



## On The Ball

### President's Piece

A new decade and after the Xmas celebrations we were hit with the worst weather for some considerable time.

Tennis were clearly unable to play their sport but Squash carried on, the only difficulty being to actually get to the Club. As I write this the sun is shining and hopefully we have seen the last of the bad weather.

Our resident Press Officer still manages to get us into all the local media despite the weather.

We have continued the improvements to the Club:

- Double glazing to the entrance and in the bar/lounge area
- Replaced the tiles at the front of the entrance
- Overhauled the Clubhouse electrical system and completed a PAT
- Replaced 2 of the squash court heaters and the main Clubhouse heaters with high efficiency units

All who help out at the Club are key to its success; we clearly could not operate without volunteers and willing parents.

21<sup>st</sup> century technology has arrived at KLTSC and we actually have moved to an online squash court booking system. Online booking is now available, and I think a fairer system for all. The General Committee would like to thank all those involved with its implementation.

The 6th squash court I mentioned in the last On the Ball has been postponed as we re-evaluate what we should do in the light of the decision by England Squash & Racketball not to support our application for funding.

We are still looking at every possible opportunity to future-proof the Club and to try and attract more members, as well as keeping the ones we have.

Members support for Club social functions is always very important; details are on the notice board and website.

As always, we have a couple of vacancies on the General Committee that we would like to fill. If you have a little time to spare please consider joining the GC; your contribution will make a difference.

**David Burton – President**

### Tennis

Our membership remains buoyant: 283 seniors and 209 juniors - an increase on last year's figures.

Member's activities continue to thrive:

Club Championships continue to be enjoyed and weekend tournaments have as always been good fun and well attended – they are often the first chance new members get to mix with the more established members so are a vital part of our calendar.

The ladies doubles ladder, which is played mainly in off peak times, continues to flourish. There is also a successful ladies doubles event held in the daytime in September which is thoroughly enjoyed by all.

The new singles ladder has proved popular. We hope that this will be followed by a men's doubles ladder shortly.

We are also hoping to add a few new ideas, and amend some of the current ones, to our calendar of events and hope that they will be well received.

#### TEAM NEWS

Ladies: four ladies teams played in the Coventry and District league last summer with 26 players representing the Club at senior level. Congratulations to the third team captained by Gill Cure who won the fourth division title.

This was the first year of the championship tiebreak rule. Although the teams had mixed feelings it was successful in shortening the matches. We entered the Stratford and District winter league where we entered two teams together with two vets teams in the Birmingham league.

We won three rounds in the National Inter Club knockout before losing in the quarter final indoors at West Bridgford. After three successive years winning the Birmingham and District Winter Vets League we were pipped at the post by a strong Leamington team.

Men: we fielded 3 teams last summer. The first team did well to maintain their premier league status. The 2nd team won Division 3 and promotion to Division 2. Unfortunately the 3rd team were relegated from the 3rd Division. However this will give us 3 teams in a wide range of levels in the Coventry league and will allow us to encourage some of our younger players and more players who are new to competitive tennis.

On a wider stage, Melanie Jennings has represented Warwickshire at over 40s level and awaits the result of their last match to see whether the team finishes as winners or runners up. Kay Gebbels and Caroline Rhodes have represented the over 50s as a doubles pair for Warwickshire.

Kate and Sam Perkins reached the semis of the national mother and son under-14s and Nicola and Melanie Jennings reached the final of the mother and daughter under-14s and were runners-up.

Tom Holmes has reached the National Schools Tennis Finals for Henley College for the 2nd year in a row as well as the National College Doubles Finals.

#### FACILITIES

We are reviewing various options to give us optimum facilities for all. This includes new maintenance programmes and enhancement of our present playing surfaces and floodlighting. This follows members' requests at our Tennis Open Meeting held in October. It is proving to be a long process, but one we will not be making any decisions on until we have a clear picture of the consequences of any alterations.

#### COACHING and JUNIORS

Thanks to our coaching team - under James Roe's direction we have one of the largest coaching programmes in the county.

As a Satellite Venue (only 7 in the County and 100 in the UK) we receive a grant from the LTA. This helps us build our links with

local schools which proves important in recruiting new members to the Club. This funding also requires us to have an Under 10 Performance Coach and we were delighted that we had a readymade candidate in Richard Sharman. Richard has been part of the Club for many years, starting as a junior member and he now continues his coaching career with us with a new title, but with the same enthusiasm and professionalism that he has always shown.

Our juniors are achieving increasing competitive successes: Five players have represented the county in their age group. Jamie Gibson, Nicola Jennings, Laura Wilkins, Milly Webb and Mhari Tyler. This year's County Closed was the best ever in terms of numbers and performance - 2 runners up (Jamie Gibson and Laura Wilkins), 1 semi finalist, (Milly Webb) and 1 quarter finalist (Mhari Tyler)

Junior night continues to be a success with good numbers - thanks to Jim Davies and Miles Wyatt Smith and the team of helpers for their hard work.

#### *ClubMark*

It is now over a year since we achieved Clubmark status from the LTA and in December we underwent our first "Healthcheck" - I am happy to say we were pronounced "fit and well". Particular attention is paid to our action plans and coaching programmes for seniors and juniors. We can rest assured that we have had a seal of approval of best practice which includes child protection. Our coaches are all CRB checked and hold other certificates that are relevant to their roles. Key volunteers also adhere to the required criteria. We can be confident that we are doing all we can to protect children participating in tennis activities at the Club.

#### **Anne Holmes – Tennis Secretary**

## **Squash**

The biggest change is undoubtedly the new court booking system. Hopefully members have realised the advantages it brings. I am sure that this system will help attract new members to the Club.

There have been problems with the temperature control of the courts: we are determined to resolve this issue and are looking at a number of options.

About this time last year Sarah Jane Perry and Chris Fuller were in Munich winning a Silver Medal for England in the European U19 Team Championships, with SJ also becoming European Junior Champion. These achievements have helped her clean the board at local awards ceremonies: Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Sports Woman of the Year, Leamington, Warwick and District Sports Woman of the Year, and The University of Warwick Sports Woman of the Year.

Chris Fuller has now turned full-time professional and has currently risen from 404 to 265 in the world in the last 6 months. Chloe Pearson, at only 15, has gone on to become a force in the Under-17 national rankings and is currently number 5.

Chris Hall has returned from university and is now part of our coaching team ensuring that all members can get help improving their game and enjoyment from their sport.

Our Club continues to have a very strong junior county presence with 12 juniors representing Warwickshire across the age groups. The continuing growth of juniors puts Kenilworth in the top 5 most active coaching programmes in England. We have

around 100 juniors with 60 attending Saturday coaching sessions. To maintain the strength of our junior section we are continuing to offer free mini squash sessions to local primary schools.

We also have an illustrious batch of older players to be proud of and now have 19 squash leagues, a number not reached for some years; the racketball leagues are also growing. Recently we have had more members playing in the social tournaments – we're planning to hold more of these events. Are you ready to join in?

We continue to rely on a small team of members to run the section. Thank you to Derek Grover, who has run the squash leagues for many years, and is stepping down at the end of April. Are you willing to take over and continue all Derek's good work?

At the AGM we were proud to award honorary social membership to Derek Grover and Trevor Sanderson and look forward to continuing to see both of them at the Club.

#### **Roger More – Squash Secretary**

## **Croquet**

This time of the year, we croquet players begin to look forward to the coming season. Work on the lawns and surrounds has continued through the winter but now reach a crescendo as we prepare for the opening of the lawns, as soon after Easter, as weather allows.

We ended 2009 with another record year in terms of membership and financial contribution to the Club and expect this to continue in 2010.

As part of the Kenilworth Festival, we shall be welcoming top Golf Croquet players from around the Midlands to compete for the Kenilworth Festival Trophy. Kenilworth won the trophy last year but we expect even tougher competition this year. We will also be holding an Open Day at Abbey Fields followed a week later by an Open Day at the Club. These days prove very popular with guests new to croquet and generate new members.

This season we shall again be competing in the West Midlands Federation Leagues versus teams from Edgbaston, Shrewsbury, Stourbridge and Himley. Our list of Friendly matches continues to expand with Broadwas, near Worcester joining Northampton, Ashby and others. These matches allow all members the opportunity to play competitive croquet within and outside the Club.

We run a number of tournaments and Club competitions and also organise social friendly games through the season. Tuesday evenings remain popular Golf Croquet evenings.

This year we shall continue our successful Social Croquet events when groups of people from outside the Club pay for an enjoyable session of croquet. These sessions raise money for the Club and increase awareness of croquet, our Club and its facilities.

We are looking forward to another successful and enjoyable season and if any member of other sections of the Club would like to try croquet, there's always a welcome on the lawns!

#### **Adrian Morris – Croquet Chairman**

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