the first time this summer we entered two midweek teams, Men's Vets and Mixed Vets. I am very grateful to Roger Keeling who gallantly captained both for us. Though everyone enjoyed the competition and meeting players from other clubs the travelling proved arduous so next summer we plan to enter just a Men's Vets team into the North Kent League. I hope the men will again rally round Roger and give him their support.

I organised a Ladies Tinsel tennis morning before the section's Christmas dinner which was good fun, a couple of team selection sessions and a drills morning run by Laura Thomas. The newer member's really enjoyed meeting and being coached by a 1st team player.

Overall it's an exciting time for ladies tennis as we see younger players becoming regular and successful team players. Good luck to you all this coming season

Carole Fowler
Ladies Captain

c. HON. JUNIOR SECRETARY

Over the last twelve months, we have developed our coaching offering for both juniors and adults.

1) Coaching Program

Juniors

We have managed to stabilise numbers on our courses. We are now running close to capacity on Saturdays and are looking to increase participation during the week.

Courses

We currently run 24 courses at the club in addition to after school offerings. Each course currently runs at a profit for the club.

We had a great summer season, and thanks to a link with a local school we are teaching close to 300 children per week at the club, as well as teaching another fifty plus pupils at our outreach pupils.

Camps

We decided to expand our tennis camp offering this year, extending courses from 3 to 5 hours. This worked very well for the summer camp where we saw over 75 different pupils attending the camps. At our peak we were teaching 25 pupils per day which is well over a 100% increase from last year. We began advertising for the courses in May and visited a number of schools to help promote the courses. We will be using the same marketing strategy for our half term, and Easter camps next year.

Schools Programme

We have managed to attend a number of schools in the last year to offer free lessons. We usually aim to teach each pupil at the school, in small groups. We then follow this up by offering discounted lessons at the club.

We will be repeating this again this year with the aim of attracting as many juniors to the club as possible. In addition we also run after school clubs at three local schools where pupils are actively encouraged to attend courses at the club.

Annual Junior Tournament

We had another successful annual junior tournament on finals day. We ran eight competitions with over 50 junior competing. Due to the success of this, we plan to run a Winter Juniors Finals day to coincide with the winter adult competition in March.

Match Plays

We started a matchplay program this year, and ran 4 mini tournaments in early 2015 where juniors from other clubs were invited to attend. We are in talks about repeating this in 2016 and with advanced marketing hope to increase numbers.

Marketing

We've been using social media more and more this year. The development of the new website has been beneficial and we have received lots of new enquiries from this and twitter. As a result, we now have over 300 people on our junior email database. We plan to develop this further this year by sending out weekly updates in line with the emails sent to adult members.

Teams

We had a good summer season with eight teams entered in the Kent League. There were some notable performances with our u14 Aegon Team winning their division, and both our u9's and u10's finishing as runner ups.

We now have a clear pathway at the club for juniors to begin competing at under 8 level through to under 18's and beyond and a number of our juniors have either represented the club over the last 12 months at adult level or have entered in the club tournament, and ladder competition

Adult Coaching

Free Coaching

The coaching team has ensured that each new member was offered a minimum of a free 5 week taster course to introduce them to the basic shots and supplemented this by offering free

coaching sessions on a Saturday. This has resulted in a number of new members being moved into regular club sessions with many others close to reaching the required standard.

Mondays/Saturdays

Our Monday night coaching groups for intermediate and more advanced players are both close to capacity, and the Saturday morning intermediate course is full.

More than 30 adults are currently involved in group lessons with many more taking individual lessons.

Over 20 new players have joined the regular Saturday club sessions, with more hopefully to join soon.

3) Coaching Team

I would like to thank the coaching team for the help in the last twelve months, in particular Tony Martin for his work on the junior program, and Peter Kiss for his work on the performance section.

I would also like to thank Adam Constable and Elliot Ward for their work over the last twelve months. Both coaches have moved on but will keep a link with the club.

We have recruited a new level 2 coach, Paul Horton, who will be working on the junior program on a Saturday

4) Goals

The goal for the next 12 months will be to increase numbers on our program on Mondays to Thursday after school. I am in talks with a number of local schools, and hope to offer some free sessions with the goal of feeding players onto the course.

I have also started a campaign to attract juniors from local pre-schools, and will be starting a number of daytime courses to help attract juniors at this early age.

Matt Brolly
Hon. Junior Secretary

d. FINANCE REPRESENTATIVE

Membership has increased from 239 adult members October 2014 to 275 members in Sept 2015. Subscriptions have increased to £56,557 less joining incentives which gives a net £53,094.

We have had problems reconciling the Junior coaching programme as there have been changes to the accounts prepared by the Club office. This won't be easy to unravel as Helen Garrett has now left the club.

Coaching income was reported to be £15,989 1st Oct 2014 – 30th June 2015 but this seems far too low. Coaching costs have grown to £26,738 a net loss of £10,749. This reflects the additional costs of coaching incurred to provide new members with taster and starter coaching to encourage members to stay with the club beyond their first year.

The BBS junior competition is showing £995 in entry fees and £500 sponsorship and £890 costs so provided a £605 profit.

The Amosca junior competition is showing £1,377 entry fees plus £1,800 sponsorship and costs of £2,272 so provided a £905 profit.

Despite some minor remedial work needed to be completed on the new acrylic courts we have agreed to pay the contractor the remaining 50% of their outstanding balance providing they commit to completing the work when the weather improves in early 2016.

Socials have made a lower profit in 2015 of £400 due to no French night or Hog roast which are our normal larger profit making events.

After paying the £5,000 to the club out of our tea fund to assist payment for the new Acrylic courts the fund has grown again to £4,500.

Tony Wood

Finance Representative

6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- a. James Buddell remains as Chairman – proposed by Ray Ballard, seconded by Simon Gregory
- b. Mus Kemal remains as Men's Captain – proposed by Don Sperring, seconded by Sue Norman
- c. Carole Fowler remains as Ladies' Captain – proposed by Gary Eldridge, seconded by Laura Sperring
- d. Alexia Capsomidis remains as Hon. Tennis Secretary – proposed by Carole Fowler, seconded by Liz Sharrock
- e. Matt Brolly remains as Hon. Junior Secretary – proposed by Mus Kemal, seconded by Miriam Heard
- f. Chris Lamb remains as Hon. Fixtures Secretary – proposed by Sue Buddell, seconded by Peter Clegg
- g. Richard Moore was elected as Finance Representative – proposed by Diane Alagar, seconded by Gladys Paine

h. Committee Members:

Members agreed to the following appointments:

Peter Clegg was remains as Grounds Representative

Lizzie Grumbach remains as Social Secretary

Jane Gorvett remains as Committee Member

Maria Chandler and Rica Dearman were elected as Membership Secretary

Diane Alagar was elected as Assistant Social Secretary

John Pedevilla was elected as Tournament Secretary

Paul Mansfield and Alex Chabali were elected as Fundraising Representatives

Fraser Williams was elected as Improvers Representative

Gavin Simpson was elected as Men's Team Representative

Merinda Peppard was elected as Social Media Representative

7. Any Other Business

- a. *Macadam Court Resurface*. Members were advised that plans for 2016 were being put in place to replace the surface of the Macadam Courts. Discussion around possible options available and whether any funding was available from the LTA. Continued discussion to happen with members to ensure we are able to offer a year-round surface for all members
- b. *Floodlights*. Options have been looked at to replace all existing floodlights with LED lights. The cost would be £180k which is not a possible amount to raise in the near future.
- c. *Beckenham Cricket Club 150th Anniversary*. James asked the members for suggestions as to events that the Tennis Section can hold to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Club. There will be one day with Exhibition Match and Social but other activities are welcome.
- d. Committee members thanked James Buddell on behalf of the Tennis section for all his hard work over the last 12 months

The meeting closed at 5.28pm