

BERKSWELL & BALSALL COMMON TENNIS CLUB

MINUTES OF A.G.M. HELD AT THE LANT COMMUNITY CENTRE ON 12 NOVEMBER 2012 AT 7.30 PM

PRESENT: There were 28 members present & 5 apologies.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM: These were agreed & signed.
Proposer: Pam Brown Seconder: Bob Harris

MATTERS ARISING: Jon requested that the sharp metal lids from the tennis ball cans should be placed in the bins as they were dangerous left lying on the court.

ACTION: An email to ask members to be more vigilant.

REPORTS:

Ladies Captain: Louise reported the tennis season of 2012 had been a success, with two out of the three teams being promoted.

First Team

The first team (Sue Walsh, Lucie Ray, Katie Standley, Angela Stuart-Smith and Dottie Parkes) have had a great season finishing second in Division 3 behind Rugby 2 on 32 points. They have worked really hard and deserve their place in Division 2 next year. Jessica Crawley also helped out in the first team, playing with Katie and did very well. This bodes well for the future.

Louise thanked Sue for acting as the team captain and ensuring we got a strong team out each week.

Second Team

The Second Team (Hilary Brattle, Sally Webber, Emma Lycett, Jo Brattle, Jessica Crawley and Emma Thomas) have fought hard to stay in Division 3 after being promoted last year. Unfortunately, they were unable to hold on and finished 7th. This means they will find themselves back in Division 4 next year. The second team, once again, acted as a platform to bring on the youngsters and under the direction of Hilary and Sally, they have done well. Louise thanked Hilary and Sally for organizing the Second team.

Third Team

The third team (Judith Thomas, Suzanne Barney, Emma Thomas, Helen Atherton, Ann Lloyd, Sarah Kirk and Jane Watson) have also had a very successful year, finishing second in Division 6 behind Beechwood 4 on 37 points. This means that they will be promoted next year and will find themselves in Division 5.

Louise thanked Judith for acting as captain for the third team, supported by Suzanne. They have worked hard and managed to get a strong team out each week even when there has been a shortage of players.

Louise thanked all those who had played and supported the teams She hoped that the club can continue to build on the successes of this year, making for an excellent season next year.

Mens Captain: Jon began by congratulating Harry Malone who had been awarded the Coventry & District Lawn Tennis League Player of the Season. It was recognised that he was the youngest team captain and had led his team to promotion. The award is a great achievement for Harry and an honour for the club. He was presented with award at the League AGM by the League President, John Kenney.

1st team – Finished 5th in Division 1

A great season for the first team finishing 5th (mid table) after being in the relegation zone for most of the season. Solid performances from the core players including Chris Barker, Dave Green, Ted Bloom and Jon Baber ensuring 1st Division tennis again for the 2013 season. Also thanks to Harry Malone, Jack Malone, Ed Brotherton, Steve Parker, and Graham Selby who stepped in to earn us crucial rubbers throughout the season.

2nd Team – Finished 2nd in Division 3 – Promoted to Division 2

This was perhaps the main highlight of the season. Our young second team captain Harry Malone led a team of great experience including Paul Westall, Steve Parker, and Duncan Mayne. Jack Malone joined the squad in June adding more strength and depth.

The 2nd 's will play in Division 2 next season and with the quality of the players mentioned, there is no reason why they can not earn promotion again into Division 1.

3rd Team – Finished 5th in Division 5

Many of us were expecting the 3rd team to earn promotion into Division 4 after narrowly missing out last season, but sadly it was not to be. Very strong Hampton, LMRC, Warwick TC, and Kenilworth teams proved too much for the 3rd's. However, a very respectable 5th position underlines inspiring performances from Chris Rees, Phil Dale, Collen Mhlanga, Graham Selby, Jack Crossley, Alan Dick, and Eddie Simms.

4th Team – Finished 7th in Division 5 – Relegated (we think!!)

Sadly we have to assume that our 4th team is relegated into Division 6. We had initially thought that because David Lloyd Solihull had withdrawn from Division 2, there would be only one team relegated from divisions below. At the time of writing I am still waiting for a confirmed decision from the league committee on this. Many thanks to those players who battled so well throughout the season including Chris Rhodes, Lee Bowen, Eddie Simms, Mick Lloyd and Jack Crossley. Also well done to Patrick Parry-Evans, and Matt Quinn who stepped in to achieve some great results.

5th Team – Finished 5th in Division 7

A very respectable 5th position for our 5th team, David Brown led a squad consisting of Alex Nurse, Patrick Parry-Evans, Bob Harris, Peter Brough, Simon Jones, Matt Quinn, Dean Henry, and David Shaw.

6th Team – Finished 7th in Division 7

Jon said he had a keen interest in the 6th team both from a captain's and a coach's view point as it was a new venture for our club, but also because we were using a considerable amount of junior players- Some as young as 12. This team was never designed to be a triumphant team that would win this league, but instead a team where our promising juniors could gain the required match experience with the assistance from older more experienced league players. As a result we saw some very mature and promising performances from the likes of Rob Atherton, Christopher Barker, Phil Wreford, Charles Davies, Ali Watson, and Charlie Crossley. Many thanks to the senior players involved in the team namely Mark Esling, and Rich Clewes. Our biggest thanks go to the organisers of this team- Matt Quinn and Dean Henry. Without their commitment this team would not have been able to go ahead.

Finally, Jon thanked all the team captains: Dave Green, Harry Malone, Chris Rees, Chris Rhodes, David Browne, and Matt Quinn.

Birmingham Spring League: John said this ran from February to May and the Berkswell team earned promotion from Division 2 to the top division. It should be interesting, and a challenge, next year when they have to play teams from Edgbaston Priory, Solihull Arden, Streetley and the like.

Warwickshire Vets Leagues: Bob reported there were 2 Mens and 1 Ladies teams playing in the Winter Vets Leagues. The Mens teams have negotiated to play all their home games on a Sunday. The “A” team is top of Division 2 and the “B” team is enjoying good games in Division 3. It is a great opportunity to play against different clubs who do not play in the summer Coventry & District League.

Tournaments: David reported that this year’s tournaments started with the Floodlit Cup which saw David Green and Caroline Lovatt beat Colin Grafton and Angela Stuart Smith in a closely fought contest.

The Club Championship Finals in September was blessed with the best weather we have had on a Finals Day for many years. The tennis was fairly special too with some thrilling contests. The two singles finals were both enthralling with the Malone brothers playing some fabulous tennis with Jack finally winning in three sets. The Ladies singles was a battle of youth against experience with Jess Crawley winning despite being pushed all the way by a dogged Sue Walsh.

Sally Webber and Jo Brattle beat Hilary Brattle and Emma Lycett in the Teens and Has Beens, Dottie Parkes and Sue Walsh beat Judith Thomas and Suzanne Barney in the Ladies 90+. The Mens 90+ was won by David Green and John Walsh against Paul Westall and Phil Dale. The Mens Doubles saw Ted Bloom and Jon Baber save a match point before beating Chris Barker and David Green in three sets. The Ladies Doubles was unfortunately cut short by an injury to Judith Thomas, so Sue Walsh and Lucie Ray triumphed. The final match of the day saw Colin Grafton and Dottie Parkes winning the Mixed Doubles against Chris Rhodes and Chrissie Grafton.

David thanked all the people who volunteered to umpire the finals and the sterling work of Alex, Astrid, Paul, Pam and especially Patrick who put on the excellent barbeque and refreshments.

The most recent tournament was the David’s Cup in October, organised by Chris Rees. Eight teams of three players each participated in a singles and doubles match, with the top four teams contesting semi-finals, and the winners contesting the final.

The winners were David Lea, Dean Henry and Sue Walsh.

Finally, this year’s Floodlit tournament will begin in a couple of weeks with the Final being held in 2013.

David was asked whether less members entered the Annual Tournament this year and he replied that it was much the same.

There was also a query whether competent Juniors could enter the Floodlit League. They have not been invited in the past but the Committee will bear it in mind.

2012 Senior Winners

Mens Singles – Jack Malone

Ladies Singles – Jessica Crawley

Mens Doubles – Ted Bloom and Chris Barker

Ladies Doubles – Sue Walsh and Lucie Ray

Mens 90+ - David Green and John Walsh

Ladies 90+ - Sue Walsh and Dottie Parkes

Mixed Doubles – Colin Grafton and Dottie Parkes

Ladies Teens & Has-Beens – Sally Webber and Jo Brattle

Club Sessions: Patrick was pleased to report that Tuesday Social Tennis continues as normal. Now on four floodlit courts from 7pm through the Winter. We are getting, on a good night, twenty or so players and people arriving at 8.30 or 9pm will generally find partners to make up a four. With the cold nights also comes the opportunity for a

convivial gathering in the bar, sometimes with an impromptu pizza or baked potato supper. The bar still usually opens when there is no play possible.

But the standard request: could all Vets team captains please make sure that they give their home match nearly new balls to Angela, Judith or Patrick.

Angela said that Saturday Club Afternoon had endured some funny old weather over the past year.

Firstly, on February 4th, although very, very cold, people turned out and played enjoyable tennis until at 2.30 pm snow flurries appeared and so did Eddie Simms in his shorts! By 3.30 pm the lines around the courts were invisible, but those hardy mortals slipped and slithered around the courts, until frozen digits forced them indoors.

We endured rain sodden courts in June, and on October 13th we were all forced to run for shelter as a hailstorm rained down on us and turned the courts white.

However we have not missed too many Saturday afternoons due to inclement weather and we even managed four hot sunny days when we sat out and indulged in tea and biscuits on those unmentionable chairs!

On April 7th court 6 was officially opened after refurbishment, and Angela was particularly pleased with the news that it had been agreed with the coaches et al that court 6 could be used by Saturday afternooners from 2-4 pm. Her thanks to all those people involved in this decision.

It was with great pleasure that four new members, together with some younger members came and played with us in July and she sincerely hopes we can build on this in the future.

We even occasionally had some old faces join us for a game, Anthea, Phelim and Keyvan. On average we are getting 22-28 people turning up to play on a Saturday afternoon which is excellent.

Overall, it has been a very successful and hopefully enjoyable tennis year for our regular Saturday afternooners and Angela would like to thank them all for their continued support and exemplary behaviour on court.

Alan thanked Patrick, Judith and Angela for all their efforts which made these sessions run smoothly every week.

100 Club Report: Dottie reported that over the period March 2011 to February 2012 we had an income of £1564. With the six draws of £150 each the amount of £900 was deducted which left us with a total of £664 to contribute to the club funds.

Membership is currently 66 which is up by 4 from last year and it would be wonderful if we could raise the membership even higher, possibly by advertising on the club board and also by perhaps sending the membership form to those tennis club members who have not joined.

Friendly Matches: Sally reported her report last year was rather short and sweet, simply because we did not manage to fix up many matches.

Happily, this season has seen us fare a little better. Our first fixture was against Knowle & Dorridge, a club new to the friendly match circuit. The afternoon was a great success - one of the hottest Sundays of the summer - with lots of good tennis enjoyed by all, followed by a traditional tea sitting in the sunshine and, instead of stopping after tea, we decided to change partners and carry on playing for another hour which meant lots of spent bodies, stiff knees, etc afterwards but clearly a great success. Our return match to them at their club was just as good and again, after an excellent tea, we carried on playing mixing up partners. All in all we feel that Knowle & Dorridge Club is a great asset to our list of friendly match clubs and we will continue to arrange friendlies with them.

Our second fixture was against Warwick Club (not the Boat Club!) We fielded a competent team and enjoyed some well matched games - but this time suffering some rain delays. The return leg was again evenly matched and thoroughly enjoyed by all. Not a massive programme but, as mentioned, better than last season and, with a bit more effort next year, we will continue to build our friendly match network and get more members involved.

Junior Coordinator: Jackie presented the following report:

Tournaments

We had a busy summer planned this year with a full day's tournaments registered with the LTA twice a month from May to August for all children aged 6-14. Unfortunately the weather didn't co-operate with us so a number of these tournaments had to be cancelled.

However, the principle has gone down well with parents and children alike, as most are much more comfortable playing on home turf than away at other clubs. These events are also attracting kids from other local clubs who do not hold many tournaments "in-house".

The club's perceived performance relates directly to the number of matches each individual has played and we have come very close to hitting the targets set by Stuart and the LTA for the year. A feat that 50% of the other tennis clubs in Warwickshire have not achieved.

Clothing

We continue to clothe as many of the club players as possible with our T-shirts and hoodies, both senior and junior. To date we have sold 40+ T-shirts and 70+ hoodies in sizes ranging from 6 years through to XXXL adult.

To improve the club image we also invested in some T-shirts for the helpers at Open Day.

Presentation Evening

The junior's evening was held on Saturday 13th October 2012 at the club, where the championship winners and MVP's were presented their trophies. It was a fun evening where the kids partied and played quiz games including an attempt at recreating "Blankety-Blank". Thanks go to the coaches for giving up their valuable time on a Saturday to host the evening.

Christmas Party

Planned for the 2nd December 2012

Website

The junior section has been actively managed over the summer, and she would be interested in any feedback from members.

Junior Membership

We have added a new membership category for 3 to 5 year olds called "Tots", primarily for keeping in contact with prospective Wimbledon Champions!

Coaching: Stuart reported that as we end 2012 the junior coaching programme consists of 14 group coaching sessions per week. We run 8 club groups and 6 performance squads, all operate midweek.

The focus of the coaching programme this year was to expand the variety of activities on offer and for adults and pre school children.

For pre-school children tots coaching has been introduced, 2 sessions per week currently run.

Cardio Tennis has expanded to 5 sessions per week and has a loyal and active following under Collen's tuition.

Rusty Rackets continues to thrive and provides coaching and a great social environment for adults.

With lots of hard work from Collen and Jackie the junior competition programme has expanded. Grade 6 events are running monthly and entrants are being attracted from far and wide.

Junior Slams had another successful season and these provide competitive tennis with the social and psychological benefits of a team structure.

The club entered teams in the Warwickshire Mini Tennis Leagues and Tennis Leagues and this provides match experience for our better juniors.

As of September our Regular Competing Juniors numbers were:

48 players had played 6 matches

23 players had played 20 matches.

We will aim to grow these numbers during 2013.

All 3 coaches, Jon, Collen and Rachael have done a great job in 2012 and I would like to thank them for their hard work and enthusiasm.

A Coaching Team cannot improve and expand a Coaching Programme without a supportive and helpful committee, we are fortunate to have such a committee at Balsall Common.

Finally a thank you to the members for your continued support of the coaching programme and we look forward to working with you in 2013.

Membership: Sue reported that this year membership is considerably down on previous years, as the total playing membership is 238 as opposed to 292 last year.

Membership is made up as follows:-

SENIORS:	129 (155 in 2011) comprising:
Senior	84 (107 in 2011)
Senior Citizens	22 (24 in 2011)
Young Adult	11 (10 in 2011)
Intermediate	12 (14 in 2011)

JUNIORS	109 (137 in 2011) comprising:
Under 7	24 (22 in 2011)
7 – 10	35 (52 in 2011)
11 – 15	50 (63 in 2011)

Sue wasn't sure whether to blame the state of the economy and people tightening their belts.

Sue concluded by saying she was stepping down from the position of Membership Secretary after 11 years as she thought it was time for someone younger to take her place on the committee. Alan paid tribute to her sterling work over many years.

There followed a discussion on how members could be retained and recruited.

Astrid said 400 flyers had been handed out at Open Day offering a free Coaching or Cardio session and the coaches did not receive a single response.

Stuart is sure the considerable single payment in March is a deterrent and he would suggest monthly payments. It was acknowledged that this would be difficult to monitor. Alan said it would be a priority of the new committee to find out why people had left and to look into alternative payment methods.

Accounts for 2012: Alan circulated the accounts prepared by Anne.

Total net assets stand at £39,238 compared to £58,412 at the end of 2011.

The drop in Membership is reflected in the reduction of Subscription income by over £2,500.

Court Rejuvenation of Courts 1 & 2 to extend their playing life accounts for the increase in Court Maintenance expenditure and the new court brushes and drag mat cost £ 1905. Alan reminded all members that the last player off the courts should sweep the courts which prolongs their life and helps to remove leaves and other debris.

The figure of £949 for Administration includes planning fees for the floodlights. However savings were made as we did not incur consultancy fees.

The Court 6 resurfacing costs of £27,782 were taken from the Court Renewal Fund. The balance on this Fund is now £26,218.

Alan emphasised that we are still a cash-rich club in a healthy financial position but we need to address the downward trend.

Due to the increase in energy costs, the committee decided it was necessary to increase the cost of a floodlight token from £2 to £2.50 from December 1st 2012. This is the first increase since the initial floodlights were installed.

Nikki asked what contingency plans the club had to increase other income if subscription income continued to drop. She suggested closer links and functions with the Senior School parents and students to promote the club.

Chris Barker asked how the levy to the Sports Association was set. Bob as the Director of Finance responded that their budget was set for 12 months and the Tennis Club contributed 60% of the total income levied on the clubs. He explained that their electricity costs had increased by 35% on a fixed 3 year contract.

Angela Stuart-Smith proposed the accounts should be adopted, Chris Barker seconded it. The accounts were adopted.

ACTING CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Alan reported: "First of all, some good news! After a somewhat elongated and turgid process, we have at last managed to obtain planning approval from SMBC, regarding our application for floodlighting on courts three and six. As you may recall when we started this process, we were encouraged by the Warwickshire LTA to pull together a project for the refurbishment of court six as well as the installation of this additional floodlighting. At that time the project was estimated to cost £75,000 of which £50,000 potentially was available from the LTA, in the shape of a grant and interest free loan, split £25k/£25k. Unfortunately this grant/loan was ultimately cut back to £30,000 (made up of £15,000 grant and £15,000 loan), which was a tad disappointing. However we have not spent any money on consultancy fees or indeed on contingencies and the likely expenditure will now be in the region of £55-60,000, so the ratio of grant/loan to expenditure should be circa 50%.....a positive result! We have yet to agree a start date with the proposed contractor, Exclusive Leisure. As part of the grant application process, we also had to provide a business plan to the LTA and this was completed in the early part of the year. It is a very full and detailed document covering all aspects of our tennis club activities and I'm sure that this document, as well as facilitating the LTA funding, will also assist us in our next major task – the application for Clubmark re-accreditation in 2013.

Although already covered by Sue Walsh in her membership report, I would like to add my own disappointment at the drop in membership numbers this year, especially after the excellent efforts by many members at the Club Open Day. Redressing this trend clearly needs to be another key objective for the committee in 2013.

In terms of social events, the theme this year has really been one of quality rather than quantity! Our finals day as well as providing excellent tennis was enhanced socially by fine weather and a marvellous barbeque, organised by Patrick Parry-Evans. We also had two super fund raising events in the shape of a comedy night and a race night and our thanks go to Dave Green and Chris Rhodes for organizing such events which provided a much needed fillip to club funds. More recently of course we held a very successful Annual Presentation Dinner Dance with an excellent ‘Olympic’ theme – well done and thanks to Louise Baker and Chris Rhodes.

On the Sports Association front no real issues to report - the Association continues to ‘balance the books’ and has paid back to the tennis club the first instalment of the loan. It is worth noting that the staging of the Jubilee celebrations at the Sports Association grounds in June definitely enhanced the credibility of the Association and our facilities overall, thereby giving us a much needed Public Relations boost! John Walsh should be thanked for his efforts in being the main point of contact between the organising committee and the Sports Association.

Succession planning! As we are all aware Bob Harris decided to step down from his position as Chairman of the tennis club in May of this year, and as a result, the committee (essentially David Green, Astrid and myself) were tasked with the responsibility of finding a replacement. Rest assured a robust process was put in motion but despite our best efforts, formally and informally, no candidate was forthcoming! Therefore, in the interest of continuity, (and as a last resort), I have decided to put myself up for nomination for Chair for one year only. Looking to the future and given the difficulties that we have experienced at getting nominations for a number of committee positions, one of the challenges facing the tennis club is to try to ensure that we have a more seamless transition when vacancies arise. In essence, we need more people (especially younger persons) getting involved in, and taking ownership of, the running of the tennis club perhaps through sub-groups/project groups. Easier said than done - time will tell!”

Alan took the opportunity to thank Bob for all his hard work and the achievements he had contributed to the Club during his 11 years as Chairman.

Lastly, Alan thanked all committee members for their support during his period of tenure as Acting Chairman and for putting up with his idiosyncrasies!

INTERVAL

Election of Officers & Committee:

PRESIDENT: Peter Nurse Proposer: Alan Dick, Seconder: Bob Harris

VICE-PRESIDENTS: The re-election en bloc of J Green, J Hare-Scott, K Rose, B Standley, E Innes, P Brown, M Milnes & B Green was proposed by Alan Dick and seconded by Anne Tucker. Carried unanimously.

CHAIRMAN: Alan Dick Proposer: Lance Hare-Scott Seconder: Barry Standley

VICE CHAIRMAN: No nominations

SECRETARY: Astrid Westall Proposer: Nikki Paton Seconder: Pam Brown

TREASURER: Anne Green Proposer: Angela Stuart-Smith Seconder: Sue Walsh

LADIES CAPTAIN: No nominations

MENS CAPTAIN: Jon Baber Proposer: Chris Barker Seconder: Bob Harris

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Jackie Bland Proposer: Sue Walsh Seconder: Hilary Brattle

JUNIOR COODINATOR: Jackie Bland Proposer: Patrick Parry-Evans Seconder: Hilary Brattle

GENERAL COMMITTEE:

David Green Proposer: Chris Rhodes Seconder: Jon Baber

Chris Rhodes Proposer: David Browne Seconder: Peter Nurse

David Browne Proposer: Nikki Paton Seconder: Judith Thomas

Angela Stuart-Smith Proposer: Astrid Westall Seconder: David Browne

Chris Barker Proposer: David Browne Seconder: Jon Baber

Patrick Parry-Evans Proposer: Judith Thomas Seconder: David Browne

Nikki Paton Proposer: David Green Seconder: Patrick Parry-Evans

NON COMMITTEE: **100 Club:** Dottie Parkes
Friendly Sec: Sally Bell

Alan thanked the retiring Committee members: Sue, Louise and Lucie and welcomed the new ones. He emphasised that all committee members would be expected to fulfil an active role.

A.O.B.

1. Court Furniture

Sue asked whether it would be possible to have some benches and/or hooks on the courts as visiting teams had observed that there was nowhere to put clothes etc.

2. Shelter

Astrid reported that some of the daytime players had inquired of the possibility of some shelter from showers, rather than having to enter the clubhouse. Various ideas were discussed.

3. Clock on Junior Clubhouse:

Peter Brough volunteered to investigate a replacement at the previous AGM but there is still no clock. The committee is to seek action.

The Chairman closed the meeting.

