

TRAMLINES

YORKSHIRE TENNIS NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2021

www.yorkshiretennis.org.uk • yorkshire.tennis@aol.co.uk



Message from John Crowther, Chairman of Yorkshire Tennis

Dear Tennis Friend,

I hope I find you well and enjoying tennis!

In this packed edition of TRAMLINES, you can read about the many successes that Yorkshire teams and players have had this summer as competition has come back substantially. There is still some way to go to get back to the pre-Covid levels, but things are moving in the right direction.

The LTA is to be congratulated on the launch of LTA Youth to primary schools earlier this year with over 251 schools signing up for regular mini tennis sessions. The most recent launch to secondary schools is still in its early days but similar success is anticipated.

Our congratulations go to Reuben



Newman-Billington on winning the LTA National Award for Young Person of the Year and the Leeds Community Tennis Programme for winning the Communities and Parks award. It shows that tennis in Yorkshire is in good health in spite of the challenges that have been thrown at clubs, venues, coaches and players.

The promotion of the Men's adult Summer County Cup team to Group 1 next year means that both the Ladies'

and Men's teams will be at Eastbourne competing at the highest level in county tennis. I have booked my hotel room already and hope to see many Yorkshire supporters down there!

Finally, tennis in this country would not happen without volunteers. Yorkshire Tennis is looking for volunteers at district/county level to help with two-way communications to our members.

A knowledge of how tennis is run is helpful whether it is from a club volunteer, competition or coaching background. One day you might be helping a local club source a new qualified coach, assisting with a funding application or putting them in touch with an expert who can help them with a court re-surfacing.

There is immense satisfaction making a difference to the fortunes of tennis where you live. We welcome all people who want to make a difference by giving up some of their time whatever their age or background. Please get in touch with us!

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Fabulous summer of success for club, county and international players

In the previous edition, TRAMLINES reported on the achievements of Yorkshire's 2021 LTA County Award Winners with five categories going forward from the North Region to the National Finals in June.

Two Yorkshire award winners were crowned national winners, with Reuben Newman-Billington receiving the Young Person of the Year Award and Danny Burrell, representing

the Leeds Community Tennis Programme, receiving the Communities and Parks Award. They are both featured on pages 2 and 3 respectively.

Adult and Junior County Cup Competitions took place this year, except for 18U, after it was not possible to hold them in 2020. Read about Yorkshire's great achievements on pages 4 and 5.

Individually, Yorkshire's

Juniors and Seniors have much to be proud of this year. Joseph Mazingham became 14U Junior National Champion, while Paul Jubb, (pictured above, second left) won his first ITF M25 title. Several senior players also won titles over the summer including John Andrews, Wilf Jessop, Andrew Hutchinson and Rich Furness. All the details can be found on pages 6 to 8 of this bumper edition of TRAMLINES.

celebrating the achievements

of Yorkshire's 2021 LTA National Award Winners



Young Person of the Year

Reuben Newman-Billington, a leader and team player with a great future

Players at Graves Tennis Centre have been privileged to work with Reuben Newman-Billington over the last couple of years. Whilst studying for A Levels, and before the pandemic hit, Reuben spent 2 to 3 days per week volunteering at Graves where as a L1 coach he helped with the LPDC group of junior players, and organised competitions.

His innovative and creative skills came to the fore during lockdowns when he spent numerous hours working with around 50 younger players from Graves helping to keep them fit and engaged with the club.

He established a WhatsApp chat group and set challenges every morning which

comprised both physical and puzzle formats, for example doing a number of press ups in a specific time and learning a list of 50 names of people who had won Junior Wimbledon and then reciting them to Reuben via Face Time. A Leaderboard was established to keep the players interested and motivated to reach the top.

When tennis resumed outdoors, and post lockdowns, A Levels and gaining his L2 coaching qualification, Reuben was involved in coaching individuals and groups of players every day and throughout the summer holidays.

Reuben is now studying History at Nottingham University and whilst enjoying life as a fresher he's interested in playing more competitive tennis. As a youngster he was always keen to compete and

played for the County, including in the 12 Counties competition, as well as in Grade 3 and 4 tournaments and British Tour Doubles tournaments.

He's been more focussed on coaching in the last couple of years but just recently played for Graves in the finals of the NPL at Weybridge club. This has re-awakened his competitive spirit so Reuben plans to play regularly while at university participating in a range of tennis activities including box leagues and team tennis.

Whilst not thinking too much at this stage about where his future is heading he plans to continue coaching in the holidays at Graves, will look for opportunities to coach next year in Nottingham and gain further coaching qualifications post university.

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Communities and Parks Award

Leeds Community Tennis Programme

Inspirational and creative ideas to grow tennis in the region

Leeds Community Tennis Programme, organised by a team of coaches and managed by Danny Burrell, is based in two of the many Leeds parks of Roundhay and Springhead.

There are actually fourteen park sites with tennis facilities across Leeds that are bookable online and plenty more courts where people can just turn up and play. All courts are free so not surprisingly they were very busy and fully utilised in 2020 and 2021 post lockdowns and particularly when some tennis clubs were only partially open.

At Roundhay and Springhead adults and juniors have many opportunities to participate in organised group and individual coaching sessions throughout the week and at weekends. With Roundhay's 16 courts and Springhead's four floodlit courts the tennis programme is able to flourish throughout the year.

The programme is self-funded so is dependent on players continuing to sign up to the group coaching sessions and individual lessons which means Danny

and the team must employ all the usual business and marketing skills to maintain its presence.

In summer 2021, the team also coached at Woodhouse Moor with its six courts and these sessions were funded by the local community committee.

During lockdowns it was often reported how clubs were able to continue contact with their members, as a part of member retention, through regular communications and online activities.

Danny was able to replicate this same process with the park players as he had 8,000 contacts on the LTA Clubspark page and engaged with them throughout the time the courts were closed. Around 30 to 40 players participated in online activities, which included weekly free tennis lessons via Facebook and a Tennis Titan Challenge for children in three age categories.

The latter involved a different weekly activity requiring participants to send in their videos. A Leaderboard was established and trophies were awarded at the end of specific time periods. Danny

also hosted online Q&A's which were about getting to know the coaches and making the sessions more personalised.

With so much interest in Parks tennis Danny has many ambitions which he hopes to realise during 2022. Firstly, there is a desire to offer more coaching opportunities at other park sites including at Woodhouse Moor, Morley, Calverley and Kippax and in addition at venues in inner city areas, like Cross Flats and East End, where free equipment will also be provided.

Secondly, additional venues means more coaches are a major necessity and to this end innovative schemes are being employed. Currently five coaches are working towards their L2 qualifications. They are funded by the programme and pay back through coaching hours.

Finally, because of the focus on making tennis inclusive and accessible to everyone, Danny plans to link with disability charities and schools across Yorkshire to support disabled people and children getting involved in tennis at Leeds parks.





■ Men's Summer County Cup Team

Celebrating Yorkshire's County Cup achievements in 2021 across both adult and junior teams

In the **Adult Summer County Cup**, which took place across GB in week commencing 19th July in very hot and sunny weather, Yorkshire men playing in Group 2 at Northern Club, Manchester, won their Group and will be playing in Group 1 at Eastbourne in 2022.

Meanwhile Yorkshire ladies, already playing in Group 1 at Eastbourne for the second year, made it another year in Group 1 for 2022 after being placed fourth. This means that Yorkshire Men and Ladies will both be playing at Eastbourne for the first time since 1992 after becoming both Men's and Ladies' Champions in 1991.

Both teams put their successes this year down to a fabulous team spirit and a mix of youth and experience. Richard Crabtree, one of the more experienced members of the **Men's team**, said they had been unable to get out of Group 2 in previous years and this year made a concerted effort to achieve their goal.

With three strong pairs playing every day, including professionals like Luke Johnson and Jonathan Gray, and pairs complementing each other with strength of shot and consistency, this all added up to a great result.

Every team member made a valuable contribution from Luke who played 13 matches and won 12 to Elliot Chang who played two matches and won one. Overall, Yorkshire only dropped seven rubbers out of 42 played, lost 17 sets out of 87 played and finished miles ahead of second-placed Cambridgeshire.

Yorkshire Tennis has a key objective of being consistently in the top three counties as measured by the County Cup Leaderboard and, with just Adult Winter County Cup events to be played in 2021, Yorkshire is placed second in the table just five points behind leaders Surrey and six points ahead of Kent.

Many congratulations to captain Steve McLoughlin and team members Luke Johnson, Kyle Brassington, Matthew Clegg, Finn Murgett, Richard Crabtree, Jonathan Gray, Jordan Reed-Thomas, Joseph Newman-Billington, Joe Gill and Elliot Chang.

Yorkshire ladies' great escape

The **Ladies' team** had a much more challenging week in Eastbourne. Non-playing captain Joanna Craven explained that with no members of the team playing full-time unlike other counties, including the Yorkshire men, and several of the team attending University in the USA, managing to stay in Group 1 by the end of the week would be an unbelievable achievement.

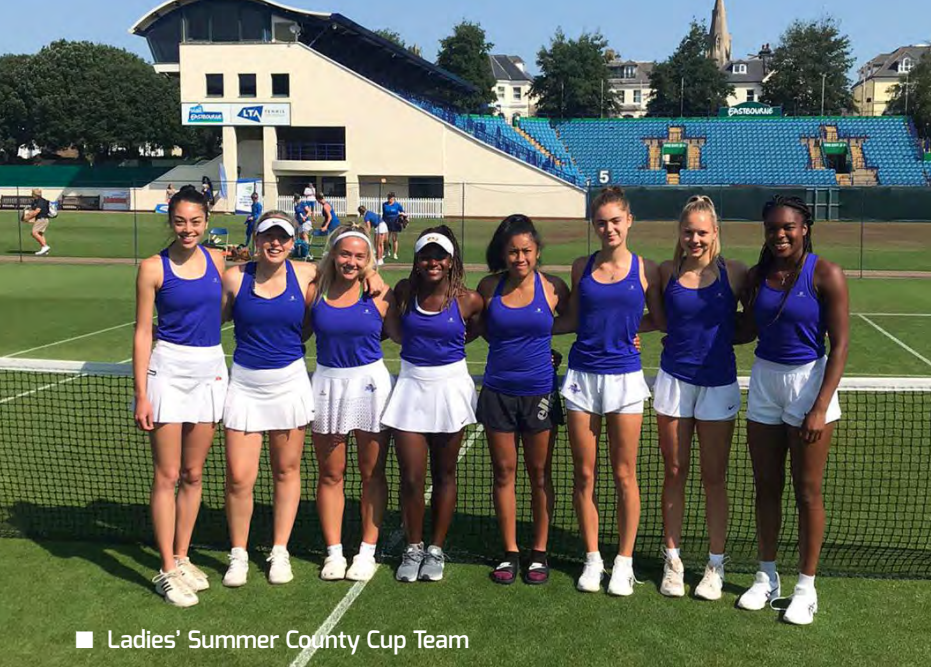
After three days, the ladies had lost all three matches and were looking to be heading to Group 2. However, a big win on day four against Leicestershire meant the final day against Middlesex was crucial with

one win each so it was winner take all.

The experienced Katie O'Brien, who had been British No. 1 and world ranked 84, now aged 35 and women's national coach at the LTA tasked with developing the best juniors and aspiring professionals in Britain, played on the first two days and was back for day five.

The team talk was all about changing the style of play, mixing up the ground strokes and trying out different serving positions. The great escape for Yorkshire was most definitely on and the ladies fought to the bitter end: 3-0 up after round 1, 4-2 up after round 2 and a nail-biting finale was in store. The atmosphere was incredibly tense but they completed the win with a 6-3 score-line and there was a lot of cheering and hugging at the end!

As with the men, every team member contributed to the stay in Group 1 and all should be applauded – Jessica Dawson, Sofie Woon, Savannah Dada-Mascoll, Katie O'Brien, Orla Cooper, Isabelle Hearnshaw, Serena Nash, Megan Hopton and Jayanne Palma with the amazing captaining skills of Joanna Craven.



■ Ladies' Summer County Cup Team



■ Ladies' 035s Summer County Cup Team

Everything to play for

The 035s County Cup Teams, in action over weekends of 30th July to 1st August (Ladies) and 20th to 22nd August (Men) at Eastbourne, had differing outcomes.

The Ladies' team, in Group 2, were captained by Natalie Gill and what a close group this was. With only one team gaining promotion there's everything to play for.

Going into the third day, Yorkshire already had two wins whilst Lancashire and Warwickshire had one win each so a Yorkshire win, a must, in the battle of the Roses on Yorkshire Day was definitely on.

In the end Lancashire came out top with a 3-2 win and so there were three teams tied on two wins each but Lancashire were promoted to Group 1 by beating Yorkshire in this match despite Yorkshire having a better set and game ratio. How unfortunate is that?

Many congratulations to the team of Katie O'Brien, Nicola Mooney, Becky Lee, Gillian Kilner and Danielle Brown and they are ready to go again to gain promotion in 2022.

The Men's team playing Group 1 and earning a runner's up spot in the 2019 event, were unfortunately relegated to Group 2 for 2022. The team of Martin Calvert, Ben Gudzelak, Peter Hall and Thomas Sanders all fought valiantly so will be looking to get back to Group 1 at the first attempt.

Winter County Cup is being played from Friday 10th to Sunday 12th December. Yorkshire Men, in Group 1, are playing at Bath against Essex, Lancashire and Kent whilst the Ladies are in Group 2a at Nottingham competing against Essex, Hertfordshire and Nottinghamshire.

Everyone wishes the teams lots of luck for the last cup tournaments of 2021 and potentially achieving a top finish in the County Cup Race Leaderboard.

■ Junior County Cup matches, apart from 18U, went ahead in 2021 in a different format from usual as they were played locally and whilst 9U and 11U had qualifying events which led to a final, the 10U, 12U and 14U were only played as group matches. The final results were as follows: 9U Boys, Champions; 9U Girls, 4th; 10U Boys, RU; 10U Girls, Champions; 11U Boys, 4th; 11U Girls, 3rd; 12U Boys, RU; 12U Girls, RU; 14U Boys, Champions; 14U Girls, Champions. Pictured below is a selection of the junior teams representing Yorkshire in 2021.



Junior National Champions and National Tour Champions Yorkshire's young players have a great future

The county has much to be proud of. 12U and 14U Junior National Championships were held in Nottingham and Joseph Mazingham won the 14U Boys' Singles and teamed up with finalist Benjamin Gusic Wan in the doubles to take the 14U Boys' Doubles title.

National titles have all been won by some of Britain's best players including Kyle Edmund, Heather Watson, Elena Baltacha, Annabel Croft and Yorkshire's Eleanor Dean.

A new Summer National Tour of six Grade 2 tournaments for 10U to 18U age groups commenced this summer. At East Gloucestershire, **Joseph Mazingham** beat Alfie King (Cheshire) to win the 14U Boys' Singles and won the 14U Boys' Doubles with Zechariah Hamrouni (Avon). LTA National Tour at Nottingham for 10U and 11U saw a title for **Sevil Parviz** in the Girls' 11U Singles.

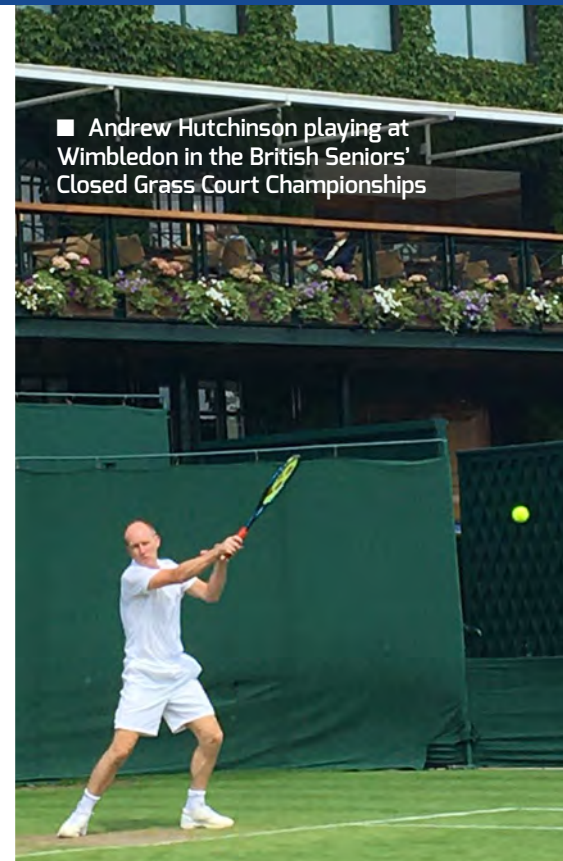
Apart from these national titles, Joseph Mazingham has also won titles in Tennis Europe International events. He was the winner of 14U Boys' Singles at the Junior International Repton and 14U Boys' Doubles titles at the Junior Internationals Queenswood and Edinburgh.

At the end of September nine Yorkshire junior players represented England in the **Junior Home Nations Championships** at Corby Tennis Centre. Events comprised 12U, 14U and 18U age groups with two boys and two girls playing for each of the four nations. England beat Ireland by one set to take the overall Championships.





■ Wilf Jessop (left) in 70+ Doubles at British Open Senior Indoor Championships



■ Andrew Hutchinson playing at Wimbledon in the British Seniors' Closed Grass Court Championships



■ Andrew Hutchinson (second from left) at Wrexham at the British Open Seniors' Indoor Championships



■ John Andrews in 80+ Singles at British Open Seniors Indoor Championships

Yorkshire Seniors making all the headlines

Many congratulations to a number of Yorkshire Seniors for winning national titles this summer and getting back to competition after the traumas of the last 18 months.

The biggest news is that Andrew Hutchinson completed the British Grand Slam of Men's Doubles titles at 55+ after winning the British Open Senior Indoor Championships in Wrexham and is now ranked British No1 and World No3 in this age group for doubles. A fantastic achievement.

All of Andrew's titles

have been won with different partners and are on three surfaces. Andrew is the current holder of the British Open Seniors Clay Court Championships, which was not played this year, but has won the following in 2021:

- **British Seniors' Closed Grass Court Championships** at All England Club, Wimbledon with Neil Howitt
- **British Open Seniors' Grass Court Championships** at Eastbourne with Mike Harpin
- **British Open Seniors' Indoor Championships** at Wrexham with Ronnie Terras

Andrew was seventh seed

in the 55+ Singles at Wrexham and performed well above expectations as he narrowly lost the final in a hard fought three set match.

Other Yorkshire winners at Wrexham in the British Open Senior Indoor Championships at the end of September were **John Andrews** who was the reigning champion in the 80+ Singles and retained the title after winning his matches in the round robin format.

Wilf Jessop brought home the 70+ Doubles trophy which he retained although with a different partner this year. Wilf was also victorious in 70+

Doubles events at Eastbourne in the Open Grass Court Championships as well as in Seniors' events around Britain at Tunbridge Wells and Woking.

Yorkshire's Seniors would normally be playing abroad in the Seniors and Super Seniors team and individual championships. They hope to be competing again in these prestigious tournaments in 2022 but to quote Andrew: "It's just been fantastic being able to compete again after 18 months of no competition and I'm looking forward to more tournaments in the near future, possibly even in Europe."

YORKSHIRE'S INTERNATIONAL PLAYERS MAKING

ALL THE RIGHT MOVES

21-year-old Paul Jubb has had a very successful summer and on 18th October 2021 reached his highest ATP singles ranking of 368.

After winning two M15 titles in Sharm El Sheikh on the ITF World Tennis Tour earlier this year Paul went on to win his first ITF M25 title in September in Portugal and then a week later repeated this feat.

In his first M25 title winning match he beat Argentinian Santiago Fa Rodríguez Taverna and the following week was successful against Spaniard Alejandro Moro Canas.

As regular readers will know from Tramlines features in Autumn 2018 and 2019, Paul won the NCAA Men's Singles Championships in 2019 whilst studying at University of Carolina and was rewarded with a wild card into the Wimbledon Championships.

After graduating he embarked on his professional tennis career, is training as part of the LTA's Pro Scholarship Programme and signed up to Andy Murray's management company.

2020 was a year to forget with injuries and the pandemic but Paul is now fighting fit and 2021 has seen a return to winning ways. Paul recognises that he needs to play lots of matches and is aspiring to make top 100.

To quote from a recent article in the Red Bulletin: 'I obviously have aspirations to get into the top 100, but what will be will be. It'll come. Right now, I've just got to continue that momentum.'

Luke Johnson, 27, continues to play on the international tour and fortunately for Yorkshire has committed as well to playing for the county team bringing his wealth of experience to ensure promotion to Group 1 this year.

Luke rejoined the ITF World Tennis Tour post lockdown and has experienced a number of highs this year. He's reached two M15 singles finals and at the end of September reached both singles and doubles finals in France and won the



■ PICTURED: Paul Jubb (above left); Luke Johnson (above right) and Naiktha Bains (right)

doubles title with Ben Jones. Luke also won doubles titles in Germany and Poland, made another final in Egypt and reached a number of semi-finals.

On the basis of these results he was awarded wildcards into the main doubles draws at both Eastbourne and Wimbledon but unfortunately came up against the experienced Indians of Bopanna and Sharan at Eastbourne and the Australians de Minaur and Reid at Wimbledon.

As at 31st October, Luke's ATP singles ranking stands at 658 just below his highest ranking of 643 and his doubles ranking is 395.

Naiktha Bains has returned to Leeds and as at 31st October has a WTA ranking of 261 in singles and 246 in doubles. 23-year-old Naiktha has played both singles and doubles on the ITF tour in 2021. On grass this summer she played WTA singles qualifying tournaments at Nottingham and Birmingham and reached the second round of qualifying at Wimbledon.

In doubles she gained main draw entry to the same tournaments and reached the quarter final at Birmingham after beating Heather Watson and Harriet Dart in the first round.

Looking back at Summer 2021 and activities continuing this Autumn and Winter

After no competitive tennis in 2020 and the first half of 2021 it was wonderful for adults and juniors to get back to playing local singles tennis leagues, county and district doubles leagues and Team Challenge, and also tournaments being staged across the county. Clubs and parks have seen their courts full as interest in playing tennis, particularly from beginners, has continued throughout the summer and especially since Emma Raducanu's win at the US Open.

The key now is to maintain that interest and encourage participation in competitions right from the start. There are plenty of opportunities to play throughout the winter and details are listed below.

Team Challenge for juniors was very successful this summer as new players could enjoy competition and have great fun with their friends. Over 100 Team Challenge Match Week packs and 200 Team Challenge Festival packs were sent out to over 30 Yorkshire Clubs which equates to reaching around

1500 players. Team Challenge continues over the winter and packs are available year-round for clubs to order.

As a reminder Team Challenge is based around 'Match Week' to run every six weeks or so within coaching sessions for players to put their coaching into practice regularly and 'Festivals' which can be run outside coaching sessions for all members to join in a fun, themed event eg Family Cup, Back the Brits, Halloween.

Packs are available to sign up for at any time of the year

and are usually delivered within two weeks of ordering. All the details can be found at: www.lta.org.uk/workforce-venues/coach-teach/programme-development/team-challenge

Call for venues and volunteers

Graded Tournaments at level 4 and 5 started again in April 2021 although not at full capacity as many venues were only just beginning to open up. There is a comprehensive calendar of events taking place during the winter season but **the county is in desperate need of venues and organisers across Yorkshire to run Grade 6 matchplay events.**

These events are really important as they 'bridge the gap' for players who have only ever played in internal 'fun' events at their club and

introduces them to signing up individually online and competing against players from other clubs and areas, although still in a fun and more informal event.

The 8U-10U age groups are particularly important as they have missed out on competition during the pandemic and many have never played in an event before. There were low entries in summer 2021 events at the younger age groups so there is a real need to build up the player base.

One idea that has been suggested is to develop a cluster of nearby clubs to run a circuit of events so every club takes a turn in hosting and the clubs can promote the events amongst each other. If any readers or clubs are interested in running an event or want to find out more details, contact: paul.bennett@lta.org.uk

Local Tennis Leagues have been a great success this summer and will continue throughout the winter. These are singles leagues which are mainly aimed at park players but can take place at any venue convenient to the participants. Leagues have been running this summer in Sheffield, Leeds, Harrogate, Kirklees and York:

- In Sheffield there have been 221 entries and an average round size of 74 up from 42 in 2019.
- Leeds, which only started in 2021, has had 219 entries and an average round size of 73.
- In Harrogate there have been 32 entries and an average number of 11 players per round.
- in Kirklees a total of 53 entries have been made with an average round size of 18 compared with 13 in 2019;
- in York, where the league re-started this year, there have been 35 entries and an average round size of 18 players.



Wheelchair users can of course join in any of these leagues but in Leeds a dedicated Wheelchair League commenced this year having been set up by Nick Smith who facilitates the sessions

mostly at John Charles Centre for Sport. One round of seven players has been played so far which went really well and the next round commenced in October.

For those interested in

playing in the winter please go to www.localtennisleagues.com to find out more and sign up and there are plans to grow these competitions as new leagues are being planned in Wakefield and Hull in 2022.

Three years ago TRAMLINES featured Eleanor Dean following her first Women's Singles win at the Yorkshire Championships. To re-cap 25-year-old Ellie reached a WTA ranking of 509 in 2015 after winning her first ITF titles. At Junior level she won the Girls' 14U National Singles and Doubles titles in 2009, the latter with Katie Boulter. She travelled the world as a junior and having adapted well to the women's circuit a bright future was predicted.

However, injury intervened and after a stop-start process Ellie had to abandon her professional career. She was able to play for the Yorkshire County Cup team in the summer of 2018 when they were promoted back to Group 1, started coaching at Chapel

Allerton Tennis Club and was hoping to play in more county and club tournaments.

Fast forward to 2019, although Ellie managed to retain the Women's Singles title at the Yorkshire Championships her ongoing injuries meant she had to

abandon playing and coaching tennis as a career.

She took on a full-time role at a jeweller's in Leeds whilst focusing on building her skills to become a trained jeweller in the family's jewellery business, which has been going for generations in Ossett, and by commencing an apprenticeship.

Ellie now plans to continue growing her jewellery business and eventually take it over to ensure it remains in the family. On the tennis side she is planning to restart playing at Chapel Allerton and get involved with the teams and

social events as she is keen to remain ready for tournaments and participate for Yorkshire in the Championships and County Cups.

Work commitments and Covid-19 put paid to representing the county this year and involvement in the social aspects of tennis. However, her success for the third consecutive time in the Women's Singles at the Yorkshire Championships illustrates what a great competitor she still is, which everyone hopes will continue well into the foreseeable future.

Eleanor Dean

Full-time jeweller
but still winning
at Yorkshire
Championships



First time winner of Men's Singles at 2021 Yorkshire Championships

Prior to the Yorkshire Championships this year, Jonathan Gray participated in his first County Week and won eight matches out of the ten he played so an excellent result for him. Playing with Richard Crabtree they made a good pair combining Richard's accuracy with Jonathan's power.

Readers might be wondering why, at age 24, Jonathan is a newby to both County Week and the 'Yorkshires'. After GCSEs he wanted to play full-time tennis and went to live in France.

He started by playing on the Junior Tour and when he reached the age of 18 he joined the professional tour. He had a French coach, learned French and played in French league matches. Jonathan was lucky in that he had financial support from his parents and did earn an income from the league matches.

He returned to Leeds just before Covid struck and commenced an Open University degree course in Business Management and Spanish.

Now two years into the course he will graduate in 2023 and will then have to decide whether to move into a full-time business career. All will depend on how he performs from a professional tennis perspective.

Jonathan is currently training at John Charles Centre for Sport and he acts as a hitting partner with some of the juniors working with Richard Crabtree in the RPDC but a coaching career at this stage is not on the agenda.

He's due to play in tournaments, starting in Spain in November, on the ITF Men's World Tennis Tour. Come June 2023 if Jonathan has progressed on the ITF Tour sufficiently to be able to enter ATP Challenger events that would spell success.

Let's hope the 2021 Yorkshire County Championships are a springboard for future glory!



Jonathan Gray

**90 years
young and still
playing four
times a week**



Nothing can stop Joyce Walton

Playing tennis four times a week, planning holidays in UK with the family and watching tennis in the UK and on holidays abroad, helping her granddaughter, ferrying her 8-year-old great granddaughter to various sporting sessions and meeting friends for social occasions keeps Joyce Walton healthy, happy and always raring to go!

Joyce's 90th birthday celebrations included a fabulous lunch with all her tennis playing friends at Chapel Allerton Tennis Club in September, a fitting way to mark such a significant event and a tennis playing career that started aged 11 when Joyce was at grammar school in Alnwick and the country was at war.

Tennis rackets weren't available. However, the school managed to obtain six for a class of 30 children so parents were asked if they had any rackets or could borrow from others.

Joyce had an uncle in the army who had a racket, a pre-war man's wooden racket, which he gave to Joyce. One can't imagine how a young school girl coped with such a large racket but it clearly made no difference as Joyce was hooked on tennis right from these early beginnings!

Joyce met her future husband Leslie at the local cricket/tennis club in Morpeth where she played tennis on grass in the summer and moved indoors in winter to play badminton.

She continued to play her sports following marriage, motherhood and working in the civil service but stopped



playing for some years after the family's move to Leeds in 1966. Thanks to her granddaughter Fiona's lessons at Chapel Allerton, and friendly chats with the coach in the early 1990s, Joyce got back into the game she loved from a young age.

The timing also coincided with losing her husband and Joyce decided she must get into doing things for herself. She joined the Townswomen's Guild in Adel along with resuming her tennis career. She took tennis lessons, joined a coaching group and was invited to play in winter block booking groups.

In 2021 Joyce is still part of the sessions organised by the friends she met in the 1990s – outdoors in the summer and indoors in the winter on three or four days a week. Holidays with her daughter have taken her all over the world and her first holiday watching tennis was in 2004 at Monte Carlo.

The ladies from Chapel Allerton have been going to various tournaments every year since and have visited Monte Carlo

and Rome on a number of occasions along with Barcelona and Madrid. The pandemic put paid to the Barcelona trip in 2020 and 2021 but it is planned for 2022 along with visits to Nottingham, Ilkley and Wimbledon.

Joyce never gives up – even when she was diagnosed with inflammatory arthritis about ten years ago, simple things like lifting a kettle were nigh impossible, but rather than stop playing tennis she fought the illness with gusto and got back on court. During the pandemic she kept fit by walking and in touch socially with all her friends on Zoom. She is an inspiration to all at Chapel A. Her many friends love playing with her as noted below:

"She's got a fantastic range of shots – backhand, slices, spins..." "she's also very competitive but in a really nice way – she does want to win" "she can run most of us off the court as well" and to sum it all up "if we can play like her when we're 90 – most of us wish we could play like her now!"

OUTSTANDING DEDICATION

to county and national tennis as a player and volunteer

This year John Ramsbottom retired from active volunteer involvement with Yorkshire Tennis after commencing life as a player at county level in 1957 and moving on to roles as a volunteer at county and national levels.

His knowledge, dedication, pleasant and courteous manner has enabled him to give an outstanding contribution to county and national tennis and as a result John was nominated for the LTA President's Award in 2021 for his exceptional service to tennis.

John's county playing achievements include winning the Yorkshire 18U Boys' Doubles event in 1959 with Barry Duggan but in the same year he lost in the Boys' Singles final to Roger Taylor as well as in the Mixed Doubles with Molly Joyce. In fact he lost to Roger Taylor in three singles finals from 1957 to 1959.

At senior level he unfortunately never won a title but came so close. He remembers vividly the 1964 Yorkshire Championships Men's Singles final at Scarborough when he played Terry Pickering in a five-set thriller, the last five-setter to be staged, which began at 2pm and finished at 5.30pm when John lost the last set.

He reached the Men's Doubles and Mixed Doubles finals in 1965, and in 1966 was the top seed in the Mixed with Joyce Fulton but the event was uncompleted due to bad weather!

At team level he played Yorkshire Juniors from 1957 to 1959 and for the Summer County Cup team played in five county weeks. He remembers his first Summer County Cup week playing with John Sharp when he was part of the team but as a reserve. Roger Taylor played the first three days and then had to leave to play in the Davis Cup in Sweden, which gave John his chance to step in.

In those days there were no tie breaks and the matches were very long. He recalls one match at Eastbourne which started at 2pm and completed at 9.30pm with the final set going to 16-14.

John played most of his club tennis at



John Ramsbottom

Heaton, although he started playing in the park as a young boy in Halifax, and when his insurance career with Commercial Union took him to Margate he played in the Kent Tennis League. John was asked to attend Kent County trials but he never did!

These days John no longer plays tennis but does play golf at Bracken Ghyll golf club whenever he can.

John's voluntary roles started with committee positions at Heaton and refereeing tournaments, including Heaton's adult and junior tournaments for many years. He became a Yorkshire LTA councillor, representing the Bradford district, in 1983 and progressed to become one of the three LTA councillors representing Yorkshire in 1986.

John was appointed to the LTA Main Board from 2002 to 2006 and during this period his roles included LTA Council representative (2002-3), Chairman of Tennis Operations Board (2004-6) and a member of AELTC Wimbledon Championships Committee (2004-6).

He became an LTA Vice-President in 2008 and still is. John was also Chairman of ATP Nottingham Tournament for four years from 2003 to 2006.

For Yorkshire LTA he was President in 1993 and has held the roles of Secretary and Chairman. Until 2020 John chaired the Initiative Committee which has raised hundreds of thousands of pounds for Yorkshire Tennis and he played a major role in modernising the governance of the county in 2012.

John has made an outstanding contribution to tennis focussing on clubs and community and making tennis accessible and safe for all. He has never forgotten learning to play in a park and whilst chairing the LTA Tennis Operations Board led the drive to increase participation by making it more accessible and affordable as well as raising coaching standards. The present LTA strategy of 'Tennis Opened Up' uses the same philosophy of bringing tennis to anyone who wants to pick up a racket.

EMMA RADUCANU

PLAY YOUR WAY



The 'Emma Effect'

Undoubtedly one of the highlights of the year came on 12 September, with Emma Raducanu's spectacular win at the US Open. Emma's success put tennis firmly in the spotlight, creating a fantastic opportunity to engage new audiences in the game.

On the same day, Joe Salisbury became the first Brit to win two doubles titles at a Grand Slam in the Open era and Alfie Hewett and Gordon Reid became the first pairing to complete the calendar Grand Slam.

Success on the world stage, we know, has a direct impact on grassroots participation. Following Emma's post-match interview, in which she expressed a hope that young girls and boys would be inspired to pick up a racket, we saw a fantastic number of venues upload LTA Youth Start Courses and deliver fun Team Challenge Festivals.

As a county, Yorkshire's coaches and venues delivered nearly 9% of all LTA Youth Start courses in Great Britain – a fantastic achievement.

Inspiring new players

Even prior to Emma's success at the US Open, we were hearing a huge number of positive stories of venues attracting new members and growing court booking numbers. With tennis able to resume ahead of other sports and activities, and with so many people looking for outdoor opportunities to get active, we saw a significant

Laurie Haines, Participation Development Partner, North Region



This time last year, I, like many, looked ahead to 2021 with hope that we would be leaving the unprecedented challenges of 2020 behind. As January arrived, however, we found ourselves back in lockdown, uncertain as to what the following months would bring. Taking the time to reflect on what has been achieved this year, I am struck by the resilience and passion of our tennis community – our venues, coaches, volunteers and players. Against the backdrop of ongoing challenges and uncertainty, we have seen some fantastic successes in 2021.

growth in the number of people picking up a racket.

Yorkshire's venues and coaches stepped up to this opportunity brilliantly, offering a warm welcome to those new to tennis, providing flexible 'pay and play' and short-term membership options and introducing Clubspark online booking to create a smooth user journey to court.

We have lots of resources available to help players and coaches with player retention so, as we move into 2022, we have a fantastic opportunity to keep these new players in our sport long term.

Engaging children

March saw us launch our fantastic new LTA Youth primary schools offer. Since then, nearly 360 primary schools in Yorkshire have

taken up this opportunity to upskill their teachers on how to effectively deliver tennis in a school setting and hopefully inspire their pupils to explore tennis opportunities out of school hours.

The £250 voucher offer, for any schools completing the training, also facilitated the development of new links between primary schools and their local venues. This September, we were excited to launch our equivalent LTA Youth offer for Secondary Schools, creating yet more opportunities to engage under 18s in our sport and create links between education venues and local clubs.

Facility investment

What has been particularly pleasing has been the number of venues progressing with

facility development plans. This reflects positively on both the financial health of Yorkshire's tennis venues and also the number of people getting on court.

In my patch, I am supporting a number of clubs including Great Ayton LTC and Ackworth Tennis Club to install floodlighting, which will provide year-round play opportunities for their players.

Elsewhere, interest in Padel and Padel facilities has grown this year. It was great to see Rawdon G<C install a new court recently. A further 20 venues in the North are also looking at developing Padel provision, which will undoubtedly help the sport expand in the coming years.

Government announcement

Finally, at the end of the year we were delighted with the announcement that the Government would be committing £22 million to help revive poor and unplayable park tennis courts. This funding, in conjunction with the £8.4m already committed by the LTA, is an unprecedented opportunity for us to engage more people in tennis.

We know that parks are a really important setting for people first engaging with our sport. If we get this experience right, there is a fantastic opportunity to create a pathway into coaching programmes and venues.

The above is just a snapshot of some of the brilliant work and successes that have been achieved in Yorkshire in 2021. Next year brings a fantastic opportunity to build on these achievements further, to capitalise on the raised visibility of our sport and the number of new people picking up a racket. Thank you again for all your hard work and effort this year – I hope you are just as proud looking back on 2021 as I am. I very much look forward to working with you all in 2022 to grow our sport further.

New and improved coaching structure for Yorkshire's young players

Just to remind readers, back in September 2019 TRAMLINES reported on the opening of the new Leeds Regional Player Development Centre (RPDC) at John Charles Centre for Sport to train and develop the North Region's best players aged 10-14. Head Coach Richard Crabtree brought his coaching and consultancy business Cultiv8 Tennis and Cultiv8 Academy to Leeds RPDC combining high-performance tennis coaching programmes with sports science support. Senior performance coaches Elliot Chang and Tom Loughton completed the team.

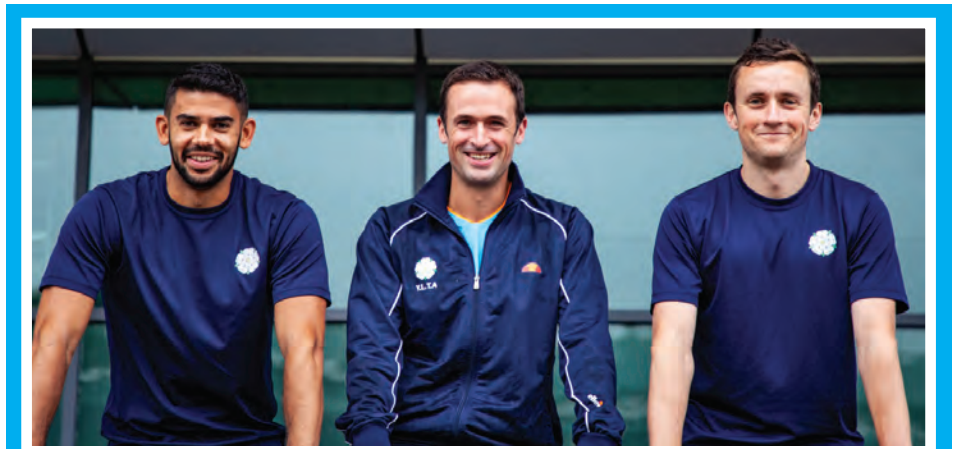
This was all made possible by establishing a four-year partnership with Leeds City Council and funding provided by sponsors to the tune of £110,000 plus a grant from LTA. A group of 11 players started at the RPDC, training three to five times per week for 39 weeks per year. Additionally, Yorkshire players aged 10-18 who were involved in county training and Local Player Development Centres (LPDCs) were given access to the coaching team at various times throughout the week/end.

Two years on and various RPDC participants have made great strides in their tennis careers with significant success at county, national and international tournament levels.

They include **Joseph Mazingham** whose results this summer, as described on page 6, stand out. **Abby Kelliher**, from Northumberland, won the National 14U Girls' Doubles title, was 14U Girls' Doubles champion in all four Tennis Europe international events at Wrexham, Edinburgh, Queenswood and Repton and was 14U Girls' Singles champion at Wrexham.

Abby and Daniella Piani have now moved on to the National Academy at Loughborough University and new Yorkshire and North Region players with 2010 birthdays have joined the programme including **Isaac Sallu** and **Sevil Parviz** from Yorkshire and **Aran Selvaraasan** from Cheshire. There are now 21 funded players at Leeds RPDC and a few more who are not funded by the LTA.

Yorkshire Tennis recently undertook an in-depth review of training following the cessation of LTA funding for LPDCs, the redundancy of the LTA Regional



■ RPDC Coaches (above L to R) Elliot Chang, Richard Crabtree and Tom Loughton; (left) Joe Mazingham on left of picture.



Pathway Co-ordinator and the objective of consistently being in the Top 3 of the LTA County Leaderboard.

A new coaching structure has been developed which brings together the Leeds RPDC (U14) and County Training (all age groups) under the leadership of Director of Tennis Richard Crabtree. Tom Loughton will become Head Coach of Leeds RPDC, Elliot Chang will remain as Assistant Coach of Leeds RPDC and become Head Coach of County Training for 14U and above.

Sam Salt will become 10U Coach to undertake the extremely important work of ensuring that talent is both identified and nurtured within the county so that a stream of potential players is directed to Leeds RPDC and County Training. He will also be responsible for County Training for 12U players and the appointment of age group captains.

With all aspects of training coming together the need for more facilities has

also been identified meaning in addition to John Charles Centre for Sport all age groups will train at Leeds Beckett University (LBU) and Hull.

Richard Crabtree has collaborated with Steve McLoughlin and Paul Johnson at LBU for those players aged over 14 years to train with top University students and some of Yorkshire's top players like Jordan Reed-Thomas and Barney Fitzpatrick. Yorkshire is very fortunate to have such depth in adult players and collaboration between LBU and Cultiv8 Tennis is providing further training options in the county.

LTA feedback about this new structure is positive. Yorkshire Tennis is seen as leading the way with junior development and other regional centres are looking at Yorkshire's approach. It's early days as further appointments are still to be made but with great success for several young Yorkshire players this summer the future looks rosy.



2021 Yorkshire Championships Review

With 63 events and 325 participants the Championships took place over 12 days at John Charles Centre for Sport and for the first time the Seniors were based at this venue. Overall numbers were down compared with 2019 due to having no junior area qualifying events. With no Championships in 2020 competitors were just pleased to compete and feedback was very positive.

Referee, Dave Kitchen, added some interesting aspects to the enjoyment of the Championships for both players and spectators with the walls decorated with Yorkshire themed quiz questions and publication of some memories from the past. These aspects were enjoyed by all and became a great talking point.

Developments for 2022 include increasing the numbers for the Senior events and those who participated have volunteered to help promote and increase the entry. The Wheelchair event would also benefit from improved publicity and a Visually Impaired event is to be added. The Women's draws are always small and a greater focus on building participation from across Yorkshire is planned.

If anyone has any feedback or thoughts on additional improvements for 2022 then please contact Dave Kitchen.

■ Yorkshire Champs: (above, L to R) Josh Bows, Boys 18&U; Louis Hull, Boys 14&U; Sevil Parviz, Girls 14&U; Sara Copley, Girls 16&U, with YT President Geoff Newton; Eleanor Dean, Women's Singles; (right) Josh Crowther, competitor in 10&U competition.



A full list of winners is available on the Yorkshire Tennis website but the Singles winners in all events are as below:

Men's Singles: Jonathan Gray	Women's Singles: Eleanor Dean
Men's Wheelchair Singles: Nick Smith	
Men's Singles 35+: Adam De Vries	Women's Singles 35+: Susie Azoulay
Men's Singles 40+: Dave Mangham	
Men's Singles 50+: Philippe Bourgeois	
Men's Singles 55+: Paul Blackett	
Men's Singles 65+: Myles Collett	
18U Boys' Singles: Josh Bows	18U Girls' Singles: Gabriella Lindley
16U Boys' Singles: Joseph Mazingham	16U Girls' Singles: Sarah Copley
14U Boys' Singles: Louis Hull	14U Girls' Singles: Sevil Parviz
12U Boys' Singles: Oliver Wilson	12U Girls' Singles: Sevil Parviz
11U Boys' Singles: Isaac Sallu	11U Girls' Singles: Esha Batth
10U Boys' Singles: Neo Hodkinson	10U Girls' Singles: Roberta Gaskell
9U Boys' Singles: Max Hodkinson	9U Girls' Singles: Molly Dear
8U Boys' Singles: Hugo Asmussen	8U Girls' Singles: Emmanuella Idemudia

Latest on Padel Courts in Yorkshire

In 2019 the LTA announced it would integrate British Padel into the organisation's day to day activities as part of finding new ways to grow participation and to make tennis more accessible.

Padel is seen as an innovative format of tennis that is fun, flexible, easy to play and extremely sociable. It's one of the fastest growing sports across Europe with over six million playing the game in Spain where there are 20,000 padel courts. Many readers will have seen these courts and possibly even played padel when holidaying in Europe.

At the end of September 2021 there were 115 padel courts (39 covered and 76 outdoor) in Britain at 59 clubs. The LTA has ambitions for 400 padel courts

by 2023. Three Yorkshire clubs have them and a number of clubs are actively considering them. For any clubs that would be interested in finding out more about padel the clubs that already have them in Yorkshire are only too willing for people to visit and understand more about the process they went through.

There is plenty of information on the LTA website about building courts and funding options. Venues can apply for interest free loans from £25k to £250k. There is also a Webinar available which covers the benefits of padel, the costs, potential financial returns and how to approach a project. Clubs may also be interested in reviewing other ways of financing a project including approaching

organisations like Game4Padel and Padel Developments UK along with Crowdfunding. Information on financial options and the various companies offering finance are available online.

There is currently a Padel National League, Padel Tour and GB Seniors Tour but once there are more courts across Yorkshire and nearby counties local competitions will become more widespread to add to box leagues, club championships and group coaching sessions that take place at individual clubs.

Find out below how clubs have established or are establishing Padel at their clubs.

Huddersfield Lawn Tennis & Squash Club

Huddersfield was the first club in the UK to have padel courts ten years ago and these have been recently re-opened with the addition of an all-weather canopy roof in partnership with Game4Padel. This means the game is not dependent on the Yorkshire weather so growth in play has gone from strength to strength.

A Padel Festival was held in July at which all court bookings and introductory taster coaching sessions were free. 100 people came along to try out padel and the festival was rounded off with a social tournament and BBQ. Since then, an LTA graded tournament has been held and box leagues and twice-weekly social mix-ins have been established.

Nick Holloway is the resident Padel coach and clubs have approached him so they can organise their own social tournaments with his help and advice along with new players being given basic coaching and rules to get started. Yorkshire Tennis Seniors have even held their own Padel and Paella party at the club.

Readers can contact Nick Holloway to organise a free



■ Huddersfield Padel Courts

introduction for a group of three or four people or to bring a group for a mini social tournament. Rackets and balls will be provided. Details are: n.holloway87@yahoo.co.uk

Anyone can book a court and no membership of the club or Game4Padel is required. If anyone is interested in joining Game4Padel then the following link will take you direct to the right page: www.game4padel.com/huddersfield

Harrogate Sports & Fitness Centre

Harrogate has two padel courts, the original uncovered court was opened in 2019 and the second covered one opened in December 2020.

James Gaston, general manager, estimates the club has 250 active padel members who are using the courts for 14 hours per day with c85%

court usage. Demand during Covid-19 restrictions was phenomenal on the outdoor court as tennis and squash players tried out the sport and many have become hooked.

Activities at the club include various coaching courses for seven different levels of player. Around 80 ladies, aged 16-80, play regularly on courses or in their own groups and many of these ladies have >>> **CONTINUES ON P18**

>>> CONTINUED FROM P17

never played other racket sports or have played tennis but can no longer compete.

There are box leagues, a Yorkshire Padel League and the first Closed Championships took place in October with 50 players competing including a Women's and Junior events. For 2022 the club is planning a larger Closed Tournament, an LTA Open Tournament and potentially other tournaments, including junior tournaments.

The plan for an LTA tournament this year was shelved due to the lack of padel referees. With so many activities going on at the club two more courts are being considered at the club.

Coaches at the club are Will Brannan (Head of Padel), Javi Serrats (advanced groups), Nicky Horn and Robbie Burnett.

For any reader or club interested in finding out more about playing padel or establishing padel at their club can contact James at info@harrogatesfc.co.uk

Rawdon Tennis and Golf Club

Rawdon is the latest club in Yorkshire to have installed a padel court which opened in May 2021 although the seeds for the project began some four years ago. The original plan was for two courts in conjunction with a company on similar lines to Game4Padel.

This did not go ahead and instead the club looked to pursue their own investment of one court with an LTA loan as part of a strategy to improve the club's finances by bringing in a new sport, new members and new fee income. Again, this plan did not materialise. Covid 19 struck and the outlook for padel looked doomed.

Fortunately for the club, golf and tennis were able to resume outdoors in May 2020 before other sports so Rawdon was inundated



■ Harrogate Padel Courts



■ Rawdon Padel Court

with new members and an outdoor area was developed for socialising and bar use to maintain the club's income.

The result was spectacular. With new confidence in the club's finances, and lots of new members, the padel project was back on and, after much hard work by the business development committee, approval was eventually gained from the membership. The LTA also approved a grant application for a gate access system to control bookings and access to all courts. 2021 saw more restrictions but the groundworks finally commenced in April after planning permission was obtained.

Challenges for planning

included noise and lighting reports and the LTA also put in a holding objection due to the loss of a grass court for the padel court to be built on. The court went up in mid-May and play commenced in the same week.

The club has organised two open days and promoted the new court and sport through local advertising, social media, flyers as well as a big sign on the A65.

Club coach Jonathan Sowden, assisted by Nicky Horn, has built up several WhatsApp groups of players for introductory sessions and coaching. The numbers have gone from strength to strength, with bookings rising from 28 in June to 164

in September, and October looking likely to exceed that. The court is generating over £2K per month in court fees and there are 26 new padel members and another 20 who play mainly padel but also joined for tennis. The first club championships took place in October and winter box leagues have launched.

A Thursday social club night is well attended especially the Padel and Pizza night on the last Thursday of each month. Bookings from players have come from Liverpool and Chester and the Leeds Kuwaiti students have used the court for a triangular tournament with their Manchester and Liverpool counterparts.

With such a successful outcome the club is planning to install a second court. Simon Bickerton, club chairman, would be pleased to speak to any Yorkshire club considering padel to share the club's knowledge and experience. He can be contacted at secretary.rgltc@gmail.com

Ripon Tennis Centre

The club is aiming to build two padel courts for members and the community in and around Ripon. The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted the club from a financial perspective like many similar clubs with indoor tennis facilities and a gym.

By bringing padel to the club they plan to recoup their losses and take the opportunity to move forward in an innovative way. Financial support from Sport England has been secured as a £30K target for crowdfunding was reached on 29th October and an LTA loan is in process. So, the plan to have courts up and ready to go by April 2022 is well on the way.

To find out more about Ripon's plans and the support from crowdfunding go to <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/lets-play-padel-at-ripon-tennis-centre>



Brand new clubhouse at Kirkbymoorside

Kirkbymoorside is a small market town in North Yorkshire, midway between Pickering and Helmsley on the edge of the North York Moors National Park. A beautiful part of the country with a tennis club that has two hard courts and welcomes players of all abilities including both members and non-members.

Activities include a members' night, coaching and ladies and mixed teams who

compete in the Hovingham League.

On Saturday 18th September 2021 the club finally cut the red tape on their brand new clubhouse, a project which started some four years ago but was delayed due to the pandemic.

It was definitely worth the wait as the club not only has a larger hut but it has running water, kitchen facilities and a toilet which will be a driving



force in attracting new members.

This was all made possible thanks to the grants and generous funding from Kirkbymoorside Foundation, Kirkbymoorside Fruitpickers, Kirkbymoorside Town Council and the LTA.

The opening event was attended by members, non-members and those who worked on the project and donated to it. Liz Davison, widow of Alan Davison, the original driving force behind the tennis club, made the official opening.

Northowram, opened in July and flourishing

Northowram Tennis Club's club's three-year journey from complete disrepair to planned re-opening was featured in the spring edition of TRAMLINES.

The new courts were officially opened on Saturday July 3rd 2021 by Holly Lynch MP, and secretary Peter Thornton who has led the refurbishing project with the tennis committee gave a short speech to the assembled crowd

The courts have been well used since July with Pay and Play and the club has already signed up 40 members both adults, children and families.

New coach Kevin Hart has been busy organising new courses for both adults and children and with the shorter days the club hopes to attract many players from the area to use the floodlights.

The club looks forward to attracting many more players to the courts in the next 12 months and would like to encourage people to join the committee and help the club grow.





Tim Henman at Ackworth School to celebrate community outreach programme

In November 2020, TRAMLINES dedicated an article to Ackworth Tennis Club and Ackworth School as Don Saul and Alice Robson were awarded the LTA Volunteer of the Year and LTA Development Coach of the Year respectively.

One of the key achievements noted was the success of Alice's community-based programmes which involved delivering coaching to 2,000 pupils at 28 local primary schools and encouraging children to attend school events as well as open days at the club and join other programmes and activities at the tennis club.

In May 2021 Tim Henman visited Ackworth School to celebrate the programme as it is jointly funded by the Tim Henman Foundation (THF) and Ackworth School in partnership with the LTA and Yorkshire Tennis. The purpose of the event was to showcase the success of the programme. Teachers from the local primary schools were tasked with delivering a lesson to the pupils from their schools.

All of the schools were given free teacher training, provided by the LTA, and equipment bags funded by the LTA and THF. Prior to the event Alice made extra visits to the schools to provide support with their tennis delivery.

On the day itself there was much excitement as the children were given the opportunity to practice their skills



alongside former British No. 1 Tim Henman.

Tim said: "I am delighted to be at Ackworth today and see more young tennis stars coming through the pipeline. Talent is spread evenly across the country but sadly opportunity is not, which is why this Foundation initiative in association with the LTA, Ackworth School and Ackworth Tennis Club is so important."

All partners involved in the initiative were invited to the event. Paul Bennett, Head of LTA North Region said: "The results of this partnership speak for themselves and it's great to see so many of the school children that Alice has inspired to pick up a racket enjoying today's session with Tim."

"We are continuing to work closely with the Foundation as we both work towards encouraging more and more young people from all backgrounds to get involved in our sport. There are plans in place to follow a similar model to this project in other parts of the country and hopefully we will see similar levels of success."

Alice Robson said: "It has been a privilege to give so many children around Yorkshire the opportunity to play tennis for the first time.

"Seeing them pick up a racket and learn new skills is wonderful. Ensuring they have a positive first experience with tennis is important when trying to engage them with the sport and inspiring Britain's tennis players."

Recollections of a wonderful week in 1991, winning the Yorkshire Double in Group One

To celebrate this momentous achievement, Karen Mitchell, Yorkshire Tennis Chair of Performance, who was one of the players in the Ladies' County Cup Team participating 30 years ago got in touch with her fellow team mates suggesting they have a reunion and re-live their great feat with food and drinks.

On Sunday September 12th 2021 Captain Charlotte Lindsay hosted the reunion and attending were Jackie Holden, Cath Davies (nee Berry), Katie Charnock (nee Howden), Karen Mitchell (nee McLoughlin), Louise Marshman (nee Johnson) and Helen Longstaff (nee Young). Unfortunately, Sarah Thomas (nee Longbottom) and Alison Moverley

could not attend but loyal supporters Margaret Platts, Joyce Howden and Irene McLoughlin were able to participate.

Charlotte provided cuttings and the programme from 1991 and the discussion included Jackie and Cath achieving 14 out of 15 matches and Karen and Katie with 11 out of 15 and why oh why did Jackie and Cath lose to the Lancashire 1st pair? Had they won they would have been on the 15 out of 15 Roll of Honour.

They recalled the delight when Yorkshire Men came to support them in their match v Surrey at four rubbers all and how the men certainly gave them a huge boost as they had already completed their own match to become Champions.

This was a team who showed great teamwork, enthusiasm and Yorkshire grit.

For Karen Mitchell, this was the highlight of her career as was playing for Yorkshire and to be Champions. It also meant she had won the U18 Girls' County Cup, Ladies' Winter County Cup and Ladies' Summer County Cup with most of the same team members.

For Captain Charlotte Lindsay there was no proper opportunity to celebrate 30 years' ago so they have now done it 30 years on! Below are some brief memories of that amazing week from Charlotte and supporter Margaret Platts and extracts from an article written by Yorkshire Post Tennis Correspondent Reg Brace.

YORKSHIRE

Charlotte Lindsay's Memories

DOUBLE

The first day v Leicestershire was a very tight match which we won 5-4 but lost on sets and games! However, there was a problem as our third pair did not win a set. A change would be needed for the next day otherwise the pressure on the first two pairs would be too much.

So, 17-year-old Louise Johnson was brought in to partner Sarah. The other two established pairs Jackie and Cath, Karen and Katie, I was keen to keep together for the week.

On day two, it rained. No match with Essex. Very frustrating as this meant play on Saturday. Day three was a comfortable 8-1 against Middlesex. No problems for the captain.

Day 4 was against Lancashire which is always an edgy battle. Rachel Violett and her partner won 3 matches but we won the tie 5-4 thanks to our determined second pair pulling off the final match. There were shock waves around the ground that day as Surrey, unbeaten since 1985, lost to Leicestershire. That made our day one win all the more valuable and put us on top of the leaderboard.

Day 5 was our battle with Surrey. They were not as strong as previous



years but we were nervous and edgy, losing match points, saving match points but eventually pulling off a 5-4 win.

From a captain's perspective, this was a nightmare day given the importance of the overall situation. I must give credit to

the fighting qualities of the team members as once again we were in a thrilling 4-4 position.

At some point during the final round, the Men's team arrived to give valuable >>> **CONTINUES ON P22**

>>> CONTINUED FROM P21

vocal support and encouragement. I have never been so happy to see a gang of sweaty and loud men in my life. They had just beaten Surrey too!

The final day we had to play the postponed rain affected match against Essex. I did not sleep that night fearing an anti-climax, tired legs and mental fatigue after the week's battles. However, a serene 6-3 win meant we were Champions.

What an achievement for a group of players who subsequently went on to win the Winter Indoor Championship as well.

The following are extracts from a review by Reg Brace, Tennis Correspondent of the Yorkshire Post, that was written for Serve and Volley, the official magazine of the LTA and fully reproduced in the 1992 Yorkshire LTA Annual Handbook.

Patience has its reward

I waited a long time to write about a Yorkshire double in Group One of County Week. I was there in 1963 to see the late Freda Hann's side win a second accolade for Yorkshire women, and in 1967 and 1988 to record a second and third triumph for Yorkshire men. Two titles in the same year, however, remained a tantalising mirage.

The week that changed all that started with a couple of setbacks as Jason Goodall withdrew from the men's team with an injured shoulder and Nina Topper from the women's line-up because of an ankle operation. But ranks were closed, and at the end of a remarkable championship neither team had been beaten.

Yorkshire men reached a final tally of five wins, 32 rubbers and 69 sets. The women also, of course, won five matches but took 29 rubbers and 60 sets. These matches also contained a shot and a set which were crucial to the hopes of both the men and the women.

First, the shot. It was in the second round of the women's match when Yorkshire's leaders Catherine Berry and Jackie Holden were 3-5 and match point down in the final set against the Surrey thirds. Defeat here would have put Surrey 4-2 ahead at tea.

Who would have backed Yorkshire to capture the three final rubbers? Nobody, I suspect, although the questions became academic when Holden solved the crisis by climbing to hit a smash of splendid power, angle and penetration.



Margaret Platts' Memories

I've supported the Yorkshire Ladies for a number of years and I learned about supporting at the feet of Thelma, Gloria, Irene and Joyce.

Thelma always wanted our pairs to get to the net and dig in. Irene taught me how to keep the score on two courts at the same time (or nearly) and Gloria would keep scores on all three courts at the same time (I failed miserably at that). Joyce always wanted to know the scores which kept me on my toes. I have to say the men's team showed us how to take the support up a notch or two!

I suppose all counties claim good team

spirit but the Yorkshire team spirit is second to none and it is what makes us win matches we otherwise might have lost.

When one team member, Cath Berry, makes a 500-mile round trip on the day of the reunion to celebrate with her team mates just because she could, it seems to bring the definition of team spirit to a new level. More than that she was the first to arrive!

The standard of competitiveness at County Week is phenomenal and all played without umpires and line judges. No wonder it is addictive watching.

She also struck another fine overhead to clinch victory by 6-1, 6-7, 7-5 but it was the smash on Surrey's match ball which saved the rubber and arguably the week for Yorkshire women.

The set which was equally priceless to Yorkshire men was in the last round. They had led 4-2 at tea, but lost their momentum dramatically as Surrey counterattacked to take the first set in each of the last three rubbers. Yorkshire were tottering, no doubt about that. Steve Heron and Gary Henderson were the players who rose to an increasingly desperate situation.

They had been performing fitfully, but found the passion to force a deciding set against Neale Pashley and Richard Stoakes in which they produced their most innovative and exciting tennis to come through 2-6, 6-4, 6-1. Surrey won the other two rubbers but it was too late: they had been beaten for the first time in three years and Yorkshire were within reach of becoming Britain's top county.

Diminishing the mathematical permutations which always accompany the closing stages of the event, Yorkshire had to beat Lancashire and the women defeat Essex to become the dual champions.

Joyce and Roger Howden drove through

the night from Leeds to see their daughter Katie play for Yorkshire. Joyce – a member of the last Yorkshire women's team to win the title – was greeted by Valerie Clark, her partner 28 years ago and another stalwart drawn to Devonshire Park for an occasion to savour. Denis Heron, father of Steve, made a dawn dash from York because "I just wanted to witness a bit of tennis history."

The men had the hardest task. No Roses clash is easy. Ian Blakeman and Paul Ranson played a vital role for Yorkshire in the first two rounds. Yorkshire 4-2 up at tea, with one victory needed for an impregnable lead. This arrived when Danny Bishop and Simon Ickringill beat Knowles and McGuire and at the venerable age of 34 Simon enjoyed his best County Week since his debut at Ilkley in 1978.

Yorkshire women's conquest of Essex was almost placid by comparison. Berry and Holden dropped only nine games as they brought their total of winning rubbers for the week to 14. Two victories from the admirably consistent second pair of Howden and McLoughlin and one from a resolute third couple of Louise Johnson and Sarah Longbottom completed the second unbeaten run in a memorable week.