



**Minutes of the Tennis Annual Meeting  
held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

**Present:**

Andrew Wakely	(Committee Chair)
Andrew Guest	
Brenda Nixon	
Alan Flitcroft	
Victoria Stephens	
Howard Spence	
Alessandro Noce	
Rachel Godsave	(Ladies Captain)

**In Attendance:**

Marc Newey	(Chief Executive)
Peter Bradburn	(Course and Grounds Manager)
Dan Lott	(Racquets Director)
Nik Snapes	(Tennis Manager)
Tim Freeman	(Trevor May Ltd)

**Apologies**

Jan Menneken	( Men's Captain)
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## 1. Committee Chair Report – Andrew Wakely.

Good evening and thank you for coming.

Yet again we can start by basking in the reflected glory of Joe Salisbury's stellar year. In 2021 he was the winner of men's and mixed doubles at the US Open, and the mixed doubles at Roland Garros enabling him to be currently ranked No.3 for men's doubles in the world. We had a lovely reception for him in September with a Q and A by our own Paul Mendelson. For those interested, pencil the 5th of December in your diaries as there is a very good chance Joe will be representing the club in a home match. New British No 1 Cameron Norrie has also agreed to give a Clinic for the Juniors in the ITC in early December/ January after the Davis Cup where he and Joe will be representing GB.

It's not only Joe and Cam who have had excellent results. Our juniors have also had huge successes with Hannah Klugman and Martha Ground excelling. Hannah won the U12 World Champs and some U14 events too. She has been given a wild card to play for the club 1st team. Martha has convincingly won U12 County Champs and won an U12 National title. With her brother Matthew she also won a mixed County Championship.

Although our Men's and Ladies teams couldn't win the National Championships this year the Men did win the National Doubles League Finals at St George's Hill. The 2021/22 campaign has just started so you will see some top-level matches in the ITC this winter.

Our internal leagues are busy. I can tell they are getting stronger by the fact that I appear further down the roster every month. We have now got Premier leagues to attract the top players. Also, some of the juniors have been encouraged to join and Holly Dulieu has been leaving a trail of destruction behind her to get to league 1.

I have had the privilege this year of playing on the grass at Queens, Hurlingham and St. George's Hill and can honestly say that not only are ours aesthetically more pristine but play considerably better too. Thanks to Peter Bradburn, Chris Hughes, and their team as usual.

At the beginning of the year, we started Padel. Paul Lindsay has been the driving force and has done a brilliant job, particularly with the inaugural Padel Championships. It has also been great to see tennis and squash players cross pollinating. Success of the new department can be seen by the fact that peak time courts are booked well in advance. We also have two members at the Padel World Championships in Qatar. Chris Salisbury and Elvira Campione are both representing Team GB. Matches are live on YouTube for those so inclined.

The replacement airhall is now up, and I hope that you have found it an improvement, especially the LED chandelier lighting and new straight sides giving much more room around the courts. A fuel tank will be fitted on 30<sup>th</sup> November so we can frost bust up to 10 degrees as per the regulations just like the ITC.

Congrats to Marc Newey and his team for jumping through hoops and securing permission from the council for a second airhall over 7-8-9-10. We are optimistic that the GLA will sign off on it very shortly. This will give us some decisions to make on the best surface for these courts and we intend to release a document this evening outlining possibilities.

We say thank you to Jan Menneken for being a very enthusiastic and supportive Men's Captain for

the last 3 years, and welcome Frederik Warneryd into the role and look forward to his drive and enthusiasm. The Club is organising a special gift for Jan to thank him. Thank you also to Rachel Godsave continuing to do an excellent job as Women's Captain.

The Club Championships in the summer were well received in the new shorter format but will be slightly tweaked next year to provide a wider window for the handicap and doubles events. We would also like to have a mid-week BBQ during the championships which was scuppered by the pandemic this year. Congratulations to all the winners as the standard again this year was so high.

Our fantastic Rackets Cubed outreach programme has just resumed after the pandemic so you should see some school children from local Primary schools enjoying supervised tuition during off peak times. This reflects very well on the club and greatly assists when we look to the council to approve our planning applications.

I believe the Club is poised to sign a three-year agreement with a sponsor from 2023 onwards for the three-day pre-Wimbledon Tennis Championships to return which is good news. A one-day event is being planned for 2022 with the Roehampton first team players featuring. More details to follow.

At the time of going to press we have no concrete news for the Racketlon for 2022 but are hopeful.

Finally, thanks to Dan and Nik and their coaches for all their hard work, and for instituting the new booking system for private tennis and padel tennis lessons. It is so much more professional and now aligns with other Club sports booking systems.

## 2. Racquets Director Report - Dan Lott

Over the past 12 months all racquet sports at Roehampton have continued to be extremely popular, despite another lockdown at the end of last year. This year we also added another racquet sport to the offering. Two Padel tennis courts were successfully installed and opened for member play in May. The Opening day involved Paul Lindsay and Chris Salisbury providing free coaching clinics for both adults and juniors. We ran seven, 1-hour sessions throughout the day. Since then, padel has rapidly become a popular sport at the club, with tennis and squash players participating regularly. This has been achieved through weekly introduction sessions, club social sessions and internal leagues. Both Paul and I were keen to ensure that we cater for all member demographics in all the coaching and social sessions we offer.

These sessions include:

- Ladies Mornings
- Club Nights
- Club Afternoons
- Various Introductions to Padel sessions

The first Padel League run had 70 players in the Open, 38 in over45s and 16 in the Ladies.

We also hosted the first Roehampton Padel Club Championships in August with 74 Entries and over 60 members coming to watch the finals. It's clear the sport will grow from strength to strength over the coming year. Next year we plan to host grade 3 and grade 4 padel tournaments that will give members a chance to participate in an LTA sanctioned event here at the club. I would like to thank Paul for all his efforts creating such a buzz around this sport so early in its introduction and putting together a comprehensive padel programme for our members.

Stop press news is that Chris Salisbury has been selected to represent the GB Padel Team in Qatar next week. We publish details of what we are able to view online when we receive them.

### **Tennis**

The tennis section has continued to flourish with a wide range of social, coaching, and competitive opportunities for both adults and juniors.

At present we have 6 social sessions running through the week free of charge for members.

These include: 18-35s social night Club, Ladies' morning, Vets Matchplay, Mixed bash night, Club Afternoon and Club night.

We also continue to run 3 pay and play sessions that are popular throughout the week on Mondays, Fridays, and Saturday mornings. These sessions still remain an important part of the coaching programme as they give new members a chance to get involved in coaching straight away and allow them to integrate with the existing membership.

This year we have also introduced Pickleball, the game has become extremely popular with a lot of Country Clubs in the US. Roehampton's Golf and Games assistant, Louis Laville is a National Pickleball champion and has been delivering pickleball tasters throughout the summer and we are in the process of setting up a regular monthly session for members. We also plan to run a member racketlon tournament involving all the clubs racquet sports – table tennis, pickleball, squash, padel and tennis.

### **Racquets Team**

The backbone of the Racquets team remains unchanged with Nik Snapes supporting me as the Tennis Manager and Paul Lindsay overseeing all other racquet sports as the Racquets Manager. Paul is now heading up the padel section as well as the squash section and maintains his strong links with the charity Rackets Cubed. Nik continues to run the junior programme and manage the club competitions and adult team sessions.

The coaching team has sadly said goodbye to Gill Lomore and Seb Comotti who have both moved abroad to find their next adventure. Gill had been at the club for 16 years and it was great to see so many members come and say goodbye and have a drink with him in the sunken garden before he left.

We currently have 16 coaches working at the club who are doing a great job delivering the coaching programme and satisfying the huge demand we have for coaching. Due to this demand, this year also saw a change in the way private coaching sessions are booked. Now all members can check when lessons are available and book them through the website at a click of a button. This has created a more transparent system for all members and allowed the coaches to fill lessons easily. Lesson availability can now be regularly updated and checked by all members.

## **Junior Coaching**

The Junior tennis programme is in a healthy position this year with over 300 juniors in the programme currently. The booking of junior group coaching sessions has also moved online this year making it easy for members to choose the correct session for their children and book for the term. At the end of each term players currently in the programme will have a 48-hour early booking window before the bookings open to all members. As well as making the process easy and transparent for the members it has taken a great workload of the reception staff.

This year we have worked hard with the other sports to ensure that tennis, squash and padel can all be timetabled effectively without conflicts with other sports such as golf and swimming. I would like to thank Ricky Pharo and Ana Leal for their continued support and co-operation in this area.

We continue to use matchplays to give juniors their first taste of competition in a club environment. This gives them the experience and confidence to compete in external tournaments and matches. All results are fed to the LTA where players can see their progress through the LTA rating system.

## **Club Championships**

The tennis club championships were again held over a week at the end of June. This year saw a huge entry of 49 players into the men's singles open with all other events having good sized draws. The week worked up to a great finals day where we also hosted 8 junior events from 8 and under to 18 and under. It was great to see the club full of members of all ages competing. I would like to thank Nik Snapes for all his efforts in making this day successful once again. Having run the week-long format for two years the tennis team and committee have decided that next year some main events will remain a weeklong format, but other vets and doubles draws will be given more time to complete the matches. Unfortunately, COVID -19 prevented us for holding the socials throughout the week. However various socials will be organised throughout the week leading up to finals day next year. I would also like to thank Peter Bradburn and his team for another excellent summer on the grass courts. Feedback from all visiting clubs over the summer has been excellent.

## **Club Competitions**

This year all the summer surrey league and junior team trophy matches did take place but had a delayed start due to the pandemic. Thanks to all the captains for all there help and commitment fielding teams for all fixtures. Both our men's and ladies 1<sup>st</sup> teams made it to the end of season National Finals in Bournemouth. Both teams put up a good fight eventually losing in the semi-finals. However, our men's 1<sup>st</sup> team did win the National Premier league finals that took place at SGH in the summer.

The interclub leagues continue to be a very popular way for members to compete within the club. This year we also added various padel leagues, including an Open, Ladies and Over 45's league.

We have entered 3 men's, 3 ladies', 3 midweek ladies' team, an over 50 ladies and over 55 men's team into the winter surrey league. I would like to thank Jan Menneken who is stepping down as Men's Captain after 3 very successful years. Jan has done a great job integrating the top juniors into adult teams over the last few years. Fred Warneryd will be the new Captain and I wish him the best in the role, I'm sure Fred will do a great job and build on Jan's success.

Vets Friendly matches this year including Quad Cup and Triangular matches also took place. I would

like to thank Mark Young who has agreed to help organise these events next year.

The Indoor Tennis Centre continues to be a great success providing the club with 3 premium indoor courts that are extremely popular with the members. The Airhall over courts 12 to 14 has now been replaced with a superior skin and internal lighting which has greatly improved the playing experience in the daylight and in the evenings. It also has more vertical side giving players more space around the courts.

Next year we also plan to install a second airhall on courts 7 to 10 along with a new playing surface. Planning for this has been approved by the council and just need to be agreed with the GLA for the final decision. By October 2022 the aim is to have 10 indoor courts during the winter months which will be fantastic for the tennis membership.

BN: Felt that there are too many pre booked courts for coaching and matches on a Saturday morning.

DL: Explained that out of the 6 indoor courts, one is used for junior coaching until 11am on a Saturday morning, the other 5 are free for member play from 10am. All matches are scheduled in the afternoons when less busy.

DL: will monitor all courts through winter period to ensure there are courts free for members in peak times.

**Tim Freeman – Trevor May Ltd**

**Airhall 1:** The original airhall at the club over courts 12-14 was an entry level airhall that was 90% transparent with the external lights shining through the skin. This led to a loss of light through reflection and made it difficult for players when the sun is low in the wintertime. We looked to resolve these issues with the replacement.

The new skin is Covair's intermediate skin with a stronger membrane that requires higher pressure to support the structure's extra weight with the new internal LED lights. Due to this the skin doesn't need to be transparent therefore the low sun issue is now resolved. The increased pressure also makes the internal walls more vertical creating more runoff space around the court.

There is also dark fabric at the back of the airhall that allows players to pick out the ball more easily. It has a more sophisticated plant operation with automatic emergency back up fans and generators. The airhall will also be heated to a maximum of 10 degrees as frost protection but no higher. The oil tank for this heating will be in operation from December.

**Airhall 2:** The airhall over courts 7-10 will be the same shape and construction as the new airhall over 12-14. Once the Committee has decided what surface underneath and the final parts of planning application have been signed off, plans for the installation and resurfacing the courts will be made. Ideally the courts will be resurfaced when the grass courts are in play over the summer of 2022. In terms of timescale for the project we would plan around 12 weeks. Therefore, the date will need to be worked back from when the club needs the courts in play. We would need a decision on the court surface by February 2022 to ensure we are ready to start works at the appropriate time.

TF recommended that no loose particle surfaces should be used under an airhall. Surfaces that need to be watered prove problematic once they are inside an airhall and they can also cause dust issues.

Therefore, a closed cell acrylic court would be more suitable. A porous acrylic surface would not require a fall on those courts and therefore easier and cheaper to achieve. A non-porous acrylic would need a fall to be put on the courts therefore there are cost implications.

AG asked TF about the advantage red courts and if they needed watering during summer months. TF stated this is not necessary however the courts would perform better, especially in dry conditions if they were swept before play, if done correctly this would relevel the sand on the surface making it more even and increasing the performance. Courts should be swept not side to side but working from the outside in ever decreasing circles until all the surface has been swept.

TF will circulate maintenance information regarding Advantage Red to MN and DL.

**No AOB was put forward**

The meeting ended at 8:15pm

