



Minutes of a Meeting of the Tennis Committee
held on Wednesday 15th July 2020

Present:

Andrew Wakely	(Chairman)
Lily Brown	(via zoom)
Alessandro Noce	
Alan Flitcroft	
Jan Menneken	(Men's Captain)
Catherine Michie	(Ladies' Captain)

In Attendance:

Marc Newey	(Chief Executive)
Peter Bradburn	(Course and Grounds Manager)
Nik Snapes	(Tennis Manager)
Dan Lott	(Racquets Director)

1. Apologies: Puk Kroijer, Victoria Stephens

2. Minutes from previous meeting:

Minutes of the meeting held on the 20th February discussed and approved.

3. Reports

AW- Is the airhall being replaced this year?

MN – Yes, we put the expenditure on hold whilst we were on lockdown but the Board will hopefully decide that it will be replaced in October.

JM- What is its lifespan?

MN- Around 6 years. They need to be replaced when the weathering of the surface makes them less translucent.

The club is also looking at another airhall over courts 7 – 10 where we have 3 doubles courts and one singles court. However, this must go through Wandsworth Planning. To keep the same configuration of courts and allow for a ringbeam around the four courts we would need to lose the walkway between courts 6 and 7. Therefore cannot access to grass courts 23 and 24 this way. However, players can access from behind the croquet pavilion as they are doing now. We would move the gate on 6 to the end instead of the side.

DL – I feel this is the biggest problem for the club of this size in the winter. More indoor courts will solve many issues therefore; I feel it should be a priority for the club.

LB – What would the surface be?

DL – Best surface would be poroflex for 7 to 10 and then when it comes to replacing 15 – 18 these should change to Smash giving the club more playable surfaces in the winter.

NS – One of the reason 15 -18 do not drain that well is because there is no fall therefore Smash courts would be more suitable here. It was constructed originally to have clay courts.

**Action – New Airhall skin to be purchased for courts 12-14 ready for October 2020.
Committee to discuss and confirm court surfaces for courts 7 -10 further down the process if Airhall 2 is confirmed by Planning.**

Course and Grounds (PB)

MUGA fencing on court 11 has now been finished and other sports equipment purchased. Family activities can go ahead with priority still being given for tennis. Because of the new fencing, we have had to lose one of the ball machine cupboards.

MN- DL has moved the red ball machine as it is too complicated to use for Members. Players like the netting on court 11 as it keeps ball contained, so we will keep it drawn all the time.

DL – I purchased a portable ball machine that can be taken to any court. We plan to use this on court 6 so we still have the access to 2 ball machines.

MN - Padel court works are being planned for December/ January. All planning consent has been granted and we had to undertake additional surveys (Bats and Noise) to please the planners. We will also need to take down one of the big trees at the back, however this will be replaced. We plan to have them ready for April 2021 if the Board approves the funding. Will decide in September.

AF – Usage for the padel courts has increased at Hurlingham, we have just one court but have received planning permission to build two more due to the popularity.

Action – DL to implement usage of 2nd ball machine (when Covid–19 guidelines permit). MN to ask Board for funding the Padel courts project ready for December pre works.

ITC surface repairs have been done as paint is flaking when not being used. More bumps have appeared – we are waiting for more answers on the cause regarding this from Proflex.

Grass court usage has been good and the coverage this year is good. Courts 19 and 20 on the southside are affected by the ITC shadow. Light rig has been purchased to help maintain growth through the winter.

Grass court 25 has high clay content therefore is barer on the baseline than others. May have to change the way we prepare for next year, as we will try to keep some grass courts in for longer this autumn due to lockdown etc.

Action – PB to continue to investigate ITC lumps.

Racquet Directors Report

Club Operations

Tennis Members have been very happy in the way the club reopened after lockdown. We

were careful not to open too quickly, therefore started with limited visits per member and then gradually opened more access. This allowed us to monitor the demand and ensure everyone had fair usage of the courts. The courts (except grass) are currently bookable 4 days in advance.

Members are now encouraged to put all player names on the booking, so we are aware of who is at the club each day. (LTA Covid-19 guidelines) Currently we have around 70% of members doing this. Members need to allow their names to be viewable in the privacy setting in MyCourts if their names are not currently listed.

Surrey League, and NCL Matches

Due to the pandemic all these leagues and have been cancelled this summer. The club has paid entries fees, and these will be carried over to next year's entries.

Grass courts

This summer I have changed the way the grass courts are booked. Grass courts are bookable 24 hours ahead and members cannot book another surface as back up. This should allow access to more courts. Previously the grass courts opened on the morning which meant more work for reception and left empty courts once players had moved to grass on the day. Members now access courts 19 to 24 from behind the croquet pavilion to reduce traffic from the golfers going to and from the course.

Club Championships 2020

We are looking to hold some form of Club Championships over the first week of September and run an "LTA style" tournament with players coming throughout the week to participate in the events. We would take out the grass courts and another surface as back up to get all the matches played. Events and format to be confirmed. **Provisional dates 30th August to 6th September.**

Junior Programme

The Junior tennis programme had just under 3 weeks to go when the club went into lockdown. We finished the term by running the programme again from the 24th June to the 12th July. We also offered out places to juniors who were previously not on the programme, so it was open to all members over this time where parents are looking for more activities for their children after the lockdown. Groups were divided up so we could adhere to the LTA guidelines and not have more than 5 players and 1 coach in each session.

Summer Sports Camps

The sports camps will start on the 12th July and run all though the summer. The format of the camps is below:

Programme

Morning Camp (groups: 7 to 8 or 9 to 11 years' old)

9am to 10.30am – Tennis Camp

10.30am to 11.30am – MUGA – Multi Games Activities

11.30am to 12.30pm – Chill Time (Quiz, Games/Movies)

Afternoon Camp (groups: 7 to 8 or 9 to 11 years' old)

1.30pm to 3pm – Tennis Camp

3pm to 4pm – MUGA – Multi Games Activities

4pm to 5pm – Chill Time (Quiz, Games/Movies)

Important: Junior Members who are 6 but have their 7th birthday later in the year can book on.

Policies in place:

1. Bookings only permitted with one-week in advance
2. In case of bad weather, camps will be cancelled and refunded
3. Booking is only available until the previous day of the booking camp day.
4. Black-soled trainers will not be allowed in this camp due the MUGA court floor, please bring the juniors with the appropriate equipment
5. Cancellation policy 24h up to the starting of the booking camp day
6. No guests allowed until further notice

Cost: £40 per Junior Member (minimum of three children per age group needed for the camp to go ahead)

We will also be putting together some tennis camps for the performance players over the summer.

Social Tennis Sessions (Update)

All club social tennis sessions have been cancelled for the moment. We are awaiting a change in the guidelines that will allow us to run groups with more than 5 players. We are also looking at the current set up of the social sessions and plan to relaunch these in September, so they cater for all the club's demographic and run at times that utilise our court times. **Club night has now restarted on Wednesday nights. Members will have to call Reception to book each week as spaces are limited and we must adhere to the social distancing guidelines.**

Padel Tennis

The Club will consider starting the works of the Padel courts for January 2021 subject to Club finances following the pandemic. We hope to have the Padel courts in and ready for member play by April 2021. The rackets team will look to implement a full schedule of coaching and social play to introduce the game to our membership.

Coaching Team

I am in the process of renewing coach contracts for the coming year. Over the next few weeks, I will be meeting with all the team individually to go through coaching hours and fees effective from September. All coaches now have the Roehampton coaching kit that we ordered from PlayBrave. Members will be able to purchase items from the new club sports shop.

Junior Programme Renewals

Over the next few weeks Nik will be sending out the renewals for the autumn term starting on 7th September. We are also exploring the potential of using an online booking system (club spark) that will also deal with the payment for the courses.

Dan Lott
Racquets Director
6.7.20

DL – Asked for views on Club Champs

JM – Would top players play?

NS – It would depend on the tournament schedule come September.

NS – In the past we have had certain members ask tennis scholarship players to play with them so they have a good chance to win. This should not be regularly allowed especially once they have won the tournament with a scholarship.

MN- We can let them play with Scholarships but once they have won, they cannot play with one again for 3 years? Good to see the scholarship players competing.

DL – We will plan to open entries for club championships then depending on sign-ups will decide the format that will suit.

Action – Committee approved that Members who have previously won club championships with a Scholarship player will not be able to play with another such player for 3 years. DL to open entries for Club Championships and plan event.

DL – Plan to move the booking window to 7 days for Members. The ITC will open on the 25th July. Then from 27th July, all courts except grass court will be bookable 7 days in advance.

AF – Will grass bookings remain at 24 hours?

DL – Yes this is working well, however we do have certain groups that do not put all the

player names on the booking so they can book both surfaces and then cancel at last minute if the grass are in play.

NS – Can we look to release court if there is only one name on the booking at 8am in the morning?

Action – DL to change courts booking window to 7 days from 27th July and investigate MyCourts automatic cancellation of courts if only 1 player name on booking. DL to open ITC booking for 25th July.

CM – Is there any update on the winter league and weather it will go ahead or not?

DL – No, all summer leagues are cancelled. They are running grade 6 tournaments now but all our entry fees for surrey league etc. will be carried over to next year.

JM – Have we taken any new good players in recently?

MN – Yes Paul Jubb had now joined through our link with Michael Hill and Rackets Cubed.

AOB

Dress code

AW – We still have issues with the dress code. Perhaps we should follow up all dress code issues with an email to the member.

MN – Yes, Best if staff deal with the issue by going to talk to the member but for anyone who is not spoken to, we could send a polite email.

NS – I have received feedback from the women's legging rule. Is there any reason women need to wear a skirt over their leggings?

LB – Most pros and players now just wear leggings, so all the kids want to do the same.

AF – As long as they wear white top, I do not see an issue with this.

MN – could CM and LB do a poll so we can understand that this a popular view with female Members?

Action – Tennis Team to follow up all dress code issues with polite email if not dealt with at the time of play by staff. CM and LB will run poll amongst female tennis players to find out consensus on leggings dress code.

Block Bookings

AW – As discussed in the last meeting, are block bookings needed or fair to allow especially at the current time? The pandemic has changed the way people work and there will be more demand for indoor courts this winter.

Committee discussed the block bookings and other group block bookings (Danny Gesua/Matthew Salisbury groups) and if they should be kept going forward. The following points were raised:

- The system does not fit all the club's demographic as younger members cannot commit to playing the same time every week.
- Although block booking ensures the court is used every week all indoor courts are in huge demand through the winter months and the courts will have maximum usage.
- Doesn't seem fair that one member can have regular access to an indoor court each week.
- Would be fairer system to open it to all members so everyone gets a fair chance of getting a court on any given day.
- Group bookings can organise and book their own courts each week. This is what has been happening since the club's reopening and doesn't seem to have caused any issues.
- There is an increase of members organising their own playing groups and wanting courts booked out for them. Therefore, the fair way is to let all groups organise their own bookings instead of doing it for some and not for others.

Action – Committee decided that Block bookings and group bookings will not resume. A notice to Members will be drafted informing them that court bookings under the new booking operation will be based on fastest finger first with no preference for block bookings. It will be fairer for all Members.

DL – The tennis team have had a huge increase in the demand for coaching over the last few years. The demographic of the club has changed with younger family members that want tennis coaching. It would be helpful if we could use an extra court in the weekday mornings giving us 6 courts for adult and junior coaching. It would not change the weekend set up.

CM – Are there enough courts?

AF – What courts would you use?

NS – We would try to contain all coaching on the synthetic and the smash courts as the

poroflex are more popular for member play.

Action – Committee decided DL and NS can use 6 courts for coaching throughout the week on a trial basis. This will be reviewed in December by the Committee. Priority should be given to adult and junior group coaching to maximise numbers.

Date of next meeting - TBC