

'BEARSTED & THURNHAM LAWN TENNIS CLUB



**MINUTES OF THE THIRTY-NINTH ANNUAL
GENERAL MEETING HELD AT
1.00PM ON SUNDAY 20th NOVEMBER 2016
IN THE CLUBHOUSE**

PRESENT:

Derce Mercer (President)
Viv Pearson (Chairman)
Geoff Bennett (Past Chairman)
Janet Perrett (Secretary)
Kim Martin (Treasurer)
Alan Wilkins (Club Captain)
Pauline Johnson (Social & Evts. Rep.)
Jo Mullner (Bar Manager)
Lee Grant (Junior Rep.)

plus 27 Club members

APOLOGIES:

Aine Roche
Paul Duckworth
Neville Milsted
David & Sheila Burton
Mervyn & Pat LeRoy
Michael & Rachele Laurenson
Carol & Ian Chatterton
Jan Bowrage
Peter & Jacqueline Church
Dee Wall
Judith Smith
Tony West
Cathy Hoskins

1. WELCOME

The President, Derce Mercer, opened the meeting by thanking everyone for coming and welcomed them to the meeting. He then advised the members that there are changes this coming year as Alan Wilkins and Neville Milsted are retiring. He thanked both Alan and Neville for all they had done for the Club during their many years in office. He also thanked Geoff as he is now due to stand down from his position of Past Chairman, and finally he thanked the members of the committee for the work they do for the benefit of the Club.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from members named above.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM

Minutes of the 38th AGM were approved by those present as a true record of that meeting, proposed by Geoff Bennett and seconded by Peter Duckworth.

4. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters outstanding from the minutes of the previous AGM.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

First, can I thank everyone for attending this AGM and Jo and Keith for manning the bar.

I have been Club Chairman for a year now and have enjoyed being a member of the Management Team. Thank you Geoff for all your hard work over the past 4 years as Vice Chairman, Chairman for 2 years and this year as Past Chairman, and for all the help and advice you have given me. I will really miss you, we all will.

There have been several improvements to the Clubhouse; new inside and outside furniture, new carpet, new patio and freshening up of the kitchen. I would like to thank Helena Goodwin for researching the new furniture and carpet and David Burton and Mervyn LeRoy for organising the maintenance days when lots of work has been achieved, in particular the work to the kitchen, paintwork to the Clubhouse, a new front door and general upkeep of the Club. A big thank you also to Brian Burley and Ron Taylor for the maintenance and repairs they have carried out and to all the members who attend maintenance days, their contribution is invaluable. Thank you also to David Dodge for all his hard work in making the grounds always look great.

This year has seen some big changes in the coaching offered to members. Karen Thomas has been a coach at the Club for a number of years, helping both adults and juniors. She decided to stop being a coach at the beginning of the summer and I thank her for all the support and time she has given to the Club in her coaching role.

Thank you also to Neil Buscombe who has coached adults and many of our juniors over the years and retired at the end of September. Both Neil and Karen will be missed and are a serious loss to the Club but Carole Bacon has worked extremely hard to ensure that the Club continues to be able to offer good quality coaching to members. We have teamed up with Maidstone Tennis Academy who have successfully stepped into the breach, delivering coaching to juniors and adults individually and squad coaching, and have this season started coaching sessions at Ladies Practice Nights.

I would like to thank the Social Committee for organising several successful social events this year, and we have the Christmas Party to look forward to on Sunday 11th December and the New Year's Day Walk. The Friday afternoon bridge sessions organised by Rita Mathur have been a great success and will continue next year.

The Social Committee have many ideas in the pipeline for next year so just watch for the email notifications and the notice board for details, then come and join other members for, what is always a very entertaining evening.

There will be changes to both the Management and Tennis Committees. As I said at the beginning, Geoff retires as Past Chairman. In addition Kim is not seeking re-election as treasurer, but he has been nominated to take on the role of Club Captain. This brings me to Alan Wilkins who is retiring as Club Captain and also Neville Milsted who is standing down as Deputy Club Captain.

Alan and his family joined the Club in 1982 and he became Chairman in 1984. He's been Club Captain with Neville as Deputy since 2001 and has been serving on the Management and Tennis Committees for 32 years.

I've not mentioned all members of the MC individually, but I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Management Team as a whole, they all contribute hugely to the running of the Club.

Thank you. I will now hand over to Kim for the Treasurer's report.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

The accounts, which were audited by Rod Hewson for the year ended 31st December 2015 were not presented to the meeting as they had been available to view on the website.

Subscriptions are our main concern as they have reduced over the last couple of years from £37,000 in 2014, £32,000 in 2015 and to £31,000 this year. This is not an issue in the short term but does have an effect on longer term planning. The committee has worked quite hard to attract new members over this past year.

In 2015 we spent £6,000 on repainting courts 1,2 & 3. £7,000 on new inside and outside furniture. We received a £3,000 refund for returning the outside furniture because of bad workmanship.

In 2016 £2,000 was spent on replacing the outside furniture and new parasols. £5,000 was spent on the new patio.

Currently we have £100,000 in the bank.

There is no major capital spending planned for 2017.

No questions

7. CLUB CAPTAIN'S REPORT

TOURNAMENTS

League Representation.

We have teams competing in the Kent, East Kent and the M&D Leagues where we entered 24 (28 2015) teams in the summer leagues of this year.

This winter we have 24 teams (24 2015/16) entered this winter.

We have also entered a Boys U18 team in the Kent League this winter.

Something in the order of 250 fixtures had to be arranged, never mind the rearranged matches, for which we must be grateful to both Kim Martin and Gary Duckworth and all the team captains for their organisation of their squads.

The team results during the year have been published on the club web site and progressively throughout the year in the January, May and September issues of the Newsletters.

The Kent League and M&D results feature on their respective League Planners can be viewed on their respective web sites.

The East Kent League results are not expected until their AGM is held early next year.

During the **winter season 2015/2016** our **Ladies Mid Week 60 1** won division 1 in the Kent League. (No divisional final).

Our **Mixed 3** also won division 8A and promotion to division 7A in the Kent League. (Lost divisional final).

There was further success for our teams during the **summer season 2016**.

Our **Men's 1** won division 2 and promotion to division 1 in the M&D League.

Our **Ladies 3** won division 7A and promotion in the Kent League. (Lost divisional final).

Our **Ladies Mid Week 1** won division 2 and promotion in the Kent League. (No divisional final).

Our **Ladies 1** won division 1 in the East Kent League. (No divisional final).

Winter Singles Ladder

Paul Hayes requested and was given authority by the Tennis Committee to re-launch a winter singles ladder. The ladder started in October and will run through to the end of March next year.

Club Championship Tournament.

The finals took place this year on Saturday and Sunday 3 & 4 September 2016. The results were published in the September Newsletter, posted on the club web site and on the notice board. The weather forecast for our finals weekend was unsettled, not good news for the Tournament Referees! However the weather on the Saturday did stay dry for most of the day with only one of the scheduled matches not having finished when the rain finally arrived in the late afternoon. Apart from a rain shower on Sunday morning that did not interrupt play, the remaining finals were all completed in time to allow us to enjoy the BBQ and the presentation ceremony that followed. It was particularly pleasing once again to see a goodly number of spectators on both days to watch the tennis and enjoy the social scene. Before the presentation ceremony took place our Chairman Vivienne Pearson thanked everyone who had participated and organised the finals weekend and for making it such a success. The presentation of trophies was carried out by our President, Derce Mercer, which concluded with the most improved player awards. This year Tracey Sweet won the senior award and David Depledge won the junior award. Photographs taken at this finals weekend are now in the album in the bar area in the clubhouse alongside the photographs from previous years.

We are planning to hold the 2017 Club Championship Tournament on 2 & 3 September 2017 with the intent once again of completing all the events over 1.5 days such that play is finished by the early afternoon on the Sunday with the BBQ/Presentation Ceremony to follow.

To allow this to be achieved the Tennis Committee at its September/November 2016 meeting, having carried out a Finals Weekend review, concluded that the Playing Rule requiring finalists to be available to play on both days over finals weekend would be strictly adhered to. This was because this year there was 13 requests affecting 18 of the 32 finals from finalists wanting to play their matches on a particular day and/or time on finals weekend.

Although we were able to satisfy all of these requests it did have a detrimental effect on the balance of the order of play over the two days.

Coaching & Junior Tennis.

A Report from Carole Bacon our Coaching Coordinator and Lee Grant our Junior Representative along with any other Reports from our coaches will be delivered to this meeting later under a separate agenda item.

Social Tennis

- Social tennis has continued throughout the summer on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings. Wednesday winter social tennis organized by Susan Russell started at the beginning of October with 32 (40 last year) regular players with some 20 reserves.
- Pam Cooper organized yet another successful Ladies Tournament on 4 August this year. Winners were Teresa Abery & Sandy Chidwick.

As I said in the September Newsletter I would not be seeking re-election as Club Captain at this AGM.

In 1984 I was elected as your Chairman.

Since then I have had the continuing privilege and honour to serve on the Management and Tennis Committees from the end of my Chairmanship duties until today.

In 1989 I was elected Deputy Club Captain and at the 2001 AGM I was elected Club Captain with Neville Milsted as Deputy Club Captain.

Throughout this time I have enjoyed the support of the Management, Tennis and Social Committees along with the membership at large and Neville Milsted in particular.

The club has continued to evolve over the years whilst still maintaining its original ethos of being a club that offers excellent well-maintained facilities for all standards as well as having a superb reputation for being a very social and family orientated club alongside a high standard of competitive tennis. Long may that continue.

I feel justly proud of being involved in the management process of the club. Because of this I am more than willing and able to continue to support and be involved in the running of our club in whatever way may be appropriate and of help to the Management and Tennis Committees.

That concludes the Club Captains Report for this year.

No questions.

8. CLUB COACHES' REPORTS

Carole Bacon, Coaching Co-ordinator's Report

Since May this year we have been in a period of transition with our junior coaching. Karen decided to stop coaching and concentrate on her Sports Massage business and Neil retired. Determined to make sure that all the juniors would still have coaching, Lee Grant and myself, with backing from the Tennis Committee, set about finding a suitable coach or coaches to work at Bearsted.

After meeting a couple of organisations it was decided that Maidstone Tennis Academy would be able to offer us what we needed in terms of junior and adult coaching.

There was a successful launch day in May and some half term camps for the children. After this, MTA started to run junior squads on every night of the week which contained most of the juniors previously coached by Neil as well as a few new children. The summer camps were extremely successful with 25 – 35 children coming each day. The vast majority of children signed up again for the autumn season and to date MTA have 42 juniors having coaching in squads. Hopefully the weather will be kind and allow squads to take place over the winter.

In addition to the junior coaching, MTA have started to provide coaching for adult members. Those members keen to organise their own squads have done so and Celia Pascoe (Ladies' Captain) has been instrumental in organising coaching at Ladies' practice. This means that, including those adults being coached by Phil, we have approximately 40 adults in the club receiving coaching.

MTA are keen to support the club in different ways and have organised a Christmas social event for the mixed morning group and the ladies. We are also working with them to promote a junior Christmas party. Paul Hayes is organising a singles ladder this winter and MTA have offered a free coaching session as the prize. We see this level of commitment from MTA as very positive and know that they are as keen as we are to make the partnership successful for everyone.

Lee and myself hold regular meetings with MTA to address any issues that may arise and discuss how things can move forward. We report back to the Tennis Committee who will offer advice and guidance. If anyone has any suggestions for coaching or issues they would like to raise, we are more than happy to speak to MTA on your behalf.

Lee Grant, Juniors Representative.

Lee has entered a boys U18s team into Kent League. They won their first match and have done reasonably well since. A positive step forward for the juniors.

Neil Buscombe, Coach's Report

I finished my coaching last July so that the Club could develop a new coaching strategy by appointing Maidstone Tennis Academy.

It was nice to finish my coaching time by getting another three youngsters through 'Colours' and to see that one of them turned up for social play to see what our standard was really like. My best wishes for the future to William, Sam and Vicki.

At the end of July I had 35 youngsters on my coaching list, split into five different groups. Of these, four groups seemed to embrace the new system, applied for the Summer Camp and then signed on for this September. The one group I had doubts about proved me correct as only one player came forward and made any effort to re-join, in spite of all the encouragement given.

For the few adults I worked with last year I hope I did you some good and that you are trying to include my playing tips in your new game.

I would like to thank the Club and all the individuals I have been involved with, over the past nine years, for the support and encouragement they have given me. I look forward to seeing coaching grow in its success and the quantity and quality of tennis develop accordingly.

Phil Stocker, Coach's Report

As Phil was unable to attend the meeting, Carole Bacon delivered a brief report on his behalf.

As in the past couple of years Phil's coaching has been restricted to Saturday mornings coaching the ladies team 4, ex team 4, and team 5 players.

Phil asked Carole to pass on thanks to Alan & Neville for all the help they'd given him with coaching over the years.

No questions.

9. ELECTION OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Chairman, commences her second year of office and the Past Chairman retires leaving a vacancy for a Vice Chairman. Alan Wilkins, Club Captain and Neville Milsted, Deputy Club Captain have advised the committee that they wish to retire leaving a further two vacancies. Kim Martin has also advised us that he wishes to stand down as Treasurer.

All other committee members shown below were re-elected 'en bloc' to serve for a further year. Proposed by Keith Mullner and seconded by Julie Palmer.

Position	Nominee
Secretary	Janet Perrett
Membership secretary	Aine Roche
Social & Events Representative	Pauline Johnson
Bar Manager	Jo Mullner
Newsletter & Website Editor	Paul Duckworth
Maintenance Representative	David Burton
Junior Representative	Lee Grant

Vice Chairman:	Ron Taylor proposed by Alan Wilkins and seconded by Neville Milsted
Club Captain:	Kim Martin proposed by Keith Mullner and seconded by Stefano Santini
Deputy Club Capt:	Carole Bacon proposed by Lee Grant and seconded by Celia Pascoe
Treasurer:	Nick Horsley proposed by Viv Pearson and seconded by Kim Martin

The above nominations for Vice Chairman, Club Captain, Deputy Club Captain and Treasurer were all duly elected.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Question: What coaching is available at weekends for adults?

Answer: Phil coaches Saturday mornings. MTA could coach late on Sundays if they had coaches available and enough members willing to make up a squad. The Club can approach MTA to organise a suitable session.

In January/February the Club will be sending out an email asking members if they would be interested in having further coaching sessions put in place.

Question: Why can't we have newsletters in paper form because it's difficult to read them in the format in which they are currently sent out by email?

Answer: It's too expensive to send newsletters by post.

It was explained that next year the committee propose emailing specific items separately as they appreciate that a large proportion of members do not read the newsletter in the current format.

11. CLOSING REMARKS

The President closed the meeting by saying that he was sorry Alan & Neville were retiring from the committee and thanked them again for their many years of support for the Club, but he was delighted that Kim, Carole and Ron Taylor were taking on the roles of Club Captain, Deputy Club Captain and Vice Chairman respectively.

Derce also commented that this was his last meeting as President and that he had enjoyed the privilege of being President for the last three years.

Thank you all for coming.

The Chairman now advised that Alan Wilkins had been invited by the Management Committee to be the new President for the next three years.

The meeting closed at 1.50pm