



Chairman's Report – 2020

Trying to think of an original start to a report, which is a summary of 2020, is completely impossible given everything that has already been written and said about this year!

We started the year in an optimistic fashion with our AGM and Awards Ceremony in Exeter, following which two of our Devon winners went on to win the South & South West Regional Award and represented the Region in the National Awards. Bovey Tracey TC won Regional Club of the Year and Marian Vinall won Regional Volunteer of the Year. Marian then went on to be runner-up in the National Final (which allows me to bask in her reflective glory).

I would like to congratulate all of our Devon Award Winners and indeed all those that were nominated for awards.

Once the pandemic hit in March all team competitions were wiped out for what turned out to be the entire year. Along with that the vast majority of County Training and Tournaments were also lost. However thanks to negotiations between the government and the LTA some forms of social tennis have been allowed during both lockdowns.

This leads me onto our clubs and venues across Devon, which have had a very difficult year. Financially thanks to a combination of Sport England and Government Grants, the LTA refunding Registration Fees and the support of their members and users they have all just about survived the year. However I must go on record and thank all those volunteers, coaches, and some employees who did a tremendous amount of work to keep their clubs in good order and Covid safe during the periods when play has been allowed.

No one should underestimate the work that goes on behind the scenes and the responsibility that rest on the shoulders of these volunteers and others during these very testing times. I feel very proud to be associated with these people.

We should also remember our coaches who have also had a tremendously difficult year. Financially they have been hit hard and most of them are young self-employed individuals who have struggled to obtain support.

I must also go on record and thank the three County Employees – Debbie Freeman, Will McNally, and Jemima Morris who have gone above and beyond when they have been allowed too between periods of being furloughed.

I must also thank all my Devon Tennis Committee who have continued to support the counties work as well as working at their own clubs and venues.

We have seen the LTA introduce several new reforms to the registration process and the allocation of Wimbledon Tickets. I do appreciate that this has not gone down well with many of our clubs and venues. If you feel strongly about these changes there maybe one advantage to the current situation. It is likely the LTA's AGM will take place virtually so registered clubs can attend this easily without having to travel to London and you can express your concerns and feelings about these changes.

Lets truly hope that 2021 will see some normality return and we can all go back to enjoying our wonderful sport to the full.

David Vinall – Devon Tennis Chair and LTA Councillor