

SPLTC News

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From the Editor

Welcome to the third issue of *SPLTC News* with news of recent happenings at the tennis club and of its members' activities. The next edition will probably be in the spring depending on how much material is received. Please send me your contributions at any time – don't wait for a nudge from me. In between these issues, news items will be put on the club website.

All feedback on this newsletter, either positive or negative, is most welcome.

Thanks again to Hugh Francis for making a pdf of this document.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Anne writes:

We are all gearing up for Christmas, but it is good to see people still on the courts despite inclement weather. We are running two mixed teams and men's and ladies' vets teams in the winter and, so far, most matches have been played, some in glorious sunshine! One mixed match was played in such thick fog that you could hardly see the opposition!

The AGM was held in October – a separate report on this follows.

For the coming year we have had the following suggestions:

- purchase a ball machine
- repair the gents shower
- review our coaching programme for both juniors and seniors
- continue to encourage competitive play amongst our juniors
- how we can compete effectively with a men's team in the Bucks league.

Your committee will be considering and planning these items at our next meeting on 10 January. If you wish to have anything put on the agenda, please contact any of the committee members before then.

Happy Christmas to all and keep playing !!

AGM - 16 OCTOBER 2011

The AGM was held on 16 October with about 20 members in attendance. This is a resume of the main issues – the official minutes will be available in due course.

Chairman's report

The club is in a sound financial position and membership is up. Midweek tennis and the junior section are thriving. A number of the older juniors are a welcome addition to club nights and are taking places in both the men's and ladies' teams. The ladies are doing well in their respective teams but it is still a struggle to find men who can regularly commit to either the men's and/or the mixed teams.

This year saw us use a new coach for the juniors and several of our members are now qualified coaches.

A new sign has been erected so that visitors and the general public can find the club more easily.

Anne thanked the committee in helping to run the club efficiently.

Constitution

A revised constitution was adopted. Revisions were made to be more compliant with our status as a community amateur sports club (CASC) and LTA guidelines. A copy of this is displayed on the notice board in the clubhouse.

Finances

The club made a modest profit in the last year but a couple of fairly large bills were still outstanding.

Membership fees

New membership fees were agreed as shown below:

Subscription fees from 1 April 2012 and paid by the end of April		20% discount for children of full adult members
Up to school year 3	£10	£8
School years 4-5	£20	£16
School years 6-9	£30	£24
School years 10-18 years	£40	£32
18-25 year olds and students living away from home	£70	N/A
Full adult	£110	N/A
Joint membership – married / co-habiting couple	£190	N/A
Associate	£70	N/A

NB The main points are: £110 (up from £100) for individual full members. £120 if not paid by end of April. The increase is partly to bring us in line with other clubs and partly because we want to be able to fund some improvements.

However, there is a reduction of £190 for couples
– defined as two adults living together at the same address.

New members joining during the year make the following pro rata payments:
75% of full fee from 1 Sept; 50% from 1 Jan.

Committee

Alan Munro took over from Hugh Francis as Club Captain. Thanks to Hugh for his past contributions.

Triona Tierney agreed to serve as Maintenance Manager.

All others agreed to serve for another term.

Other Business

The committee agreed to investigate the purchase / lease of a ball machine.

CLUB-BRANDED CLOTHING

Our new smart club-branded clothing is now available for purchase.

The range consists of:

- sweat shirt navy blue with white logo: £20 each
- polo shirt white with navy blue logo: £20 each also

both the above available in three sizes – large, medium or small.



- cap navy blue with white logo: £10
- sun visor white with navy blue logo: £10.

See the gear being superbly 'modelled' !

All orders can be placed with Anne.
Please do buy them as we don't want to have lots left over. Think how good you will look on court !!
And if you're playing in a league match, all wearing the club strip might be intimidating for the opposition?

Thanks to Hugh Francis for organising this.

TEAM NEWS

It's still fairly early in the season but here are some reports.

Men's

Men's matches have not got too far yet, but two matches have been played with a 4-4 draw and a close 3-5 defeat. The team has been boosted by the inclusion of new members Andy Shephard and Mark Harvey, with Peter Milne, Roman Lach and Alan Munro also being involved. The rubbers were all close in both matches which were played in a good natured and sporting atmosphere. We are looking forward to a competitive winter season ahead.

Ladies

So far, one game has been drawn and one lost – but narrowly 3-5. The most recent game had to be postponed because of ice on our courts.

Mixed 1

Four games have been played – two have been won and two lost.

Mixed 2

Complete equality here – one game won, one drawn and one lost.

Ladies Singles +

A new competition has been entered involving ladies playing both singles and mixed matches. So far one match has been played – and lost.

Bucks Mixed Knock Out Finals

The Bucks Mixed Knock Out Finals were held in glorious weather at Stoke Park Club on Sunday 2 October.

The intermediate competition was a tough and close encounter with our team of Finella Daywan, Phil Clark, Triona Tierney and Alan Munro only just losing out to Magnolia Park, after a long and hard fought match in the unexpectedly hot conditions. For such a small club, reaching the final was a huge achievement and congratulations must go to our team who put in a tremendous effort. Thanks also go to Grace Whittam and Roman Lach who played in qualifying rounds.



Our team receive their medals from Keith Dewick, Bucks County President

END-OF-SEASON RAY HORNER TOURNAMENT

The Ray Horner American tournament took place in mid-October.

An excellent afternoon was enjoyed by the 12 participants, producing some fine battles and close results. After 12 rounds of mixed doubles tennis involving constant changes of partner and opponent, the results were as follows:

The ladies prize was won by Finella Daywan with 120 points (= 62.5%), with Terry / Roger (we were short of ladies !) second on 109 and Grace third on 93.

For the men, Phil Clark came out as winner on 114 (= 59.5%), with Richard Biondini close behind on 112, with Peter Milne third with 99.

Ray Horner tournament winners Finella and Phil being presented the trophy by Alan.



BOX LEAGUE

Alan M. is setting up an informal internal club league which about 10 to 12 members have signed up for. Men and ladies play in the same league. The matches consisting of two tie-break sets are to be arranged between players at their own convenience. If you would like to take part, there may still be time to enter. Let Alan know very soon.

WEEKDAY ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Wednesday morning tennis is continuing to be lucky with the weather and attracting people of various ages to enjoy a relaxed game. We have a new member, Gian Carlo from Old Windsor, who comes when he is not working. Brian Giles is now a regular player on a Wednesday and we welcome Quan back after five months' absence in Beijing. One member has gone away to spend a warmer winter in Brisbane and we trust there will not be flooding this time. Several members enjoyed the Ray Horner Tournament in September. We had a friendly match with the table tennis club. The hospitality was returned when we were invited to play table tennis at St Andrew's and had a very enjoyable evening (see the separate report). Several members are sporting the smart new sweatshirts!

JUNIOR NEWS

As usual for this time of year, the Monday evening sessions with the head coach, Geoff, have now stopped for the winter and will resume in March, weather permitting. Saturdays continue as usual, however, and the juniors are attending in large numbers. Some have even bought the new club caps and sun visors!

Each week we try to organise some timed competition for those who are ready. This is proving successful and the children are enjoying putting their skills into practice. Terry has promised to organise and run a mixed doubles tournament for the older juniors.

SPLTC – focusing on the juniors – featured as 'Club of the Week' in the *Slough Observer* at the end of September.

COACHING

The 'Rusty Rackets' sessions still take place on a Monday afternoon from 2pm to 3pm. Our coach Geoff Higginson offers coaching on an informal basis without the commitment of a course of lessons. The cost is £5 per session. Contact Geoff on email geoff_higginson@hotmail.co.uk or telephone 07835 958851 or just turn up.

Private coaching is available at a cost of £25.00 per hour.

MAINTENANCE

You may have noticed that the courts were cleaned during October. This has got rid of the worst of the moss and other suspect green matter but has left some obvious divots due to the high-pressure water cleaning method. The divots are due to be filled in the spring and we shall be keeping a close eye on whether the moss grows back through the winter.

A possible cause of the floodlight failure earlier in the year was the dilapidated state of the housing in which the electrical apparatus was kept. It is pleasing to report that the Parish Council has now had built a new structure on Bells Hill recreation ground. So, we should be well protected in the future.

SOCIAL NEWS

Skittles

The annual SPLTC skittles evening was held at Stoke Green Cricket Club at the end of October. Twenty people took part. It's amazing how easy it is to roll a ball without hitting a single skittle !



A happy group of skittles players.

The evening proceeded as follows: Four teams of five were made up to put our true skills to the test. Overall winners were men: Bruce Wright and ladies: Val Wright.

Then we played 'killer'; You must knock over a skittle at each turn. Each time you miss, you lose one of three lives. The last person there at the end is the winner. This was Jo Milne. Brian Giles caught the eye with his skills obviously acquired at the local Bowls Club !

Finally, it got really silly – as you had to use your arm other than the normal one – to knock down skittles. This was won by Debbie Munro.

Thanks to Brian Lill for being a good host at the cricket club.

Christmas supper

Peter hosted a Christmas supper consisting of mince pies and mulled wine at the beginning of December but only four people turned up. A poor show !

Match versus the Table Tennis Club

On the same evening as the Christmas supper, SPLTC played table tennis against Stoke Poges Table Tennis Club.

The tennis club representatives (Terry, Alan and Caroline S., Pam and Roger) were paired off with 'expert' players from the table tennis club to spare their blushes. Some of the 'experts' put so much spin on their serves to make them almost unreturnable.

The winner was Terry and his partner who were unbeaten throughout the evening. It just shows that Terry can be equally a maestro with a smaller ball !



A group of players involved in the table tennis match.

Thanks to Gerry, John and Eric for organising this.

Clubs and Societies Fair

The club was represented at the inaugural Clubs and Societies Fair held in the first half of September. Whilst a few people expressed interest in playing tennis, we don't seem to have seen any of them on the courts yet! The event suffered from a lack of visitors, so steps will be taken to create greater awareness of the event next year.

Break-in at clubhouse

During the night of Tuesday/Wednesday 25/26 October the clubhouse was broken into.

The intruders gained access by cutting the wire fence close to the main gate. They then

broke down the main door and had a thorough rummage through the cupboards and drawers. Surprise, surprise they found nothing of value – except perhaps a half bottle of sherry! They left the place in a bit of a mess – see the photo (sorry about the poor quality, but it was taken on a mobile phone). The police took fingerprints but it's fairly unlikely that anybody will be caught.



Many thanks to David Claydon for repairing the door and its lock together with the fence so that we were secure again the same day. The moral here is always make sure the grounds are locked up (they were in this case) and don't leave anything valuable in the clubhouse. This is not the first time a break-in has happened – and it probably won't be the last.

The mess left after the break-in.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

New members

We would like to welcome three new adult full members who joined the club in September: Andy Shephard, Mark Harvey and Rick Snape.

The three of them who joined as full members in September used to play at the Slough tennis centre until it closed down. So, they were looking for a local club and SPLTC fitted the bill! They normally play on a Thursday evening – and they thank various members for making them feel welcome. Some of them have already played in the men's team.

Also a warm welcome goes out to a new associate member, Gian Carlo, an Italian, who has been introduced to the club by Jack Haworth. So far, he has played mainly on Wednesdays.

Sponsored bike ride for Help for Heroes by Alan Munro

Alan writes:

During the last few weeks I have been fundraising for Help for Heroes, a charity that supports wounded servicemen and women from our armed forces. For more information about the charity visit <http://www.helpforheroes.org.uk>

The fundraising events have included a golf day with friends and cake sales at work.

On 26 November two friends and I completed a cycle ride from Stoke Poges to RAF Odiham in Hampshire, via Victoria barracks in Windsor. The total distance covered was 40 miles.

Not a regular cyclist, I started training in September to prepare for the event, and I was very glad of the practice as the ride proved quite difficult with at times a strong head wind. Overall, with the training and the main event, I have covered over 200 miles in the last seven weeks.

The cycle route I devised was to avoid major roads wherever possible: Stoke Poges via Farnham Road through Chalvey High Street to the Jubilee River. Down to Eton, over Windsor Bridge to Victoria barracks. Then on to Dedworth, Fifield and onto the Drift Road (very windy!). Out via Binfield into Bracknell and continue to Nine Mile Ride and on to Finchampstead, Eversley, Hartley Wintney and finally Odiham.

At the visit to Victoria barracks, we were greeted at the main gate and a member of the Coldstream Guards took our photo and was happy to chat about the route and the fundraising event generally. Windsor is home to the Household Cavalry and the Irish Guards, currently on operation in Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

Our arrival in Odiham High Street was a great relief, and we were met by members of our family. However, we still had to complete the trip to RAF Odiham which is located half a mile out of the village and up a long, long hill. Not the best devised finish!

On arrival at RAF Odiham, the guardsmen were from the brigade of Gurkhas, and were less happy for us to take photographs. RAF Odiham operates three Support Helicopter Chinook squadrons and one Army Air Corps Lynx squadron, and operate in support of NATO and UK interests worldwide, providing direct support to the Army.

All in all the ride went very well, the weather stayed fine considering it was the end of November and the three of us all battled to the end, and had to nurse sore legs, backs and other body parts!

Fundraising has gone incredibly well, and as a group we are hoping to achieve a grand total in excess of £1200. Thank you to those that have already contributed, and anyone who wishes to donate may still do so by visiting www.bmycharity.com/AlanMunro

Alan with proof that he reached his destination!



The Whittams head East

One of the benefits of British Tennis membership:

Through using British Tennis Membership Harvey obtained three tickets for the recent ATP finals at the O2 Arena on the opening Sunday.



Together with Grace and Angus he saw the Federer v Tsonga match, a great three setter. A fantastic experience but the seats were rather high up 'in the gods', reflected in the price. You may think it's a long way from Stoke Poges but the journey door to door by train and tube was completed in under 90 minutes.

Harvey took the opportunity to put his photographic skills to the test.

Roger Federer
in action
at the ATP Finals

CLUB WEBSITE

Just a reminder that the club does have its own website:

www.stokepogestennisclub.co.uk.

If there are newsworthy items between issues of this newsletter, they can be put on the website.

Contact Alan M.

