

Ladies Tennis Report for AGM October 2016

Membership

We have had some losses this year:

1 member moved away, 3 have not renewed because of injury or health reasons, 2 not renewed because they do not have the time to play anymore because of work and 1 more I am hopeful they will renew....

But a few gains:

1 member who has joined because of the adult coaching, 2 members who have rejoined because I approached them about coming along to the ladies drop in club sessions and 1 member who has found us through a poster I put up advertising the cardio tennis sessions.

The ladies club session on a Monday afternoon is running happily along and well attended. The Thursday afternoon invitational is also well attended. I am encouraging more ladies to upgrade their membership to full tennis in order to play in the mixed club sessions. We had a couple do this in 2015 and one in 2016. I have a few who I believe will upgrade in 2017. I will in the mean time encourage them to try out the mixed club sessions as a guest.

Tournaments

Even though we didn't move the tournaments forward to June as we did consider after the lack of entries last year, these were very successful events with six pairs entering mixed doubles and six entering the ladies doubles which is double the entries from the previous year. I anticipate this to grow next year as well, and if there is demand, we will start a ladies singles tournament in 2017.

Dorking and Leatherhead Tennis League

We had one team enter this year in division 4 captained by Lindsay Clement. Sadly not enough match players to enter two teams. We did ok – we had one match that couldn't be finished because of the rain, but we haven't been asked to resume this game so it clearly made no difference to our position in the League. We have lost a few match players to injury, but also have gained a couple. I would like Lindsay to organise team practice through the winter to help with the result for 2017 – however we are restricted to only being able to do this at the weekend because of the floodlight situation. Will discuss with Lindsay. Again we have ladies keen to play in the winter league which is fantastic and also we now have more ladies playing in the vets matches.

Great British Tennis Weekend

We hosted for the first time one of the two publicised GBTW's in July. A very successful event with over 40 people registered in advance through ClubSpark to play, plus some people turning up on the day. Fantastic support from British Tennis who provided us with huge banners, balloons, signs, wristbands. We did cardio tennis, junior and adult coaching, TRX and fastest serve. We couldn't offer the touch tennis because of the equipment going missing on the day which was disappointing. I would like to do both GBTW dates in 2017 with a barbecue if possible.

Adult coaching

Vaughan has a number of groups as well as some people having personal coaching. Lots of the adults who were having coaching with Mandy did not automatically start having coaching with Vaughan – mainly because of the increase in cost per lesson and paying termly in advance. We have sorted all these issues out and now people are taking up coaching. I have had a lot of good feedback about the adult coaching.

I want to run a Tennis Xpress course – which is an adult beginners class subsidised by British Tennis. I've asked CoverCoaches to organise this for us, but this might not happen now the evenings are getting shorter. The risk is however that they will run this course at Ashtead Players as they have floodlights and then new tennis players will join there.

The TRX hasn't started yet because of Paul Marshall being so involved in our junior programme – he also needs to have some firm commitments in order for the TRX to grow – the equipment is very expensive to buy.

Social Tennis

I have made a provisional booking for St. George's Weybridge – two evenings – 19/11 and 28/1. Notification will go out when the bookings are confirmed.

There were a couple of Friday 8 evenings – the first one was rained off, but we still went for the curry! Not as many Friday 8's as I would have liked, mainly because most of my time was spent working on keeping our juniors at our club.

Which leads us nicely into..

Junior Tennis

Coaching

We took on CoverCoaches to employ a junior coach for us after Mandy Beaumont leaving at the end of the spring term. At such short notice at the time of year when junior coaching is obviously at its peak, we were very lucky to get a coach on board so quickly. We have had a number of teething problems, but it has all now settled down. Since the Autumn term we have Paul Marshall and Stuart Sinclair running the junior programme and Vaughan running the adult programme. The junior programme has grown since Mandy left, we have now two tots classes, four red ball classes, two orange, one green and one yellow. I anticipate the demand for the orange, green and yellow to grow based on the numbers we currently have in red (5-8 years old). Most of this demand comes from the Davis Cup Legacy programme.

Davis Cup Legacy

We held two legacy programmes here at ASTC coached by Paul Marshall. This was a free course of tennis lessons aimed at 5 year olds who had never had tennis lessons before. Called 'Tennis for Kids'. I advertised our places (as well as the courses at Ashtead Players) on social media – all the bookings were done via ClubSpark and we were oversubscribed within hours. The courses were very successful and every child received a free tennis racket from British Tennis. I'm delighted to read that British Tennis will be offering the same in 2017 inspite of us not reaching the Davis Cup final, so I will make sure ASTC host at least two programmes.

Junior Red Ball Tournament

We ran a hugely successful junior red ball tournament in May 2016 – very well attended and enjoyed by all who took part.

Summer Coaching Programme

Many lessons have been learnt about how to do this for 2017. It didn't really work this summer for a number of reasons, but I am very confident that it will work next year.

Membership

I offered a reduced membership for those juniors who stayed with our coaching after Mandy left. Quite a number took this up – and I now need to deliver a junior club session for them in order that we get these juniors to renew. I am currently in discussions with CoverCoaches about getting this

up and running.

Floodlights

Lack of floodlights at our club is going to cause a huge problem for our growing junior programme at ASTC for the winter. Mandy took a break during the winter, but CoverCoaches will not be doing the same. The long and short of it is that it looks fairly certain that CoverCoaches will be taking all our juniors over to Ashtead Players after the half term in order that they can continue to coach them under floodlights.

This will obviously result in a loss of court fees as well as foot fall in our club and everything that goes along with that. They have said they will bring the lessons back to our courts when we have the floodlights.

The junior club session is now urgently needed.

Other

Ashtead Village Day was a big deal for tennis again – we have some cardio tennis players who came from this – also some juniors. Great to have Vaughan there with the mini tennis net.

Social events such as the recent Party for Parkinson's was very successful. Over £500 raised during this one evening.

The Macmillan Surrey Squash Ladies / cardio tennis coffee morning raised over £180. Thanks to Sheila Fox for organising. I will be hosting another tennis Macmillan coffee morning at my house on October 21st.

Rachael Burgess
ASTC Ladies Tennis