



Newsletter

Issue 2 Summer 2022

WELCOME from Club Chair, Jenny Nicol

Welcome to our second newsletter, coming out as our summer season moves into full swing, jam-packed with fun tennis and spirited internal and external league games.

CLUBHOUSE REVAMP

I'm happy to report that we have embarked on a revamp of our Clubhouse. We now have a new permanent cleaner, who is coming in weekly to clean the whole premises. Under the artful eye of Judy Knight, helped by a band of volunteers, the Clubhouse has been painted and decorated and generally given a sympathetic facelift. Together with new flooring, the end result will be a much more welcoming space, fit to host social events for all sections and sub-sections of the Club - tennis, bowls, croquet.

REJUVENATION OF COURTS 3&4

The other important development is the rejuvenation of Courts 3 and 4. After long-standing problems with their drainage, we're confident that the work scheduled for w/c June 13 will greatly improve their playability, increasing the overall availability of courts to all members and with an expected surface life of 5 to 7 years or more. Further details elsewhere in the newsletter.

CAN YOU HELP ON THESE JOBS?

We have two upcoming vacancies on the Club Committee. Our Treasurer, Di Kemp, and Jim Hill, our Junior Liaison, both wish to stand down at the next AGM in October.

We also have a new need – a grounds maintenance manager to help ensure the club's super facilities continue to be kept in tip-top condition. Further details of this elsewhere in the newsletter.

If any member is interested in either of the Committee roles, or in the grounds maintenance role, please get in touch with me at jennynicol12@gmail.com or phone 07507 782469.



Bonnets were in abundance at the Easter social.

KEEP SUPPORTING THE SOCIALS!

Finally, please do continue to support our social events. The Easter Charity Tournament, in aid of the Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre, was a great success, and May Bank Holiday saw another fun day, with tea and cake too! The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

celebration was a red-white-and-blue occasion which involved the whole combined Club.

Lots of hard work by willing volunteers goes into organising these events, and we're very grateful for all their efforts. Thanks too to Alastair Flint for writing and co-ordinating the newsletter, and to Seabury Salmon for further editing and design.

Ultimately this is your newsletter, so please send any contributions, or ideas for content, for future issues to Alastair Flint at ajflint@outlook.com

Grounds maintenance management

The regular upkeep of the Club's tennis courts is crucial in maintaining a successful club. Over recent years, a number of volunteers have helped out with various individual jobs and we would like this to continue. But we now need a dedicated person to manage court and ground maintenance, to make sure tasks are done when needed. The recent proposal for the improvement of drainage on courts 3 and 4 includes a more rigorous maintenance schedule. Specifically, we envisage regular use of a ride-on sand brusher.

The focus of this role is the playing surfaces, which need regular and watchful attention. Hedge-cutting and weeding are done by a paid contractor, whilst Chris Piper continues as ever to keep things shipshape around the grounds, for which we are immensely grateful.

The Committee would be delighted to hear from any member willing to fulfil the role of Maintenance Manager in a voluntary capacity. Or perhaps you know someone from outside the Club who might be interested? For more information, please contact Jenny Nicol on 0750 778 2469 or email jennynicol12@gmail.com

Let the good times roll...

In mid-February, river water flooded all the courts, but fortunately the water receded quickly. Court 5's carpet was badly creased by the force of the floodwater but thanks to club volunteers and some muscular help from our neighbouring rugby club, we achieved the mighty heavy task of rolling up the sodden, wrinkled carpet and then flattening the creases as we unrolled it. Result! The court carpet was back in play very soon. An heroic effort by all concerned.



Improving red court drainage

The drainage problems on courts 3 and 4 (the red courts) after heavy rain are well known.

A Committee sub-group commissioned a report from independent court surface analysts Labosport which revealed that at the very base of the carpet there is a microscopic layer of impermeable material. This is likely to have built up from the sand applied when the carpets were originally laid. We now use a different sand. The underlying Tarmac is draining freely.

After researching ways forward, the sub-group arrived at two financially viable options:

- 1 - taking up the artificial clay surfaces and installing Astroturf instead
- 2 - retaining the existing artificial clay surfaces (which have many years' life left in them) and rejuvenating the drainage by removing and disposing of the dirty

lower layer of sand (by air blasting and then pressure washing) and re-dressing with new sand and some of the existing top layer of clean sand.

Many players enjoy using the red as much as the green courts and the club's ability to offer a mix of surfaces is one of its attractions.

The sub-group recommended, and the Committee favoured, option 2. This recommendation was accepted unanimously after we invited questions and observations from all members in March. We expect the work will be completed shortly by sports surface specialist, Fosse Contracts, who will do all they can to keep any disruption to a minimum.

The Labosport report and technical data is on the club website, www.ludlowcastletennis.org.uk. Click on the Policies tab, and the report is the second item.

Easter Fun Tournament and other social gatherings...

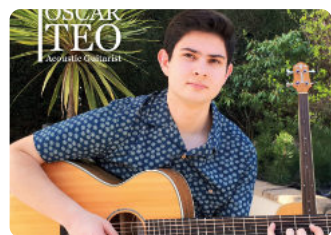
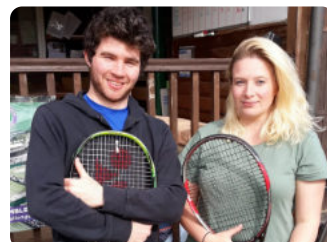
Over 35 members had an enjoyable time at the annual tournament in memory of Richard Dixon, who was a member of the Club for many years. Enormous thanks to Christine Hood for the overall organisation, and to Richard Smith for devising a format which allowed players of all standards to compete together.

The tournament was won by Jen Nicol and Iain MacDonald after a close final with Elisabeth Reissner and Martyn Jones. In the runners-up final, Rhian Davies and Ollie Church came through on top. Everyone tucked into a tasty buffet lunch, and an array of colourful Easter bonnets was on display.

The event raised a fantastic £400 for the Hereford Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre, whose Manager, Sam Stacey presented the Richard Dixon Cup to the tournament winners.



Above: Iain, Jen and Sam Stacey. Below: Ollie and Rhian.



Club member Oscar Teo plays acoustic guitar at a Ludlow Fringe concert on Wednesday 29 June. His music is "an eclectic blend of genres woven together to create a rich, immersive sound that takes you away from the everyday".

Social dates for your diary

July 10, Sunday: Wimbledon Finals Day - fun tournament followed by strawberries, Pimms, afternoon teas and the men's final. The bar will be open, TV on, so relax and enjoy the men's final with fellow tennis fans at the club!

September 23, Friday: Macmillan coffee morning fundraiser for cancer sufferers.

September 25, Sunday: Social tournament - details to follow.

October 22, Saturday: Quiz evening, fish n chip supper, open bar, music.

December 4, Sunday: Christmas Cracker fun tournament

December 7, Wednesday: Wreath making, mulled wine and mine pies

December 10, Saturday: Christmas Party, full details to follow.

Platinum Jubilee tennis

Around 80 people, loads of lovely food, a fine day and tennis galore. Ludlow Castle Tennis Club and our bowls and croquet friends celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in style with a highly successful social, organised by Chris Hood and Judy Knight. Guests included Maureen Farmer, Peter Corston, John and Gill Dowden and Julian Blake. More socials are planned – see above.



Di Corston



It is with great sadness that we learnt of the death of Di Corston on 9 March. Older members of the Club will remember Di as a lovely lady - a stalwart of the Club, who, with her husband Peter joined LCTC in the early 1960s.

Di and Peter were at the heart of the Club from then until about five years ago, when they stopped playing.

Tributes have been made to Di from her friends at the Club; she was a fine tennis player, and famous for organising afternoon teas at the then regular weekend social sessions. She was known for encouraging beginners and new members.

Di always had a warm welcome for everyone, whether on the tennis court, or in the kitchen, preparing those delicious teas. She had a keen sense of humour, on and off the court - one friend told the story that, whenever she was serving at 30-40, Di would shout "deuce coming" - and so often it did!

Our thoughts and sympathy are with Peter and the family. A memorial service to celebrate Di's life was held in St Laurence Church, Ludlow, attended by many friends and family, including members of the Club, who remembered Di with love and affection.

Newcomers' Corner

CHRIS FIRTH

In March 2021 we moved permanently to Ludlow from Leicestershire, although we had had a house in the town for over 20 years. I have been a keen tennis player since an early age after my father constructed a grass court at our house. So, one of the first things I did after moving was to join the club.



Other members have been very welcoming and friendly, so I soon slotted into various weekly social sessions and last summer played in the tennis doubles tournament and over the winter in the mixed doubles. The Christmas social last December was a real highlight. The club is now very much part of my life and I value the many friendships I have made here.

JACKIE THOMSON

We moved here a year ago from Lincolnshire, I used to play at Grantham Tennis Club which was quite a big club, I had played in league matches and socials. I also played in Australian type open tournaments which were very good. The club built some fantastic facilities via debt and lottery grant, but as a result became more like a business than a club.



I have been made very welcome, have joined in social tennis and would like to be involved in organised tennis groups as well. The members are all very friendly and I really look forward to my tennis every week.

NICOLA (NICKY) CHASE

Relocating back to this country in 2018 after 30 years away to be closer to my mum was a radical move for me. I lived in New York for 11 years before here, and in Hong Kong for a decade before that. Music has been a constant in most of my life as I presented a daily radio programme in Hong Kong, and was a club DJ around Asia and the Middle East previously, yet New York is the city I've most considered home. I worked there as a foreign radio correspondent before focusing on writing. My autobiography, "*Tea and Transition*" was published in 2015, and I'm currently working on media options around that.



When in New York, I played tennis on hard courts in local parks but only between April and November—winters were brutal and indoor courts too expensive. The US Open was local to me and I witnessed some terrific matches there. I always take my racquet on my travels and I've been lucky enough to have coaching or games in Dubai, Qatar, Bali, Australia, Hong Kong, New York, and Thailand.

I'm loving life at the Club, especially Thursday evening Ladies' Nights, although wearing scarves and gloves to play in December and January was a new experience! Along with music, tennis has been an essential constant in my life, and I'm truly grateful to everyone at the Club who has made me feel so welcome, and I feel honoured to have represented the Club a couple of times already in the Ladies 3rd team.

MEN'S TEAM NEWS – Martyn Jones

We have a healthy number playing for our external league teams, including some very talented juniors. Well done for a winning start for our Men's 3rd team away, and the 1st team comeback from 2-0 down to get a winning draw against Mosaic 2 at home in the first match of season. We've had more people interested in matchplay and if anyone else wants to be part of the teams, the captains are happy to include as many as possible in squads!

It has been great to play competitive tennis with many talented younger members on team practice evenings and I believe the older and more experienced players will help develop the younger players' potential and improve their tactical play.

The enthusiasm of many of the members has been great. It's really helped Andy Cooke, Davide Compagno and me in terms of team organisation. We've made a positive start to the summer leagues. The 1st team is aiming to stay in Division 1 and our ambition is promotion for teams 2 and 3. All goals achievable!

LADIES' TEAM NEWS – Julie Humble

The club has entered three Ladies' teams in the Shropshire Summer Doubles League this year. For a number of years we have fielded two teams, but the recent addition of keen new members has enabled us to launch our 3rd team. Thanks to Val Cooke for captaining the 3rds, who opened their season with an impressive 4-0 home win. The Ladies' 2nd team, captained by me, made a similarly positive start, with a 4-0 victory at home. The Ladies' 1st team led by Rosie Connolly continues to impress. Their first match ended in a 3-1 win.



Chris Hood (centre) with ladies' team players (L-R) Judy Knight, Teresa Pass, Jane Cook and Gladys Rhodes

INTERNAL LEAGUES

There was a healthy number of entries in the Mixed Leagues, and the winners were: League 1: Linda McMahon and Chris Dowden, League 2: Carolyn Michie and Duncan Johnson, League 3: Teresa Pass and Des Watkins, and League 4: Anne Holding and Dorian Yarham. The Summer Leagues are now underway, and run until the end of September.

Well done to Sue Williams and Laura Johnston, winners of the Ladies League 2, with Debbie Locke and Teresa Pass runners-up. Unfortunately only a few matches took place in League 1. A new Ladies Ladder now replaces the ladies' league, and is being run by Deborah Rackham. Details are on the noticeboard.

Although only a few matches were completed in League 1 of the Men's League, League 2 fared much better, and congratulations go to Michael Grimshaw and Paul Pelling who topped that league. The runners-up were Nick Wilding and Alastair Flint.

COACHING – Richard Tennant, i2C

We have:

- Launched LTA youth courses to bring in new members
- Launched adults 'Try Tennis' on Thursdays from 1 to 2pm.
- Entered a Mini Red team and Under 18s Boys Team into the Aegon team tennis this summer
- Worked with Tennis Shropshire on delivering a schools roadshow to bring more Juniors to the Club.

Outstanding Juniors : Ben Wilderer represented Shropshire Under 18s at County Cup. Clara Hill was asked to play for Shropshire Under 18s and women's teams. Clara aims to be within the top 100 Under 16s in the UK by September (she isn't far off already) and to be in or around the top 10 Under 16s by September 2023. Christian Vatahov's target is to qualify for Junior Wimbledon again this summer and be in the top 50 Under 14s by September.