

Newsletter

Oxford University Tennis Club



Winter 2024

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I hope you will agree that the club feels in good shape. The court bookings are at record levels, and we have a reinvigorated professional team. Our autumn competitions, the Stubbings Cup, the Barber-Lintott and the A1RAM Competitions were all very well supported and hugely enjoyable.

I want to say how grateful I am that the increased charges for membership and court usage have been accepted without too much push back. And thanks to all those who made a voluntary charitable donation too. Every little contribution helps. We are slowly bringing the club's financial situation under control, and hope to build our reserves, and with them the ability to keep the buildings in good shape and support student tennis in the long term.



Wine and cheese at the pre-Christmas AGM party

There is still much to do in the background. We are revising the constitutions for OUTC and the Seniors club, overhauling the billing and accounting systems and pushing on with a membership drive to recruit new members. I thank my committee team for all their hard work on your behalf and hope that

by the time you read this we will have had an enjoyable and successful first AGM pre-Christmas party. Looking forward to more fun on the court in 2025 and wishing you all a very happy New Year.

Neil Mortensen

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the December 2024 Newsletter.

First, my thanks to those who have helped put this latest edition together. Thanks, in particular to Derek Williams who – as ever – has managed all the production; to Beau Swallow and Grace Beglan – the incoming captains of the Blues team – for their upbeat updates on the state of play in Varsity tennis; and to all those who contributed reports and results, especially Andrew, Craig and Jim in the Pro Shop. As Neil said at the new-look December AGM (see below), the Club is in good shape. Having three pros on hand helps enormously and we owe them thanks for their hard work. And congratulations to ex Head Pro Alan Oliver – success not only Oxford's golf course but also in the World Masters. Well done, Alan.

As well as the usual reports on Club events and Club supporters, this edition of the Newsletter has a couple of features which look back at the past of Real Tennis. Next year is the 430th anniversary of the foundation of the Merton Court and – for the non-historians – there's a quick guide to the on-court and off-court events of 1595. There's also a review of the history of Paris' Jeu de Paume Club. Real tennis in Paris goes back at least as far as in Oxford but the hospitable Paris club has its roots 'only' in the 19th century. Well worth a visit if you're in Paris...

The next Newsletter is planned for Summer 2025 and, as ever, all contributions from members are more than welcome.

Graham Harding

CLUB MATTERS
The new look AGM

Up until now the AGM has always been held in January – and with only a few members present. Not so this year. New committee member Anisha Charania suggested making it more of a social event, so we met an hour ahead of time at the service end of the court for wine and cheese and chat.

The wine was thanks to Neil, while the four cheeses had been bought by Chris Conlon from Paul Watson of the Oxford Cheese Company in the Covered Market who introduced them.

Not only was there cheese but seven members of the University College Chapel Choir, led by men’s captain Beau Swallow, sang carols to the enjoyment of the forty or so members who braved the December rain.

After an hour of sociable chat we adjourned to the Club Room for the AGM itself. Before voting on amendments to the Club constitution and going through the election of officers, Neil and others took the opportunity to celebrate recent successes: the positive response to the increases in subs and donations to the Club, the high levels of court occupancy, recruitment of new members and steady progress on upgrading Club facilities and tackling

the financial deficit. We’re not out of the woods yet on the financial front so there will have to be another small increase in Club fees next year but our reserves are adequate, and we have a steady trickle of new sponsors.

The proposed amendments to the Constitution were accepted, as were the Committee members.

The committee for 2025 will be:

Neil Mortensen	Chair
Ian Barry	Treasurer/Finance (handing over to Ashley Deakin)
Anisha Charania	Recruitment
Jonathan Clark	IT
Chris Conlon	Secretary
Howard Cox	Facilities and Maintenance
Graham Harding	Communication and Railroad Club
Chris Peri	Compliance and safeguarding
Seth Whidden	University Senior member and recruitment
Emily Scaysbrook	Marketing and website
Derek Williams	Membership Secretary

Do get in touch with concerns, suggestions for improvements, offers of support. All welcomed! Contact details are on the Club website.



University College Chapel Choir, led by Men’s captain Beau Swallow (fifth from left)



Treasurer's report

The accounts for the clubs for the year ended 31st July 2024 are being finalised by our accountants in preparation for filing. They show that our consolidated income had increased 20% to £146k from £121k in 2023 and, partly as a result, our deficit had reduced from £38k to £30k. Whilst it is obviously good to see the deficit reducing, we still need to work hard to get back to a break even position, or preferably a small surplus to start to rebuild our reserves.

The 2024 accounts do not yet reflect the impact of the recent increase in member fees and court charges as this will come through fully in the year to 31st July 2025. Neither does it reflect the voluntary donations which many members made in addition to their 24/25 subscriptions. We are very grateful to all members for these donations as they are essential in helping us to weather the current financial pressures.

These pressures include the uplift in costs arising from currently having three professionals in the club. We have been lucky and delighted to have Jim join us during 23/24 to help cover during Andrew's illness, and the additional resource since Andrew's return has helped us in many, many ways. Key among those from a financial viewpoint are the fuller utilisation of the court and the increases in membership, and the extra income they both bring.

We have also had some big cost increases in maintenance and repairs as Howard has been bringing some of our facilities up to spec, especially in critical areas such as safety lighting. Electricity

costs have also risen significantly, and we are still in dispute with our provider who claims to have undercharged us for recent years and is seeking significant backdated cost increases.

Offsetting this we have been fortunate enough to get the agreement from a generous donor to use some of their funding in 24/25 to offset the cost increases. We are still in the process of working through the rest of the 24/25 budget to see how we can further reduce the losses and bring the club's finances back to a sustainable footing.

Ian Barry

Membership report

As Andrew reports below, we have gained a number of new members in the last few months – they are all very welcome!

Some have come via the taster sessions that Craig and Jim have continued to run very successfully. We've now held 15+ sessions and recruited seven new members (with others considering) on the subsidised new member package.

Neil's appeal for donations to support member subs has raised over £8,000 from 40 plus members. Our thanks to all those who kindly donated.

Graham Harding

New Members

We have had a dozen or so new members come on board in the last 3-4 months. A big welcome to all of you! Most of you are already playing regularly and even entering into some club tournaments! The Pros are always here to answer any questions and help you with your integration into the club.

In addition, we have lots of new student members and already have a membership of over 50 even at this early stage of the academic year. This is largely due to our enthusiastic captains, Grace Beglan and Beau Swallow. Men's 2nd team captain, Matthew Dick, is playing a huge part in recruiting too and has formed various squads to help get students involved.

We also have a group of Brookes students who are keen to form a society that would play at off-peak times.

Andrew Davis

PARIS AND THE JEU DE PAUME CLUB

Members may have noticed a new book on the Clubroom table: The History of the Jeu de Paume Club in Paris, 1840-2020. It's well worth a quick scan but if you're seriously pressed for time here's the condensed version! It's now a tennis and squash club in an early 20th century building with 'a uniquely French character and identity with a light – and delightful – English accent'. That's thanks to the many Americans and Brits who've funded, played and taught there – and still do.

In the 16th century, Paris had 250 courts – then known as tripots (see Gill's account of playing today's tripots on p. 8). But royal interest in the game declined – Louis XIV preferred billiards – and the tripots became better known as gambling dens and 'houses of ill repute'.

The French Revolution did for the few remaining 18th century courts. Private funding built a new court in 1840 but that had to be closed in 1861, because its site was needed for the new opera house. The next court was turned into a museum by the Third Republic – 'hardly fair play' said France's sports magazine. So, the Société Sportive du Jeu de Paume had to raise yet more money to build their very own court. Which, thanks in part to American millionaire Jay Gould (a very fine player), they did in the Rue Lauriston (just south of the Arc de Triomphe). Two splendid upstairs courts, inspired by the design of the New York Racquet and Tennis Club, opened in 1909.

A transformative step for real tennis was the hiring of Pierre Echtebaster in 1921. Echtebaster was a young pelota player whose interview took the form of a half hour practice with the Club chairman. The intention had been to give him a week to test out how he adapted to a completely different game but he dealt so effortlessly and so effectively with three tough balls off the tambour that he was hired on spot. Good decision. He was undisputed world champion from 1928-54 – though perhaps it was a shame that, after his first victory over the American Fred Covey, the New York club made him an offer he couldn't refuse. He stayed there for the rest of his career. It wasn't just Real Tennis he excelled at. He challenged all comers to take him on at any racquet sport – but nobody ever dared.

The Club has hosted many of the world's top competitions, but its most remarkable trophy is the Bastille Cup. This was given by Renault to the winner of a match between Paris and London's Queen's Club to celebrate the bicentenary of the French Revolution. All the games were played on 14 July 1989, and the next competition will be – wait for it – in 2089, the next centenary. Perhaps we should have a 1595 cup... Interested donors, please call Neil.

Lots more in the book and photos of some very splendid silverware. Not satisfied with Oxford's silver racquet? The Société has also gold, bronze and brass versions. Beat that...

Graham Harding

*Pierre Echtebaster in his blue beret
– courtesy of The Beret Project*



**WORLD MASTERS AGE GROUP
CHAMPIONSHIPS – OXFORD SUCCESS**

The World Masters Age Group Championships were held at Queen’s Club in May 2024. These are played in five-year age groups and Oxford alumni were well represented in both the individual singles and doubles. Roman Krznaric (Pembroke) was a semi-finalist in the Over 50s singles and finalist in the doubles. Very unfortunately he had to retire from both due to injury – the injuries that prompted his article in the last edition of the Newsletter. Fred Satow (Trinity) valiantly played in both the Over 55 and Over 65 doubles, while Nick Geere (St Peter’s) and Marek Stefanowicz were in the Over 60s singles. Marek (partnering John Prenn) was a finalist in the Over 70s doubles and in the Over 70s singles.

Peter Begg of Brasenose and Tim Harper separately reached the semi-finals of the Over 75 singles and then paired up to make the semi-finals of the doubles. However, they came up against our own ex-Head Pro Alan Oliver who won both the singles and (with Jill Newby) the doubles. Congratulations Alan!



Alan receiving his trophy from T&RA CEO Chris Davies

No Oxford alumni took part in the Over 80s. The next age group championships will be taking place in Australia in 2026. If you will qualify for any of the age groups do think about entering, especially as there should be an opportunity to try out the new Sydney court. As yet there are no female only events but if a demand is recognised they could perhaps be introduced.

Fred Satow



Alan on serve in the World Masters

1595 AND ALL THAT!

This coming year it's the 430th anniversary of the founding of the Merton Court and thus the beginning of our Club. Admittedly, 430th doesn't have quite the ring of 450th or 500th – but those events are a long way away as far as the Editor is concerned and we need to work with what we've got.

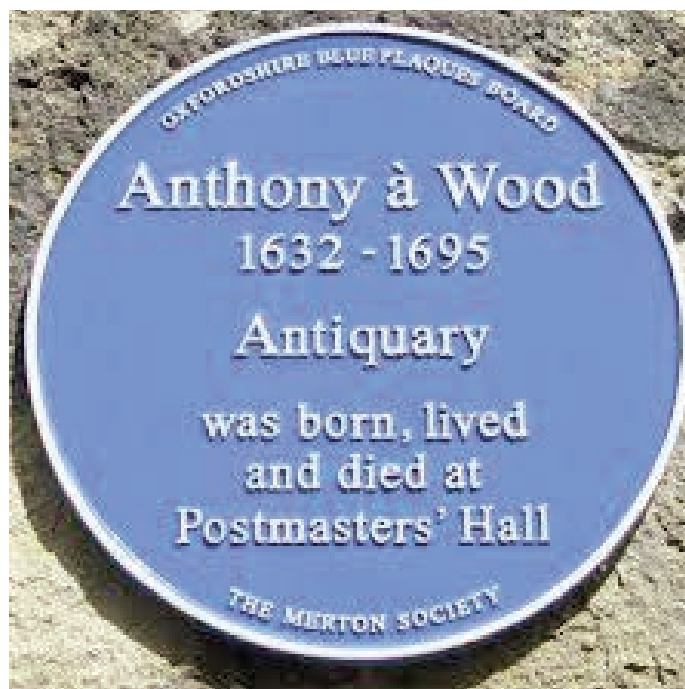
I'll start with the wider world. What else was happening in 1595? Then I'll move on to tennis. What was happening on the tennis court?

In Britain

- Queen Elizabeth I had been on the throne for 37 years but by now was getting on a bit. The Virgin Queen's white lead make-up was getting heavier and more poisonous
- Having talked his way out of the Tower, where he had been imprisoned for secretly marrying one of the Queen's maids, Sir Walter Raleigh had set off that February to find the fabled golden city of El Dorado.
- On stage, William Shakespeare had collected his payment from the Queen for a performance at Christmas 1594 that she'd attended and was sharpening his quill. It's probable that *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Richard II* were written in 1595.
- Offstage, the fashionable were beginning to put heels on their shoes – probably to make themselves look appropriately fabulous.
- For the poor of Britain ... not so good. Cost of living crisis! There were bad harvests in both 1594 and 1595 and in June 1595, food riots erupted in London.

And in tennis?

- It was 150 years before first world champion – Clergé the Elder – emerged but Antonio Scanio had already set down the rules which have barely changed in nearly 500 years.
- Scanio gratifyingly reckoned that tennis was a “very noble and rare exercise beneficial for



body and mind”, so perhaps that was why it was already becoming popular in Oxford. There were already at least three courts: in Blue Boar Lane, Oriel Street and Merton Street.

- Our court first gets a mention on 6th October 1595 when it was built by John Lante and placed under the keepership of Thomas Wood, father of the antiquary Anthony (see the blue plaque on the wall of 5 Merton St). The keeper was today's Andrew, but we don't know the name of any Oxford pro of that period.
- By the late 16th century, players were shifting from playing with bare hands or a short battoir (think table tennis bat) to the long-handled sheep gut strung rackets in the shape we know today. This was probably in line with the shift from leather-covered balls – often stuffed with dog's hair or human hair – to cloth-covered balls much more like those we use today. On court, a guide to gentlemanly conduct suggests we value much the same qualities in players today. In John Eliot's *Parlement of Prattlers* (1593), one chap – Nicholas – says admiringly of his opponent: “O divell! What a firking stroke is that! You have an arme of iron”
- Nominations on a postcard for today's candidates for practitioners of ‘firking strokes’ please...

Graham Harding



Court at Bayonne - note that there is just a side penthouse, there's a smaller grille, and the tambour is in the far right-hand corner

THE TROIS TRIPOTS

In October, Oxford teams headed to France for the 2024 running of the Tournoi des Trois Tripots 2024. Based in Bayonne the TTT is a team handicap doubles competition for up to 24 teams of four to eight players. It is generally held every two years and is organised by Simon Berry who is keen to promote real tennis in France and the court in Pau in particular, and Simon Mansfield.



Hazard end at the court at Bidderay

This competition is played on courts in Bayonne, Bidarray in the foothills of the Pyrenees, La Bastide Clairance, one of 'les plus beaux villages de France' and Urrugne just north of the Spanish border.

The courts are mainly used for pelota and whilst they have most of the features of a conventional real tennis court, there is no back penthouse at the receivers' end and the tambour is a smaller feature at the corner of the side and back walls. On most of the courts masking tape is put down for the lines!

This year there were teams from France, England, Australia, America and the Netherlands. The competition is divided into two groups based on handicap and handicaps are capped at 76. It runs over six days and all teams get an opportunity to play on each court. During the first four days each team plays six matches in their group and on the final two days all the teams play in a knock-out competition. The tournament concluded with a dinner in the Château D'Arcangues

This year a team from Oxford lost in the quarter finals and Oxford student Quentin Guérout was in the winning team Les Paumes.

Gill Oliver

BLUES TENNIS

Grace Beglan – Women's Blues Captain

Beginning the 2024 academic year was a nerve-racking time to be the Women's Captain for Real Tennis. Whilst I knew that Mary Strevens, many-times Captain and all-around Real Tennis legend, would be a staple fixture of the team; I, a 2s player from last year, would be the only remaining female player. Where would we find a hardy batch of new recruits, to pioneer us all the way to Varsity Glory?

We begin with Dill Lamming – a woman so talented she decided she'd had enough of being a Blues lacrosse player and would be "taking a year off" by playing Blues Squash, Real Tennis and Eton Fives. Dill is an experienced real tennis player, with a brilliant eye for the ball. A keen strategist and fiercely competitive, I knew we needed to snag her for the team. Naturally, after eye-watering speeches from both me and men's Captain Beau; Dill was compelled to join us. To no-one's surprise, she has become a fundamental member of the Blues team, and we look forward to watching her handicap crash down in the coming season.

Next came Hannah Wilson-Kemsley; a player I had the great fortune of meeting during Lawn Tennis Cuppers last year. Having dreaded this day for a week (I am an objectively terrible lawn tennis player), my day took a sunny turn when Hannah approached me to enquire about this mysterious sport she had heard of: Real Tennis. Since then, she's been hooked, and it's been a pleasure to watch her take to the game with (honestly, quite frustrating) fluency and ease.

But I wasn't about to stop there. We had a Women's 2s team to fill, and I was keen to replenish the (magnificent) talent of last year's twos!

Having run a super scintillating taster session to Real Tennis, with five very enthusiastic ladies attending; I was mortified to hear that nobody was too keen on trialing for the team. "The standard would be too strong, they couldn't possibly", and other such self-deprecating nonsense. It was a time for another one of my speeches! The upshot: we had a full team by the end of the day – a group effort toward a grand success.



Women's Captain Grace Beglan

Other members have since become involved, with special shout outs to Hilary Hawthorne and Carli Cooperstein; who I'm sure train more than I do!

And so, three months into the 2024 academic year is an extremely exciting time to be the Women's Captain for Real Tennis. Shameless bribery (in the form of copious pains au chocolat) is building us a quality team dynamic; and I'm excited to see where this talented and driven group of ladies take us, over the course of the year!

Beau Swallow – Men's Blues Captain

The Men's Blues have had a strong start to the 24/25 season, carrying on the momentum from a resounding victory in the Varsity Match back in March.

The current squad is largely unchanged from last season: former men's captain Alfie Backhouse remains at the top of his game, and that bastion of the OUTC, Quentin Guérout, is still bamboozling us all with his underarm twists (and the occasional obscure reference).

In what Andrew tells me could well be a first for the men's training, we have been on court bright and early at 8:15am on Monday mornings, starting as we mean to go on (surely there is no better way to kick off the week?), and even at this early stage our Varsity campaign is looking promising.

In view of a defection by one Isaac Wighton over to The Other Place, there is some fierce competition over the final spot, with the forerunners currently being two rapidly improving players, Matthew Dick



Men's Captain Beau Swallow

(my rival for the title of supreme realers badger) and Christopher Sneddon – only time will tell what the exact makeup of our Varsity squad will be.

Thus far this season we have had well-fought fixtures against the Jesters and Old Rugbeians, which have provided good opportunities for competitive matches as well as keeping up the club camaraderie. Moreover, Matthew's inspired

decision to provide Pieminister pies for a fixture in first week has revolutionised match lunches, keeping opponents and students alike well-fed and contented.

There has been great cohesion amongst the student members of the club, bolstered by off-court socials and the like. More and more students rock up to the club even when they have not got a court booked, to chat with the pros and whoever else might be there. This reached a peak during the weeks of the British Open, when it was a shock for there not to be a familiar face upon walking into the clubroom (at one point I was convinced Grace Beglan had taken up residence at OUTC!).

The difficulty of getting a spot on the court booking system is testament to the extent to which the club is flourishing in general, and the student membership is certainly thriving. I have high hopes for the squad going into next year, with all the Blues-level men keen to (and succeeding to) improve their game, and along with this competitive spirit there is a wonderful enjoyment of the first beautiful game.



**THE
RAILROAD
CLUB**

Railroad Real Tennis at Queens Club, 27th October 2024

This year, we had 25 for our annual Railroad Club event at Queens Club in late October. Once again it was great to see all these keen players – some were at OU back in the 70s and some are current students. All in all, a brilliant mix of players with handicaps ranging from 10-75! It was a lovely vibe all day – different to the event earlier in the year in Oxford yet similar at the same time! Even current OUTC club president, Professor Sir Neil Mortensen came down to play and see what it's all about!

The format was again casual doubles with most people getting on court at least 3 or 4 times. This works well as part of the idea is that people who have not played in a while can feel relaxed about signing up and joining in. It was great to see people socialising over lunch – Queens is such a

wonderful, friendly club and I feel very fortunate that we are being allowed to host events there.

There is an idea of a Railroad Club championship at some point too ... that would be a more serious competition for those who would like that. Georgie did a great job of putting the matches together ensuring that people of similar standard were on court together where at all possible. Apologies for sending out the schedule later than we would have liked – we did have a few unavoidable issues that arose just at the wrong time. The draw will be out much earlier next time around.

It was great to have a chat and a drink afterwards with a group of enthusiastic quite recent leavers who enjoyed the day. Clearly there are London based ex-students who have ideas for events going forward – that gives me a lot of reassurance. We need ideas and people's help implementing them for the RRC to thrive! If you can offer any support we would love to hear from you. It's still early days in the whole Railroad initiative...

Andrew Davis

CLUB NEWS

A1 RAM Doubles – Over 40 handicap doubles

This was a fun tournament with new members getting involved in playing handicap doubles. In the first semi-final Matthew Dick and Cordelia Lamming overcame Remy Lammertsma and Charlie Burrows in a close, tense match.

Remy and Charlie are new to the game but could easily have made the final. In the other semi, Ewan

Smith and Dave Thomas triumphed over Grace Beglan and Tom Hilditch.

The final was incredibly close too. Matthew and Cordelia so nearly won but were pipped at the post by Ewan and Dave who just nicked it 6/5. Congratulations to them.

Many thanks to Mark Savage who stepped in to sponsor this event



Left to right: Ewan Smith and Dave Thomas, Cordelia Lamming and Matthew Dick

Knight Cup

(the club's level singles championship)

In the first semi-final Mike Henman had his hands full with the much-improved Mark Crowley. The second set could have gone either way until Mike upped his game, eventually winning 6/2 6/4. The second semi-final produced a shock – Ashley Deakin having been soundly beaten in the first set produced a remarkable come-back to beat Charlie Harries-Jones. Playing the best tennis of his life, he dug in to win 1/6 6/5 6/4 – a great win! It was always going to be tough for Ashley in the final but he put up a great fight before going down 6/1 6/3. Many congratulations to Mike who remains the man to beat in this tournament! Our thanks – as always – to Roland Knight for his generous sponsorship.



Knight Cup Winner - Mike Henman



Runner up Quentin Guérault (left), sponsor Matthew Alden and winner Beau Swallow (right)

Student Silver Racket/Silver Goblet – the blues team challenge matches

In the Silver Racket – sponsored by Matt Alden – Beau Swallow, Oxford captain, beat Quentin Guérault 8/5. It was locked at 5 games each before Beau found another gear and closed the match out. A great effort from Quentin though.

In the Silver Goblet, Grace Beglan played so well but just couldn't close out the games she led in.

The match slid away, and Mary Strevens won 8-1 in the end. Mary served brilliantly and didn't make any unforced errors – a fantastic performance from her!



Left to right: Andrew Davis, Matthew Alden, winner Mary Strevens and runner up Grace Beglan



The Stubbings Cup flanked by prizes donated by Mark Savage

Stubbings tournament

The second year of the Stubbings' doubles on 12th October had another good entry of 16 players competing for the new and improved Stubbings trophy. The format is like the Christmas doubles – players playing with different partners in each match.

The final saw Mary Strevens and Sam Lowden take on Theo Silkstone-Carter and Chris Morton and ended with victory for Theo and Chris 6/1.

Huge thanks again to the Tambour Foundation for their support of the tournament.



Runners up Sam Lowden and Mary Strevens



Winners Theo Silkstone-Carter and Chris Morton

THE NATIONAL LEAGUE

National League Division 3 v Queens

Victory for Oxford! On 3 October, Oxford's first team of Craig Greenhalgh and Henry Henman took on Queens at home.

The top singles featured Craig versus Bertie Vallat. Unfortunately, Craig sustained an injury just prior to the match and had to retire early on. Craig Greenhalgh v Bertie Vallat 1/4 retired. Next, Henry took on Johnny Whitaker, former Oxford Blue and Oxford captain. Johnny started off by hitting the ball extremely hard and accurately. He sustained this long enough to take the first set in impressive fashion. However, a combination of Henry beginning to show his class and Johnny's power game going off the boil meant that Henry took control from the beginning of the 2nd set and he eventually won the match comfortably. Henry Henman v Johnny Whitaker 4/6 6/1 6/2.

The doubles was seriously exciting. Craig and Henry gelled as a pair immediately and Henry made up for Craig being not very mobile by doing all the running. There were some fantastic rallies but the Oxford pair were always on top, winning 8/2 to take the match 2-1 overall. Greenhalgh/Henman v Vallat/Whitaker 8/2. A great start to the campaign!

In all probability Henry will play for Oxford just this season (although obviously we would like to keep him for longer!) and he is making great strides in his ambition to get to the very top of the men's game. He recently made a very strong showing when qualifying for the British Open when beat a player off 7 handicap, and in the main draw only lost in five sets to Nino Merola, the Radley professional, who plays off 3 handicap. Dramatic improvement! He and Craig (who was also playing in the Open) give us a great chance in the League. Do come and support them when you can!

As ever, we are indebted to our sponsors:

Mike Henman
Mark Savage
Spike Willcocks
Neil Mortensen
Peter Farren
Marty Burn.

Divisions 10 – 5 summary

As well as the Craig / Henry pairing in Division 3, we have six teams playing in five divisions of the National League.

Div 10 (45-50 handicap).

Captained by Derek Williams they have played 4 won 2 and are 2nd in a league of 11.

Div 9 (40-45 handicap).

Captained by James Mallinson they have played 4 won 3 and are 1st in a league of 9.

Div 7 (30-35 handicap).

We have two teams.

Team 1: Captained by Chris Lintott they have played 3 lost 3 and are 10th in a league of 10.

Team 2: Captained by Mark Crowley they have played 3 won 1 and are 7th in a league of 10.

Div 6 (25-30 handicap).

Captained by Ashley Deakin they have played 3 won 1 and are 4th in a league of 9.

Div 5 (20-25 handicap)

Captained by Jim Ludekens they have played 3 lost 3 and are 7th in a league of 8.

Brodie Cup

The Brodie Cup team under the captaincy of Danny Dawson are now through two rounds of the competition. Oratory were beaten 4/1 on the Oxford court on 9th November. Another home match saw Oxford take out Hatfield with the same scoreline and we're set now for an away clash with Bristol on 9th January.

Field Trophy

We were due to play Hatfield at home in the first round of the Field Trophy on Sunday 1st December – but again there was a problem with the court sweating. Geoff Baker (captain) and the team must now await the successful conclusion of negotiations over a new date.

Thames Valley League

Chris Lintott led the team to a 6-4 away victory at Radley on 30th November. A good result and more to come...

All these depend on our captains and match managers – our profound thanks to each of them for their efforts in fixing the matches, finding the players and keeping the teams motivated.

The Howden Summer League

This competition is now in its last stages. The group stages are finished but – at the time of going to press – we don't have a date for the finals.

The Over-60s Doubles

The Over-60s Doubles was held – but not completed on 23rd November. Alas the court started to sweat, and play had to be abandoned after the group stage. No date has yet been fixed for the semi-finals and finals.

COMING UP...

30th December: Christmas Doubles.

Fun for all ages and handicaps and good for burning off any overdose of Christmas cheer.

10-12th January: Grant Bates Trophy

The Club's handicap doubles tournament.

The Strutt and Parker team competition.

This will take place throughout January and February.

Craig Greenhalgh and Jim Ludekens

OUTC 2024 Golf Championship –

This year's championship was played at North Oxford Golf Club on 21st October. Unfortunately, we could only muster six players, including one guest, to enjoy one of the better weather days around that time.

Star player and defending champion off 7 handicap was Adam Jeffrey. However, a poor start meant that even though he scored 20 points on the second nine his total of 31 points was not good enough to challenge the scores of the home course players.

Close up in 4th place was James Mallinson with 30 points. Winner of the champagne was guest North Oxford member Steve Millar with 37 points. Alan Oliver came second with 36 points but was still able to claim the trophy as Steve has only played real tennis once.

It is a pity that we can't manage to get a few more players but on any given day quite a proportion of those possible will not be available. North Oxford Golf Club will only be a possible venue for one more season so if a member of another club were willing to arrange for us to play on their course we could try to get the players. There must be quite a number of golfers amongst the University alumni and it would be wonderful if we could get some of those involved.

If you are a golfer and are interested for 2025, then please let the Pros know.

Alan Oliver

AND AWAY FROM HOME . . .

Callender Cup - National Handicap Doubles Championship, 2 - 3 November 2024

Oxford's Anisha Charania and Tim Ault won the handicap doubles tournament at Oxford early in 2024 and as a consequence were invited to compete in the Callender Cup at Wellington against other club's tournament winners. 10 pairs were entered comprising three groups on the Saturday. Anisha and Tim won in what was a tight group. So, back for the Sunday, they won their semi-final and narrowly won the final. Tim says "Anisha played brilliantly! Thanks go to Craig and Jim and several other players who helped us prepare for the tournament". Congratulations to them both.



Callender Cup Winners Tim Ault and Anisha Charania



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