

SSLTC Newsletter

Spring Issue, 2017

www.ssltc.co.uk



@StonyTennisClub



Headlines in this edition!

LTA President's visit

Cathie Sabin visits the club. Page 6

Ground Development

Is there a future for GD or is it now all done? Page 2

Coaching

Continues to develop and the juniors are going from strength to strength. See pages 3 and 5.

Chairman's Welcome

Welcome to the 2017 Spring Newsletter. Our club marches on into our 94th year in rude health, riding whatever seems to be thrown at us. We continue to have strong support at our social rollups, teams are thriving (see page 4), the junior section just goes from strength to strength (pages 3 & 5), and we have managed to complete the latest round of improvements to our clubhouse and grounds (page 2).

We are riding through fairly tough times and not everything has gone well this past year. Membership numbers have declined from a peak in 2016 and that has had a corresponding impact on our revenue, so we are back at 2015 numbers. It seems that, with a few exceptions, clubs are on the downward slope for members again. Looking back over the past 5-6 years our membership seems to have been cyclical. Up in 2013-4 and 2015-16, but down in 2012-3, 2014-5 and 2016-7. Rest assured we will not be sitting back waiting for "the up" in 2017-8. The committee are in the middle of putting in some new ideas to make the club more attractive and proactively build our membership base back up to 400.

2017 will represent something of a milestone year for the club. We have finally completed all our capital projects for the next five to six years. The old pavilion refurbishment was part of the Air Dome project and is now complete. We have a great new club room with sparkly new table tennis table. The savings we made on our original refurbishment budget more than compensated for the extra we had to spend on the ring main for the Air Dome back in 2014. And of course we now have a fabulous new bar to help the "hang around" factor in the clubhouse and improved floodlights on Courts 8&9. On top of all of that 2017 marks the end of our hefty clubhouse loans. We can now move forward knowing that the cash surplus goes into the savings account to be ready for replacing Courts 1-5 in around 2023.

Perhaps the top highlight of last year was the Open Sunday in May. The planets were aligned that day. The day before, the Davis Cup had been on display in CMK, the weather was perfect, the Mayor of MK was on court in his tennis whites, and we had more people at the club than I think I have ever seen before. Chaos reigned. No court had fewer than 12 people and you couldn't move for the people on the pathways. But there have been many more highlights. The Christmas party in the clubhouse with the new bar, Junior Presentation evening, the Ladies first win in the new winter Northants League, Cathie Sabin, the LTA President's glowing feedback on our club in December. There have been some proud moments with our junior successes including past juniors, Ben Duckett batting for England in India, whilst Zoe Shipperley picked up Gold in the Hockey. Deli Ali, who presented the prizes at Junior Presentation evening a couple of years ago, has hit the big time (since our little pep talk no doubt!).

All of those successes are enabled by all our volunteers, on a committee or otherwise, who quietly run things so that the rest can enjoy what continues to be a first rate club. Thank you. We have the best and most enthusiastic coaching team in the region, bar none. And of course, years of hard work and planning by so many, mean we have the best facilities of any tennis club in the region.

Here is to another great year of tennis.

Simon Burn, Chairman 

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Ground Development - 2017

By our standards 2016-17 has been a relatively quiet period and really revolved around the completion of prior major works, albeit a little later than originally planned.

OLD PAVILION – The last part of the Dome project, the old pavilion has now been refurbished and transformed to become a recreation room which comprises Groundsman's Store/Workshop, Tennis Works Store and a new unisex loo. The Main room is a wonderful open space at the moment, but will have a pool table, air hockey (?) and the new Competition standard table tennis table has recently been delivered. Chatter around the clubhouse is already mentioning table tennis teams and internal leagues being set up.

NEW BAR – John Cavill kindly agreed to be relocated upstairs to make space for the now completed new bar - slowly growing in popularity! Ten volunteer bar-staff have been trained in accordance with the Licensing Laws, hopefully providing a cross section of the playing membership. There are no set opening times, access simply controlled by key holders when they are present. More can be trained and added if needed.

DOME – The problems we had in the earlier life of the Dome with water around the inside perimeter has largely been overcome and we have learned lessons of avoidance along the way. New lights have been installed throwing the extra lighting along the courts netting and the courts have been playing really well this winter.

COACHES OFFICE & SHOP – Both are now up and running upstairs with a well stocked and very competitive shop! If you need anything, just ask John or Melvyn.

PERIMETER WALLS – Maintenance continues on our perimeter walls. The section from near the main gates to our new metal gates has been repaired and we are getting prices on behalf of the Trust for the remainder to safeguard them for the future. Our Club contribution towards this work is small.

TOKEN DISPENSER – will disappear in April for a couple of weeks for recalibration to allow for the new pound coin. We have intentionally delayed this until later in the year when fewer tokens will be needed. During this absence tokens will be available from Alicia Butler 01908 267295, Jan Taylor 01908 510235 or John Cavill.

John Taylor
Ground Committee Chairman



Treasurer's report - 2017

I'm pleased to say that the club continues to be in a healthy financial position and despite fighting a few worrying trends the outlook is good. As with most clubs we are fighting declining membership and it is currently down circa fifty from the peak last year. This translates to a lowering of subscription revenue of £4.2k in the current financial year. On the positive side, this shortfall in income has been somewhat mitigated by savings of £1k made in electricity costs and depreciation savings of £1.2k.

The committee introduced a new pricing system for the dome courts in November 2015, which was hoped would increase usage. We reduced the hourly cost by from £10 to £8 and £6 to £5 (20%/16% peak/off peak respectively). The outcome is a bit like the curate's egg however. Last year dome income was 22% higher than 2014-5, despite the reduction of prices by 20%. This year Dome income is £ 643 down on last year representing a 21% decrease (n.b. not all Dome income is in at the time of writing). We are back to where we started pretty much with regard to usage therefore.

The committee have been thinking long and hard as to the best approach. We ultimately want to drive maximum usage whilst trying to cover our costs and have been trying to do this by setting prices at a sufficiently attractive rate to encourage use. Our nearest rivals charge £20 for peak (£13 at Stony incl lights) or £16 for off peak (£5 at Stony). Alternative methods could be to increase subscriptions by 15% and make all Dome courts free to use, the same as Courts 1-7. Alternatively we could introduce a separate membership for those wanting unlimited indoor tennis at a premium price. Both of these might solve the usage problem, but are they acceptable to members? Your feedback is welcome.

As hopefully most of you have seen, we installed a bar facility in the club house. The bar is for the enjoyment (within reason 😊) of the whole club and I hope everyone will make full use of this great facility. I'm pleased to report that over its first winter season the bar has generated a cash surplus of £556, and with the summer season fast approaching this should increase.

The cash and cash equivalents are a healthy £ 50k. Cash generated from club activities of £14.6k was offset by loan repayments (£4.5k) and expenditure on capital projects (£16.9k) to leave a negative cash flow of £6.8k. We have one final part payment (£3.5k) to make in March 2017 which will result in The LTA loan being fully repaid. This will give a £7k positive effect on our cash position per annum and enable us to further improve our sinking fund to meet our future capital and court replacement programmes.

Adrian O'Reilly
SSLTC Treasurer



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

GREAT BRITISH TENNIS AND OPEN WEEKEND 17-18TH MAY 2-4PM

DETAILS TO FOLLOW

SSLTC AGM 2017

THE CLUB AGM WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 26TH APRIL AT 7:30PM FOR AN 8PM START.

TOURNAMENTS

3RD -7TH APRIL: SSLTC JUNIOR OPEN

TOURNAMENT GRADE 4 11AM-5PM. JUNIORS AND MINIS. VISIT THE LTA WEBSITE TO ENTER.

1ST MAY: ROAD TO WIMBLEDON BOYS AND GIRLS AGED 11-14. 10AM START

1ST JUNE (APPROX): CLUB CLOSED

LADIES, MEN'S SINGLES AND DOUBLES BEGINS. ENTRIES ON THE NOTICEBOARD FROM APRIL.

25TH JUNE: MIXED SOCIAL TOURNAMENT AND BBC. SEE BRIAN BERRILL

26TH JUNE: FOR 2 WEEKS, WIMBLEDON

3TH SEPT: MK KNOCK OUT FINALS

10TH SEPT: CLUB FINALS & BBQ

OCT-MAR: TW GRAND SLAM SINGLES LEAGUE FOR REGULAR COMPETITIVE TENNIS AGAINST PLAYERS OF SIMILAR RATING AND ABILITY. FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO

www.tennisworks.net/stony/competitions/grandslamleague. THE LEAGUE IS OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS FROM JUNIOR TO ADULT.

SOCIAL

DUE TO POPULAR DEMAND OUR FAVOURITE QUIZMASTER GRAHAM FRYER WILL BE BACK FOR A [QUIZ AND FISH & CHIP SUPPER](#) ON FRIDAY 28TH APRIL. SEE JAN TAYLOR FOR TICKETS.

[JUNIOR PRESENTATION EVENING](#) IS ON SATURDAY 4TH MARCH AT ABBEY HILL GOLF CLUB FROM 6PM. ADULTS £5, JUNIORS FREE. GUEST SPEAKER: LANCE HAGGLIN, 2010 SPOTY UNSUNG HERO WINNER.

FOR OTHER FUTURE SOCIAL EVENTS, PLEASE LOOK ON THE NOTICE BOARDS, EITHER OUTSIDE THE PAVILION OR INSIDE IN THE HALLWAY, AND ON THE WEBSITE.

Coaching progress



Tennis Works are now into their sixth year of providing coaching services at the club and the coaching programme continues to go from strength to strength, as we see the continued development of the juniors as they move into the adult playing arena.

The coaching team continue to grow consisting of John Cavill (Director of Tennis and Senior Performance Coach), Phil Hill (Senior Master Coach), Lam Huynh (Club Development Coach), Paul Hobbay (Club Development Coach) and Sebastian Callcut (Development Coach). In addition there is Alexandra (Charlie) Green who is an Advanced Personal Trainer and developing Level 2 coaches in Antonia Somers, Ollie Reis and Zack MacQueen. Melvyn Jones is the Business Director of Tennis Works and works alongside John Cavill in managing and delivering the operation. We are also supported by an excellent team of Assistants who are embarking on their coaching development. We have a clear itinerary of what is being delivered in each session, regular team meetings and coach educational workshops, both online and physically on court. Phil Hill is the Bucks U12 Boys County Captain and the Over 35's Playing Captain, whilst Sebastian Callcut Captains the Bucks U14 Girls County.

The outreach programme and our club-school links remain strong. Schools are able to offer tennis during the winter months when indoor school space is at a premium, by using the Air-dome. Our coaches then visit schools in the summer term. This has succeeded in introducing over 120 primary school children to regular tennis activities with many more experiencing tennis for the first time. We are now associated with 12 schools in the area. Our regular Leadership courses in association with these schools are seeing older juniors enter the world of tennis coaching. All of the above has generated revenue for the club in the form of non-members fees; and air-dome coaching fees, whilst meeting our Air Dome loan commitments.

In October, John and Seb accompanied a group of juniors to The Global Team Academy in Mallorca, for a week of concentrated tennis development. This is now a regular event with Jofre Porta (former coach to Carlos Moya and Rafael Nadal) and his team coach us on the clay courts.

Councillor Keith McLean, Mayor of Milton Keynes was our speaker at the Stony Stratford Junior Presentation Evening who enthralled everyone with stories of his own tennis experience and how tennis transcends all ages. The Tennis Works Player of the Year award went to Dylan Smith for his dedication and work ethic. The Stony Stratford Junior Open Grade 4 event (in its sixth year) took place over the Easter period for the first time and attracted many players from far afield, although, sadly the girls events were poorly supported. All in, 81 players competed across 190 matches. The Great British Tennis Weekend in May was a great success. On Saturday 14th May the 'Davis Cup Legacy Tour' saw John Cavill and Melvyn Jones at CMK with the Davis Cup Legacy Tour encouraging people to attend our Family Fun Day of the following day. This saw the club welcome 150 visitors participating across all age groups with activities including family fun; mini tennis and Tennis Xpress and the club was rocking! The BBQ following the event went down a treat. The Mayor of MK, Councillor Keith McLean joined us in his whites and remained on court throughout. Head UK have renewed their sponsorship of the Tennis Works Team for a fifth year, providing resources for the club to use. For all information relating to Tennis Works at Stony Stratford visit www.tennisworks.net/stony

Melvyn Jones, Tennis Works Business Director and SSLTC Member

John Cavill, Director of Tennis, SSLTC, and Tennis Works 

NOTICE BOARD

TEAM TENNIS

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PLAYING FOR A TEAM AND DO NOT CURRENTLY DO SO, PLEASE INFORM OUR LADIES' AND MEN'S CAPTAINS, MARGARET GURNEY OR MARK MEAGROW RESPECTIVELY (NUMBERS AND EMAILS IN THE PANEL TO THE RIGHT)

SOCIAL TENNIS

WEDNESDAY MORNINGS 9:45 TO 12:15 AND THURSDAY AFTERNOONS 1:00 TO 3:30 PM. ARE YOU RETIRED / BETWEEN JOBS / CHILDREN AT SCHOOL, AND WOULD LIKE TO PLAY GOOD MIXED TENNIS AND MEET NEW FRIENDS, THEN GET IN TOUCH WITH PHYLLIS ON 01908 563025. A SMALL CHARGE OF 10P COVERS THE SUPPLY OF BALLS AND HELPS TOWARDS TWO SOCIAL EVENTS – STRAWBERRIES AND PIMMS MORNING IN JUNE AND HOT TODDY AND MINCE PIES IN DECEMBER. THE CLUB ALSO HOSTS TWO EVENTS PER YEAR, USUALLY ON A THURSDAY LUNCHTIME, INVITING LOCAL TENNIS CLUBS TO COME AND PLAY AT STONY AND ENJOY A LIGHT BUFFET LUNCH

TWITTER

FOR THE VERY LATEST NEWS SNIPPETS INCLUDING, PHOTOS AND PLAYING CONDITIONS AT THE CLUB VISIT @STONYTENNISCLUB ON TWITTER.



MEMBERSHIP BOOKLETS

WILL BE AVAILABLE ON THE MEMBERS PAGE OF THE WEBSITE AFTER 1ST APRIL. MEMBERSHIP CARDS WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE RENEWED SHORTLY AFTER YOUR SUBSCRIPTION IS RECEIVED.

CLUBHOUSE SECURITY

.....HAS BEEN MUCH BETTER OF LATE HELPED IN PART BY THE FITTING OF A SELF CLOSING DOOR AND KEY PAD OPPOSITE COURT 3. THANK YOU FOR YOUR IMPROVED CARE AND VIGILANCE. CCTV RECORDS CONTINUOUSLY ACROSS OUR CLUB GROUNDS. SOMETHING WE HAD IN PLACE BEFORE, BUT HAS SINCE BECOME A CONDITION OF OUR BAR LICENCE. WE HAVEN'T HAD A SERIOUS INCIDENT FOR MANY YEARS AND LONG MAY IT CONTINUE.



WE LIKE BIG ASPIRATIONS! MURRAY AND INGLOT'S REPLACEMENTS?

Captains' Report

Current incumbents **Margaret Gurney** (01908 263967) and **Mark Meagrow** (07484 853413) have been building on where Rachel Palmer and David Marchant left off with teams in new leagues (Northants) and further junior integration. Here is a summary of some of the team's activities.

SSLTC continue to compete in multi-discipline winter events in the local MK league and further afield in the Bucks County Shield.

Our two teams competing in the winter Bucks singles league Div 1 have been hampered by cancelled fixtures and it is too early to understand how they are currently fairing in what is a very competitive division. Similarly in Div 2 our B team have only played 2 matches at the time of reporting but currently sit top of the division without loss.

For our slightly more senior members we have representation in several of the Bucks County veterans' competitions. Our mixed team has a strong recent tradition in the top division of this category, holding the champions position no less than 4 times in the last five years. This year the team is 1-0 with plenty of competition still ahead of them. The men's 'a' vets team have progressed year on year from the bottom division to now compete in the top division in Bucks. Weather has been kinder for this team and with only one fixture remaining it looks as though they will consolidate their position in the top flight, with a mid-table finish, no mean feat as the league is littered with seasoned county players. They even had the privilege of being beaten by Sir Elton John's personal coach!!..... The B team are also looking to replicate the A teams success in progressing up the leagues and currently sit top of Div. 7 with a 3-0 record.

Closer to home in the Tennis MK medley leagues we have representation by no less than 4 teams. Our A team in Div1 are finding it tough going this year and need a couple of good wins in the remainder of the season to maintain their top flight status. I am confident we can achieve this. Our B & C teams are looking likely to consolidate their position in Div2 & 3 respectively, with mid-table finishes. Last but certainly not least our D team currently sit top of Div4, being chased by Olney on the same points and Buckingham and Great Brickhill just a single point behind, so all to play for.

In summary my ongoing thanks to all captains who continue to do a great job in cajoling players away from the warmth of their front rooms to the arctic like conditions around the county to perform for the club and of course to the players for allowing themselves to be cajoled, you love it really..... Finally it is great to see the rise of our junior players ably abetted by John and the crew at Tennis Works. The improvement is plain to see to us more senior citizens on court and we are all looking over our shoulders as the clubs future increase in stature month on month. I am confident this will be the year when these 'whippersnappers' make a mark in our top senior teams.

That's about it from me, continue to enjoy your tennis at SSLTC and let's look forward to a successful end to the winter leagues and importantly the beginning of summer 2017. May the sun shine on us.

Mark Meagrow, Men's Captain



Junior successes

Continuing on from last year's successes, the club juniors have done very well. In the Aegon junior Team Tennis we won the 12U Boys Division 1 title, came second in the 12&U Boys Division 2, third in the 9&U, 14&U Boys division 1, 14&U Boys division 2 and 16&U Boyd division 1.

Jan 2016 – Jan 2017 Individual Successes

- Jack Field is runner up at Riverside 12U Grade 5
- Emily Marshall & Eva Ladyman win Girls 8U Doubles at Halton
- Emily Honor played at # 1 for Bucks 16U County team and are ranked 4th in the Country
- Emily Marshall selected for 8U Bucks County Team
- Emily Marshall wins Dunston 8U tournament
- Jenson John wins Stony Stratford 8U Tournament
- Dylan Smith is runner up at Hull 12U Grade 3
- Dylan Smith wins Riverside 16U Grade 4
- Emily Honor wins Oxford 18U Doubles
- Ashton Gallimore and Ren Church reach QR of 12&U Bucks County Champs.
- Umar Gull is runner up at Dunstable 14U Grade 4
- Emily Marshall is runner up at the 8U Girls County Champs
- Annabel Flett wins Dallington Girls 14U Grade 5
- Emily Marshall wins Stony Stratford 9U Match play event
- Emily Honor and Alexa Wilson win 18U Doubles tournament.
- Emily Honor was also selected as a Barclays Ball Kid for the ATP Tour World Champs at the O2 Arena in November last year

Our Grade 4 tournament in August was a success from a club perspective with some of our own players winning their age groups.

Placed SSLTC Juniors:

- U8 Red – Won by Jensen John.
- 14U Girls – Won by Annabel Flett.
- 14U Boys – Daniel Rowland semi-finals.
- 14U Boys Doubles – Jake Patterson / Daniel Rowland RU
- 18U Boys – George Reed semi-finals.

18U Doubles – George Reed / Jonathan Reed RU.

Our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/stonystratfordtennisclub is the best way to keep up to speed with all the players' progress and news around the club.

John Cavill, Director of Tennis, SSLTC, and Tennis Works ☒



COACHING PROGRAMMES

Holiday Camps: 2 weeks of Easter Camps 3rd -7th April (5 days) and 10th-13th April (4 days) plus 4 days May half term, Tues 30th May to Fri 2nd June. These camps are for ages 5 to 16 who wish to enjoy a fun-packed week of tennis. For more information or to book online, go to www.tennisworks.net/camps

Development Programme: : 13 week programme, starting Mon 17th April until Sun 23rd July with a break for half-term. The weekly coaching programme runs throughout the week, offering 23 different sessions for parents and toddlers, mini tennis for ages 5 to 10, junior tennis for ages 11 to 16 and adult tennis for ages 17+. Whether you are new to the sport and have only just picked up a racket or have been playing for a while and want to take your tennis to the next level, there is a Tennis Works programme available to you. To get involved, please go to www.tennisworks.net/stony/coaching for the latest courses and to book online.

Our autumn 2017 and Spring 2018 programmes will continue to utilise the Air-dome over the worst of the winter months enabling tennis enjoyment and development year-round, particularly for the mini-tennis age group year-round.

Summer Camps: 5 weeks from Mon 24th July to Fri 25th August Our camps prove popular throughout the summer combining fun physical co-ordinated activity with tennis skills and competitions, and we are doing it all again this year! There are sessions for Mini's (ages 5-10), juniors (11-16), as well as sessions for our performance competition programme members. Be sure to book early as places are limited so please go to www.tennisworks.net/summercamps for more information or to book online.

Individual or Private Group Coaching One of the best ways to improve your game is to get some private tuition and the Tennis Works professional coaches are at hand! For all enquiries, please call 0203 286 5590 or send an email to office@tennisworks.net and we will be able to suggest a coach to help you improve.

Competition Programme: This is an invitation programme for dedicated players who show tennis potential and who are dedicated to developing their skills. It consists of three distinct programmes. The Cavill Academy, Talent Development Programme and Top Squad. For further information please contact John Cavill direct at john.cavill@tennisworks.net

“MORE” NOTICEBOARD

CLUB NIGHT

EVERY WEDNESDAY EVENING FROM 6:30PM, SUPERVISED BY A CLUB COMMITTEE MEMBER, AND IN THE SUMMER ALSO ON SUNDAY MORNINGS. CLUB NIGHT REMAINS A CORE PART OF OUR CLUB. ALL FULL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME, NO MATTER WHAT THEIR STANDARD OF PLAY, AND THE DUTY COMMITTEE MEMBER WILL ENDEAVOUR TO MATCH ABILITIES AS FAR AS THEY ARE ABLE WITH THE PLAYERS AVAILABLE. WHILST ATTENDANCE IS OBVIOUSLY OPTIONAL WE ENCOURAGE YOU ALL TO GET TO AS MANY EVENINGS AS YOU CAN, MEET OTHER CLUB MEMBERS AND ENJOY THE COMPANY.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS & ONLINE COURT

BOOKING

PLEASE ENSURE YOU RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIPS PROMPTLY. YOUR RENEWAL NOTICE WAS SENT TO YOU WITH THIS NEWSLETTER. ONLY ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP CARDS CAN BE USED TO BOOK COURTS. LOOK AFTER YOUR CARD. REPLACEMENTS WILL COST £5.

CLUB CLOSED COMPETITIONS

LOOK OUT IN LATE APRIL FOR THE SIGN-UP SHEETS IN THE CLUBHOUSE FOR OUR ADULT AND JUNIOR CLUB CLOSED COMPETITIONS. JUNIOR EVENTS IN ALL AGE GROUPS PLUS ADULT LADIES', MEN'S SINGLES AND DOUBLES PLUS MIXED DOUBLES. THIS IS USUALLY AN EXTREMELY POPULAR TOURNAMENT SO PLEASE ENSURE YOU SIGN UP EARLY. CLUB FINALS ARE ON SUNDAY 10TH SEPT.

SHOP SERVICES

OUR SHOP, WHICH IS NOW LOCATED UPSTAIRS IS REGULARLY OPEN IN THE WEEK BUT WITH A QUICK CALL TO JOHN (07976 205531) ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE MADE TO OPEN. WE OFFER EQUIPMENT AND CLOTHING AT COMPETITIVE RATES AND HAVE DEMONSTRATION RACQUETS ACROSS THE ENTIRE HEAD RANGE AND CAN SOURCE OTHER BRANDS. WE OFFER RACQUET REPAIRS AND RESTRINGING THROUGH JOHN SKINNER AND OUR TURNAROUND IS USUALLY WITHIN 48 HOURS.



GREAT BRITISH TENNIS WEEKEND AT THE CLUB. KEITH McCLEAN, MK'S MAYOR IS SURROUNDED BY KIDS AND PARENTS

“Other News”

LTA President: Cathie Sabin visits Stony

We were delighted to welcome the LTA's President, Cathie Sabin, to our club on the 7th December. Cathie's visit followed some discussions between Simon Burn and Michael Downey, the LTA's Chief Executive, on the progress Stony had made with integrating juniors into the adult game.



Cathie was keen to see the work in progress and she was not disappointed. Her visit coincided with the regular Wednesday roll-up so she was able to have a chat to a few members over a cup of tea and cake.

Mixed Social Tournament

Thanks to Brian Berrill, some 30 people enjoyed a fabulous afternoon of social mixed tennis in June with a wonderful spread of tea, salads and open bar. We all enjoyed the day so much we have press-ganged Brian into organising another for Sunday 25th June 2017. Whilst there is a competitive element, it is really a day designed around mixing team and social players and having some fun doubles. If you would like to play in this year's event, please get in touch with Brian.

Clay Court Maintenance

Sand distribution over the clay courts has been troubling a few members for some time. We therefore invited EuroClay specialist to the club in January to advise us on proper maintenance. It seems that the amount of sand is far less important than the distribution of that sand. At the moment we have bare patches on the court and a surplus around the edges leading to inconsistent bounce and slide. What we learnt was as follows:

Maintenance falls into three main steps.

- 1) Firstly the synthetic clay tennis court should be dragged after play using a drag mat. The **drag mat must be in an elliptical motion** working from the back of the synthetic clay tennis court inwards **including the run off areas** to the side of the synthetic clay tennis court. This helps to move the dispersed infill back into the playing area and also smooth and level the sand. The dragging from side to side that most of us have been doing exacerbates the problem of bare courts, inadvertently contributing to an inconsistent playing surface.
- 2) Next, the lines should be brushed off using the rolling line brush. **Members should allow 5 minutes after play to carry out tasks 1) and 2).** We should endeavour to maintain a level of fill about 2mm above the stability mat so that play is conducted on the loose fill and NOT the carpet.
- 3) We have purchased a new drag brush so that monthly our groundsman can drag brush the court surface intensively to de-compact the synthetic clay fill and move dispersed clay from around court edges back into the playing surface.