

STOCK TENNIS CLUB

Yet another summer season comes to a close. Wimbledon's over, the English Davis cup team have been relegated to second division but Stock Tennis Club keeps going from strength to strength...!! We still have 8 teams entered in the local leagues generally maintaining a good standard of play; membership remains fairly stable; STC won the Horndon Bowl for the second consecutive year and we still maintain a fairly active social calendar with American tournaments, charity events, summer party, even a stall at the Stock village fair to attract new membership. Not bad for a small club like ours.

New Blood

As with all sports clubs, the key to ongoing success is being able to attract new, younger members to participate in both running the club's activities as well as actually playing tennis. STC is having varied success at this. My thanks go to James for running the Men's I team ; Simon for taking on the fixtures secretary position ; Rob for assisting with the junior coaching as well as Matt / Ryan and Lyndsey who have all started playing in the adult teams. Thanks also to Denise who has done an excellent job in maintaining the junior coaching and running all the junior camps through the school holidays – not an easy task to follow Dean.

If anyone else would like to step forward and take on a more active roll in running the club, joining the committee or any other help, please let me know – all offers are greatly appreciated.

Tennis Finals Day

This year's finals day was another enjoyable afternoon with some excellent tennis to watch, great weather and fantastic burgers (Thanks Brian). As with previous years we also held the junior finals to make it more of a family event. Results as follows:-

Men's Singles: Tom Partridge (R/up James Fordham) 7-6 0-6 6-4

Ladies Singles: Denise Watkins (R/up Lynne Davis) 6-4 1-6 7-5

Men's Doubles: John Arber & Tom Partridge (R/up James Fordham & John Hayden) 6-3 6-2

Ladies Doubles: Cathy Winterflood & Anne Semple (R/up Jean Fullbrook & Dale Partridge) 7-5 6-3

Mixed Doubles: Sue Scott & Simon Hardie (R/up Dale Partridge & Ian Hardie) 7-6 7-6

Men's Veterans: Ian Hardie (R/up Paul Kelly) 6-4 6-3

Boys U18: Sam Chesworth (R/up Luke Haynes) 6-2 6-7 6-1

Girls U18: Imogen Moore (R/up Claire Massey) 6-1 6-0

Boys U11: Jack Mullins (R/up Nathan Fry) 3-10 10-8 10-8

My congratulations go to all the winners and everyone else who took part. Thanks also to Barry for arranging the matches and keeping us all on track (again).

Absent Friends

I recently spoke with Ian Hodges and he seems to be recovering slowly but surely. Hopefully he'll make a full recovery over the coming months and we'll be able to see him back on the courts soon. (It'll be good to see those volleys from the back of the court again!!)

Anne & Bob's Summer Party

This has now become somewhat of a tradition. Anne and Bob did a fantastic spread of food as they always do – chicken curry; pork sweet & sour; vegetarian etc. followed by a great selection of deserts and cheese. The planning was perfect, even the weather was fine though a little chilly later on. The afternoon was well attended with the return of some old faces which is always good to see. Thanks again to Anne and Bob for all their efforts.

Stock Village Fair

For the first time this year Stock Tennis Club had a stall at the annual Stock village fair. This is usually a fairly peaceful event. However, this year we set up a mini tennis court in our allocated spot right by the entrance where many of the youngsters could come along and have a knock. This probably wasn't the most ideal location as we did get a few comments from passers-by but at least we got noticed. In the process we managed to attract many visitors to the stall and actually managed to get a couple of new members.

Thanks to Lorraine, Denise, Judith and Dale for helping to manage the stall (and the kids)

Quiz Night

We are in the process of arranging another quiz night which has always been a great success in the past. Date is now confirmed as Saturday 14 November, at Brightside School. 7.15 for a 7.30 start. £5 per person – Tables of up to 8 people. I hope that everyone will try and attend; it would be good to have a full hall. Also, if you can donate a raffle prize, that would be brilliant – although not the unwanted Xmas present from your batty great aunt!!

Austria Tennis Trip

It has been suggested by several members that it would be a good idea to arrange a group visit to a hotel in Austria where they specialise in tennis holidays. (Along the lines of the Windmill Hill trip in 2005) Several members have stayed there before including Pat & Neil; Denise; Dale and I. The hotel is located in St Wolfgang, about 40 mins drive from Salzburg and has three indoor courts, clay courts, spa facilities and is set in the mountains with a fantastic view of one of Austria's scenic lakes.

The hotel has several coaches who organise group / individual tennis coaching and various competitions on a full time basis. Even if you don't want to play tennis all day, you can enjoy the spa facilities, go Nordic walking, cycling or just enjoy a walk down to the lake.

The hotel is a small family run business where they offer good quality food and always make you very welcome.

If enough people are interested, I'll contact the hotel and see what deals are available for groups and when the best times are for going as they sometimes offer all-inclusive deals / other deals at certain times. The hotel is called the "Tennishotel Wolfgangsee" and you can look it up on the internet for more details.

Please let me know if you're interested as this would be a great opportunity for a short break away with other club members, play some tennis, see the local area and enjoy a few days away.

British Tennis Membership – Reminder

Hopefully many of you will have joined the LTA for free this year following the various communications through the year. If you have done so, you will be entitled to enter the annual draw for Wimbledon tickets next year. You will also have earned the club a discount on our yearly LTA club membership fee which can be put to great use. Additionally it offers you a broad range of benefits such as player LTA ratings; e-newsletters; information on competitions and events – all valuable stuff for budding STC tennis players...

Summer Fixtures Report.

Chelmsford and District: -

We have come to the end of the summer Season. Not many re arranged matches. It has been a positive summer for all teams in the Chelmsford and district and the Brentwood league.

A special Message for James Fordham and the team for taking his Men's 1 side through all the tough matches in division 1 and I can confirm we are staying up with the big lads next season. Is that the first time ever? We finished 4th.

Ladies 1: Were also in division 1 action this summer. Lynne Davis and the gang had a positive season. Unfortunately they finished 8th but I know all players enjoyed playing in the top division. Well done everyone.

Mixed 2: Were in 4th place but other teams still had matches to play and we finally ended up in 8th. Well done Mac/Dale and the team for a great season.

Brentwood League: -

I can be the first to congratulate Men's 2 for finishing 2nd and being promoted to Div 3. They were 1 win away from coming top. (I blame Billericay for that) Well done guys on a great season.

Men's 3: were playing in division 6 this season. Finished 4th. From all the results I've seen it's been a successful season with all the young guns including Dave Lister and Ian Clenaghan and the new upcoming Matt Fentiman.

Ladies 2: Jenny Nugent was the lead for the 2s this season, Heading in to Division 3. Finished 5th which sadly means relegation but well done everyone.

Ladies 3: well done for Sally Dillon and the team for a successful 4th position in division 4 and chance to face the 2's again next season

Simon

Captain's Reports

Men's 1 - The men's 1 team had a great season this summer, achieving a top 5 finish in the top division, despite pundits and former players alike predicting a relegation battle lay ahead. The star performers were Dean Graham and Tom Partridge, with James Fordham, Simon Hardie, Neil Haynes and Brian Boddy picking up valuable points. Despite having a stable team there was room for a few guest appearances, with Paul Fordham, Mac Partridge, Ian Hardie and others (including a star turn from Matt Fentiman) making the step up to the Premiership. Congratulations and many thanks to all involved for a successful season.

James

Men's 2 - It was a year of so much promise - leading the division and undefeated until our very last match. Billericay 4 (yet again) proved to be our nemesis as we got thumped 7-1 and so ended on 69 points to their 73. A draw and we would have won - but no point dwelling on the past, instead we will look forward to playing in a higher division next year. The core of the team - Bob, John, Mac, and the two Pauls - were supplemented by strong cameo performances, particularly from Tom and James. There was a pretty consistent performance across the team which hopefully we will carry into the winter league in which we struggled a bit last year. For the next few weeks I am off continuing my gap decade with a trip round the world so John Arber will be organising the matches.

Bob

Mixed II - The team this season has had mixed success. Latest status is 5th place (of 7) having a mixture of wins and losses. Again it's been difficult on occasions to field a team but hopefully we can continue to run both the mixed teams through the winter season. Thanks to all those who have played through the season especially Brian at Ingatestone (better turn up at the correct time next year!!) and Lyndsey who's just joined the team.

Dale

LADIES 3 - this summer our team saw the welcome return of two younger members, Danielle and Lyndsey, back from university and ready to play some tennis. We were extremely pleased to have them back and more than happy to spread the load of matches even further amongst the team, anything to help out the old knees! As usual the British weather tried to deter us from some matches with four being rained off, but despite this we still managed to win 6, draw 2 and lose 4. An enjoyable season overall with, thankfully no major injuries picked up by anyone, so we re looking forward to the winter league with a full team as well as all the cups of hot chocolate and Nurofen to see us through!!

Lorraine

Breweries Reel after Stock Men's 1 Post Match Shock

Even though there had been some indications over the summer that it was coming, the events of the evening of Monday 14 September 2009 still reverberated across the British brewing industry.

That evening featured a home fixture for Stock Men's 1 but it was the events that followed the match that have knitted the brows of many of the doomsayers of the beer industry. That is to say it was the non-event that followed the match!

There are many who saw it coming. The Stock Men's 1 team this year have considerably improved on their previous sally into the top division of the Chelmsford league and this has been, many have argued, down to the increased youth and fitness of its members. Attendances to the traditional post match pint-fest at various local hostelrys over the years has consequently fallen as cultivation of the beer belly so useful for cushioning the blow of the point blank volley directed in to the body has become less necessary. The current crop of players just seems able to move out of the way more readily than their predecessors.

So Monday 14 September saw the first occasion, which I fear may be followed by others, that *all* participants of a summer Men's 1 match went straight home after the game.

Another small part of British heritage and time-honoured tradition has fallen by the wayside.

Thin end of the wedge, if you ask me!

A Summer Trip

Bags are packed and in the boot
Kids with seat belts on,
Route's all planned and SATNAV set
We really should be gone.

Sweets and drinks bought for the trip
Passports checked and stowed,
Kids have been off to the loo
We're ready for the road.

Soon the miles are stacking up
The hours are passing slow,
Kids are napping in the back
There's still a way to go.
"Are we nearly there's the cry
The kids are restless now.
They're bored and stroppy and troublesome
There's going to be a row.

At last we make the final turn
And stop and disembark,
Unpack the bags and look around,
Peering through the dark.

We see our destination now,
A hotel? Villa? Pub?
No Stock Men's 1 have at last arrived
At Southminster Tennis Club!