

Newsletter

Oxford University Tennis Club



February 2009

NEWS

AGM and new committee

The Club AGM was held on 29th January.

We said a reluctant goodbye to Martin Mercer, who has skilfully chaired the club for the past 13 years.

We also thank Marty Burn, who is standing down.

The new committee comprises:

President: Simon Stubbings

Treasurer: Lesley Smith

Safety Officer: Ray Cooke

Members-at-large: James Fleetwood
Tom Povey
John Stevens
Derek Williams

Student members: Horatio Cary
Charlotte Barker
Sam Halliday

Ave atque vale, Martin

Simon Wratten writes:

Martin Mercer's 13 years as President of the club (plus a further seven as a committee member) have been the most transformative in the club's history, and he has personally led that transformation, with inimitable incisiveness, tact and good humour.

Few will now remember, or care to, the primitive facilities and gloomy court lighting of the pre-Mercer era. Despite these limitations there was a growing interest in the game, encouraged by the untiring support and excellent coaching of the pros. The mismatch between the quality of the tennis and the squalor off court had to be addressed if the club

was to thrive, and Martin was much involved with the herculean task of planning, and organising the finance for, the new club facilities which entailed raising over £200,000, and then in negotiating an advantageous lease with our landlords, Merton College. As a result, and especially following the magnificent upgrade courtesy of the Broadbent family, we can now hold our own with any club in the land.

At the same time he has managed with great sensitivity the potential difficulties of seniors and students sharing a single court. There are many advantages for the seniors in having a continuous stream of keen students to keep them up to the mark - not least when it comes to filling National League team places - but the two have differing financial and sporting priorities, which Martin has been most skilful in balancing. He has also brought clarity and stability to the club's finances, enabling us to continue to improve the court's surfaces and lighting without falling into deficit.

Martin has always made light of the many tasks that have fallen to him - producing the club accounts and dealing patiently with our not always supportive landlords being two of them - and he will be a hard act to follow. His successor Simon Stubbings will be delighted that he has agreed to continue as a Trustee of the OU Tennis Foundation and to maintain a role in managing the club's finances.

Thank you, Martin. We are all greatly in your debt.

Happy Birthday!

...to Alan Oliver, who is now the fittest man with a free bus pass in Oxford!

Men's changing room

The radiator in the men's shower has sprung a leak. Unfortunately, it is a special order, to fit the small space under the benches, and it will be about six weeks before the replacement arrives.

Members' accounts

The committee would like to remind members that individual accounts are expected to be kept in credit. A monthly statement of everyone's standing is posted on the notice board: please check that you are in good standing.

Alan will send a reminder to anyone whose account falls into the red, and members are expected to remedy the deficit within one week of the reminder. Anyone who fails to do so will lose the right to book games and play tennis.

Sponsorship

Although we have had a reasonably successful response to the request for support of University Tennis published in the September Newsletter, there is still a little way to go if we are to be able to draw down fully on the offer from Mr and Mrs J A Pye's Charitable Settlement to match contributions up to a total of £3,500 a year. Supporting student tennis is an important way to keep the game alive and well into the future. If you would like to contribute please contact the Professionals who have gift aid forms and standing orders for completion.

Parking

Everyone should know by now that parking in front of the pro shop annoys our landlords in the extreme. We rely on good relations with the college; so please, observe the Strictly No Parking sign and don't get us into trouble with Merton.

Theft from changing room

BEWARE: There has been a theft from the men's changing room on January 30th. Please remember to take anything valuable on the court with you and never let anyone into the clubhouse unless you are absolutely sure that they are club members. Also don't let tourists in unless you are willing to stay with them until they leave.

RECENT TOURNAMENTS

A1 RAM

40+ (handicap) Doubles

November 29th

Ron Mutton and Andrew Mackintosh defeated Lester Lay and Liz Leach 6/4 in the final.

J.C. Smith Trophy

60+ (age) Handicap Doubles

December 13th

This season's winners were Gordon Wilson and Julian Eeley who saw off the challenge of Simon Stubbings and Francis King 6/3.

Xmas Fun Doubles

December 29th

This competition where you play with a different partner in each match was won by Lester Lay with Andrew Mackintosh as runner-up.

Alden's Handicap Doubles

January 8th to 11th

This major club competition in the club's calendar had a full entry of 20 pairs and went extremely well with good matches and a marvellous lunch provided by the Aldens and prepared thanks to Lesley Smith.



Left to right: Ron Mutton, Richard Alden, Matthew Alden, Peter Kidd, Simon Stubbings

Things, sadly, started to go a bit wrong after lunch on the Sunday when the court began to sweat and the floor became slippery. However, there were worthy winners in Peter Kidd and Richard Alden who defeated Simon Stubbings and Ron Mutton in the final.



Worthy winners: Richard Alden and Peter Kidd

Simms (Bower and Bailey Solicitors) Summer League Finals

This was the latest ever end to summer with the knock-out stages finally taking place on January 31st!

A full evening was entertained by 2 nail-biting matches. Harry Burn [58 h'cap] scraped home against John Murphy 8/7 in the B Final and in the A Final Seb Stoddart [31] was just too steady for Matt Rowland-Jones winning 8/6.

Congratulations to them and all the Group winners who came along to collect their Champagne prizes.

FORTHCOMING TOURNAMENT

The Wroth Cup March 7th/8th

This is the club doubles championship (not on handicap). Players up to 50 handicap are encouraged to enter as the draw will be heavily seeded. Enter by February 20th.

VARSIITY MATCH

The Annual Match against Cambridge will take place at the MCC court at Lord's Cricket Ground on Friday & Saturday, 20th-21st February.

Our teams will be led by Horatio Cary and Charlotte Barker.

Spectators are always welcome, and in particular we encourage members to join the teams for champagne reception and dinner in the Long Room on the Saturday evening.

The cost is £45 per person. Please speak to Alan and Andrew for more details, or to book your place at dinner.

Places for the champagne reception and dinner are limited and will be allocated on a first come/first served basis.

We need to know numbers for the dinner by Friday 13 February.

EVENTS

0-9 Tournament and Club Dinner

The national 0-9 handicap tournament is being held at the Club on 24-26th April. Please come along and watch some high-quality tennis.

This year, the club is holding a dinner at Corpus Christi College (Merton Street) on Friday 24th, to coincide with the tournament.

There will be drinks at the court, followed by dinner in college.

Cost will be £47.50 payable in advance to the OUTC.

Please contact the professionals to book.