

Report from the Chair 2017

Welcome to another AGM of Lympstone Tennis Club and we have kept with the Tuesday format to make it easier for members to come along and have a game of tennis and attend the meeting. It has been another busy year for our League teams, who have performed well in the local leagues. We ran two ladies' teams for the first time last summer and both teams finished comfortably in the middle of their divisions, although, as a result of new teams entering the league this year, the B team has been promoted to Division 5. The mixed team also consolidated their position in Division 3 after being promoted the previous year. In the winter league, the mixed team were Division 4 winners, so yet more silverware to put in the trophy cabinet. Congratulations to the team captains and to everyone who played in any of the matches. We are already looking forward to the new season of league matches and wish all of our teams good luck. This year we will be running two ladies teams and a mixed team: the captains for the coming season are Will Harvey (Mixed), Liz Griffiths and Corinne Gimber (Ladies B) and myself (Ladies A).

It is good to see that the courts are used for regular groups during the week, as well as club sessions which are becoming more popular again, especially the Tuesday evening session. Last Saturday, on a lovely sunny afternoon, we had 14 members attending. Our courts are still in good condition, although it is now almost four years since they were resurfaced, which means we could be due for a repaint during the coming year. We have experienced a floodlight problem with one light over the winter, but this will hopefully be resolved in the near future.

Events over the past year have included a summer mixed tournament and BBQ, and the popular Triples evenings, at which we somehow always manage to attract the perfect numbers for teams of three. Even the Christmas Triples with mulled wine managed to beat the weather this year (and we used up the mulled wine we had bought for the previous year when the weather refused to co-operate).

Wendy Hoare and I ran some Rusty Racquets sessions on a Monday evening at the start of the season and this is something we plan to do in April this year, to tempt the fair weather players out of their winter hibernation. I am also pleased to say that Ollie Sharpe from the Exmouth Tennis Centre will again be offering a course of adult coaching on Thursday evenings. These sessions proved extremely popular last year and Ollie ran an additional block of sessions in the early Autumn. Adult coaching will start in early May, after the late Easter holiday. Our junior coaching was provided last year by James Isaacs, who was persuaded out of retirement for one year only and those who attended, although fewer in number than in previous years, enjoyed the sessions. This year we have a new coach for the junior programme - Matt Dunn is a local Exmouth man who has been a junior football coach for many years and is now looking to try his hand at tennis coaching. He has qualified as a Level 2 coach at the Exmouth Tennis Centre and is assisting and learning from some of the more experienced coaches at the centre. Matt is looking forward to coaching at Lympstone and we are making it our focus to try and increase the number of junior members, which you will see from the accounts are comparatively low at the moment. It is extremely difficult for us to compete with the facilities at the Exmouth Centre, where children can play all year round, but we are aiming to try and attract children who have not played tennis before, by promoting our club through the school and the Lympstone Herald. If anyone has any junior racquets they no longer need, we would be

very grateful, as this would enable us to build up a small stock, to provide equipment for the sessions, so parents do not have the initial expense of buying a racquet. Sign up morning for the juniors will be on Saturday 22 April from 10am, so please tell all your friends and neighbours. The afternoon club session on this day will be a "Bring a Friend and a Plate" open session, where we hope members will try and bring someone along for a try at tennis, to be followed by tea and cake. Don't forget, we welcome members from outside Lympstone as well!

Following the success of the curry delivery evening in 2015, the curry group expanded their operation to provide even more curries and delicious accompaniments in October 2016, raising a very healthy £500 + for club funds. My thanks to Liz, Sarah, Karen and Ann (the cooks) and our experienced and finely tuned delivery team of Simon, Steve, Tony, Alan and Clive. A lot of members (and non-members) organised curry parties and we had some very complimentary emails afterwards, so I think it was a real success. And before you ask, no we are not making it an annual event - it is always good to leave people wanting more, so we plan to take a year off and then who knows never say never! So we may be looking for a social event to fill that gap - if you have any ideas and are prepared to help organise something (with assistance from the club), the committee would be very glad to hear from you.

The committee, as always, has worked very hard over the past year, to keep things running smoothly in the background. We try not to have too many meetings, but are in regular email contact. I would like to thank all the committee members for their willingness and support - Andrew, Liz, Paul, Karen, Sarah, Corinne and Richard. We are also really lucky to have club members who regularly help out

with extra duties when asked - particular thanks to Wendy Hoare and Ann Hurley. I would also like to thank my husband, Alan, who can always be relied upon to fix anything that needs mending.

So, looking ahead to the summer season, I have already mentioned the Open Club afternoon on 22 April, when we hope to attract some visitors to try out our club facilities. We will organise our own doubles tournament and BBQ in the run up to Wimbledon and summer Triples with Pimms as well. Our website updating is still in progress, as we have been asked by the website designer to act as "guinea pigs" for a new template she is trialling, which she hopes to make available to other clubs.

As always, membership renewals are due on 1 April; as the AGM is later this year, please pay as promptly as you can to help Andrew. We will be sending out a newsletter very shortly, with all the dates and information on events for the coming season, so I hope you will all continue to enjoy the wonderful facilities we have to offer at Lympstone Tennis Club.