

STOCK TENNIS CLUB

News from the Chair

February saw the club hold its Annual General Meeting at the Old King's Head. It was nice to see so many club members take part and use the opportunity to get involved in the future of your club. A number of points were discussed, chief amongst them the decision to resurface the club courts this summer. We will be using local specialists Doe's who provided the most competitive bid, suggested ways to manage the conifer induced cracking problems and come recommended by the LTA. The work really has to be carried out in summer to ensure it can be completed without too many rain delays etc. I'm sure you'll agree that having new playing surfaces are in the best interests of the club, even if it means the odd air shot cannot be explained away by a stray piece of gravel.

As a result the courts will be out of action for around 6 – 8 weeks from 21st July. The committee is working on gaining access to some other local courts for this period, please bear with us in this respect. The summer tournaments will also be starting earlier than usual, more on this from Barry later.

Subscriptions are to be kept at last year's prices, which I am sure will be a popular decision. We have introduced a member-get-member scheme. If you introduce a new

member, you can claim 20% of their annual subs, as a discount from your own subs. (Not back-dated)

As we are officially in the summer season now we can justifiably demand some better weather...I hope you all have the chance to get out and play on the old courts in the next few months. We are currently running 3 men's teams, 3 ladies and 2 mixed so there is plenty of competitive tennis available. All standards are welcome at club night on Tuesdays from 7.30pm and again on Sunday mornings at 10.30am. Finally should you want to fine tune your game, 1 on 1 lessons can be booked with Dean Graham (07941 263273), whilst spaces on Denise's Junior Coaching courses are filling up rapidly (07854 469241).

We also agreed some social events for the coming year:

Summer Party at Bobs 10th July
American Tournament TBA (soon after new courts have opened)
10 Pin Bowling Evening TBA
Quiz Evening Oct / November details to follow

James

A poor showing from Lady Captains

Men's 1

A pretty successful winter has seen us on the cusp of promotion. However, the bad weather and certain inexplicable reluctance to travel to the away fixture has meant that neither of the matches against Basildon got played. We had hoped to just play the home game on the last day of the season and double up the score (we had our strongest line up arranged (so no captain for this one!) but it conveniently decided to rain all day and so we have had to split the points.

We now wait with bated breath to see if we did sneak into the promotion places. An interesting new trend among the leaders of our men's game at Stock seems to be regular travel to far flung parts of the world including Russia, San Francisco, Miami as well as less glamorous but no less inconvenient for making a 7pm start at Danbury venues such as Germany and Edinburgh (that would be the captain's regular port of call).

Thanks therefore go to a number of people who have stepped into the breach when our first choice squad of Dean, Tom, Simon, James and myself were unavailable including Rob Watkins, Ian Hardie (no stranger to the inside of an international airport lounge himself!), Paul Kelly and Bob Semple who made his lonely way to

Mountnessing on one occasion only to find the place deserted and the match abandoned (sorry Bob again).

Fingers remain crossed that we might have got promotion, even if we will be ever more reliant on the core youthful element of our club to keep us there.

Neil

Mens 2

The winter season turned out to be very average as we eventually scored 56 out of a possible 112 points. For most of the season we languished 7th out of 8 teams but a last gasp rally may have pulled us up to fifth in the table, although there is still a chance we might be relegated.

Bob Semple, Ian Hardie, Rob Watkins and Ian Clenaghan formed the core of the team. Through the season we were hit by a couple of problems. First several of the squad had international travel commitments. This restricted Ian Hardie's appearances, which was unfortunate as the Vets Champion was clearly our Most Valuable Player averaging over 3 points a match. But travel also

prevented Paul Fordham playing at all while John Arber only managed a couple of matches.

Our other problem was injury. Whereas the first team squad is now a youth team, Mens 2 reflects the aging of the club. Bryan Boddy had to retire in the middle of the only match he played; Mac's ankle kept him out for most of the season; while problems coping with some of the floodlights reduced Paul Kelly to a few cameos. Towards the end of the season we had great difficulty raising a team on a couple of occasions and I am grateful to David Lister and Graham Preston for stepping in at short notice and ensuring that we kept our match commitments.

I look forward to the summer season in the expectation of improvement, particularly as the men's 1 squad are all

eligible to play for us if required. The first match will provide a good guide to our prospects as we are playing arch rivals Billericay 4. They topped the winter league and our record against them was a disappointing 1-15. A win would be a good start.

Bob

Mixed 1

An up-and-down winter with one unplayed due to Billericay cancelling an hour before the match. However, the results are: Played 11, Won 4, Drawn 2, Lost 5. Apart from one loss of 8-0 to Billericay 1, the other losses were all close-run matches, 44 sets having been won and 45 lost. On balance, remaining in this division gives us the best chance of competitive games, without being thrashed or indeed doing the thrashing. Thanks to all for playing.

Ian

Summer Tournaments

As mentioned earlier in the newsletter, the courts are being re-surfaced from late July, possible until mid September. Therefore, we have to finish the summer tournament before the work starts. Finals Day has been set for Sat 9th July. This means that you lot will need to get better organized in playing matches. It was decided at the AGM to dispense with the Old Gits tournament (aka Mens Veterans) this season to ease congestion in May – July, as 90% of them enter the Mens Singles. However, some of them have written to their MP to demand a public enquiry. Rather than make a stand against the populous, the committee have decided to agree to this request. Pit-bull Kelly has been appointed to ensure that matches are played promptly – Boots have been notified and have promised to stock more Radox and muscle relaxing oils.

One change which was voted through was to encourage Ladies to enter the Singles tournament by making it a one-set (best of 10 games – tie-break at 5-5) contest. If both players agree, it can still be a standard 3 set match.

The entry form for the summer tournaments is at the foot of the Subscription Renewal Form. As we need to get matches underway quickly, **entries must be received by 1 May.**

Barry

Junior Coach

Since running the tennis camps in February half term and the open afternoon that Rob and I did in March, the junior membership has increased by 10. This means that 75% of the groups are now running to capacity and I am introducing a new group Wednesday at 3.30pm after Easter, as there were children waiting for a Wednesday session. The number of children in each group is limited as I am now the only coach on court, since Rob found employment on a Wednesday and Friday. I will be running camps over Easter and hopefully will have some more new members after that, and those that already come to coaching will continue.

Denise

Fixtures Secretary

First of all I would like to say congrats to James Fordham and all the committee for doing a great job.

Thank you for playing extra matches with in the last few weeks. All matches have been completed this winter. We had a total of 42 matches cancelled from October - March. We are still waiting for confirmation of titles and final positions.

Summer Season 2011 - The summer league kicked off on April 1st through to September 30th. We have 5 teams in the Brentwood League and 3 teams in the Chelmsford league.

Ladies 1 (Division 1) Chelmsford
Mens 1 (Division 2) Chelmsford
Ladies 2 (Division 4) Brentwood

Ladies 3 (Division 4) Brentwood
Mixed 1 (Division 2) Brentwood

Mixed 2 (Division 4) Chelmsford
Mens 2 (Division 3) Brentwood
Mens 3 (Division 6) Brentwood

(Ladies 2 and 3 are again in the same Division.)

As you are aware we are getting new courts in July so there are extra home matches before that. I have put all captains' packs and summer info on the club board for you to read. **Captains please be aware of new rule changes** before start of first match. Good luck to all players. Let's have a great summer of Tennis.

Simon