

THE ROMPA RECORDER

Sept. 2024

Editor - Clay Iles

THE CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS

sponsored by:

HPC Classics & Jag Technic Ltd.

Situated in Hammonds Drive, these classic car and sports car specialists are supporting the club championships for three years. The club was introduced to the new sponsor by classic car enthusiast and this month's interviewee Bernard Lien-Lambert.

The club championships run throughout the summer with members arranging their own matches for all rounds until the finals.

Classic encounters in these early rounds which are rarely watched by more than one or two included Peter Bray coming from almost certain defeat to beat Justin Camm in the 2nd round 3-6, 6-4, 10-8 in the tie break. Another close match was the semi-final in the ladies' singles between eventual tournament winner Sarah King-Spooner and Mars Schellevis. Sarah led 6-1, 5-2 only to lose that set and eke out a final set tie-break.



Finals Day - September 7th 2024

Ladies Singles – Sarah King-Spooner bt Ella Athanassiou 6-3, 6-2



Played on a damp court where
the ball slithered through,
Sarah's weight of shot,
particularly on the forehand,
proved conclusive. Even so the
match was closer than the score
line might suggest. More play at
the net might have helped Ella,
if she could have got there that
is. It was net play at crucial

moments that swung the match in Sarah's favour.



**Mens Singles - Colin Feeley bt
Jonathan Scriven**

6-4, 4-6, 10-8

Jonathan's attempt at winning the title three years running was thwarted by Colin's speed and aggressive forehand. Even so it was a close match. Jonathan's dogged match playing ability kept him in the match right until the end when he eventually

came within 2 points of winning. Closing in on the net more might have helped Jonathan but he would still have had to deal with Colin's heavy sliced backhand, powerful forehand and speed.

Mens Doubles - Chris Rummins/Jung Tadsee bt Peter Bray/Jonathan Scriven 6-1, 7-5

Although played in a steady downpour, the standard of play was exceptionally high. Sodden courts made the serving power and spin of Rummins and Tadsee difficult to deal with. Even so Bray and Scriven had two set points to take the match into a deciding tie-break. Overall, superior forceful play at the net in difficult conditions by Rummins and Tadsee was the deciding factor.

Ladies Doubles - Sarah King-Spooner/Ella Athanassiou bt Jess Gisby/Hazel

Sneath 6-1, 6-4,

Another match played in the rain. Drenched courts made all attempts at consistency on the vital crosscourt shots difficult to sustain. The spun groundshots of Sarah and Ella prevailed over the flatter forehands and backhands of Hazel and Jess. The losers could have tried to volley more, but slithering to the net was never going to be easy against fierce forehands.

Mixed Doubles – Hazel Sneath/Chris Rummins bt Mars Schellevis/Jonathan Scriven 6-3, 6-4.

A tight match where greater accuracy on groundstrokes and volleys made the difference. As in his singles Jonathan could have dominated more from the net, but after two other finals, fatigue was starting to show. Hazel and Chris, whose serve was always going to be difficult, proved sharper and more reliable in the volleying exchanges.

Veterans Mixed Doubles – Sue/Kevin Boakes bt Brigid Argyle/Colin Lockett 4-6, 6-3, 10-4.

Brigid and Colin seemed to have the match under their control after a fiercely fought first set. But then a few errors crept in, particularly on volleys, while Sue and Kevin steadied their game to win the tie break final set.

Veterans Ladies Doubles-Sue Boakes & Clare Greenwell bt Brigid Argyle/Carol Robson 6-2, 3-6, 10-2

Another close fought duel played on a wet court. Harder hitting from Sue and Clare gave them the first set against slightly more tentative opponents. Brigid and Carol

raised their game to take the second set but couldn't keep up the level of play to stay with Sue and Clare, who ran away with the final set tie break.

Veterans Mens Singles-John Kulenicz bt Rob Currie 6-4, 6-2.

High level percentage tennis with plenty of net clearance on cross court groundstrokes. Lots of exciting rallies, often attritional, led to a long straight set battle. The first set could have gone either way but a few decisive volleys from John gave him the edge.

The Plate - Bernard Lien Lambert&Anne Backshell bt Nick Jolly&Andy Williams 7-5, 6-2



Instigated two or three years ago, losers in first round matches can enter this mixed competition. A popular event both for players and spectators it might well sum up the club ethos – everybody plays with everybody (almost). This year the final, scheduled at the end of the afternoon brought the most watchers, filling the club

with an excited buzz. The cloud high lobs of Nick and power of Andy finally succumbed in a spirited defeat to a gentle lady Anne and her determined guiding partner, Bernard.

And what fantastic food! Served all day.



Provided by members and arranged and served by Deanna, Chris, Anne and Linda.

Many thanks to Peter Bucklitsch who took photographs on the day in Mike Dixon's absence.

Other matches not played on finals day. Congratulations to:

Veterans ladies singles-Wendy Lambert bt Clare Greenwell

Veterans Mens Doubles- Neil Baker & Johnny Fogarty bt Colin Lockett & Chris Atherton

Summer Fair

This year's August Summer Fair was another wonderful success. Skies cleared at last so that members and friends enjoyed a wide array of activities and great food.

Jackie and Sharon were in charge of the plant & produce stall, Tony managed

bric a brac, while Hazel looked after the tombola and Clare ran the shop.

Various games took over from tennis. Tony was the goal-keeper in the Beat the Goalie competition; Bernard ran the tennis serving accuracy; Glenda organised flipping coins; Ben looked after the hurling while Lesley and Wendy were in charge of the volleyball.

Meanwhile in the pavilion Cassie and several helpers were extremely busy with the delicious food. Jan had also compiled a hamper, the draw for which was won by Jim Winslet. Other winners were:

Chris Rayner – Bottle of Whisky,

Mrs Williams - £1 lottery.

The club raised over £1000 from the food, the events and stalls.

While members were enjoying the fun of the fair, near tragedy was unfolding on court 2. At the end of a coaching session one of the group collapsed with ventricular fibrillation. Members fought to save his life as Brian rushed the defibrillator from the pavilion to the scene. The head of the ambulance crew said, 'the defibrillator and immediate CPR from a member and a friend of a member saved him.'

The member who suffered is now up and about and hoping to return to tennis in a few months.

The Defibrillator

Sudden cardiac arrest can happen to anyone, anywhere. Having a defibrillator readily accessible in public spaces – such as schools, airports, shopping centres and sports facilities - significantly increases the chances of survival. How fortunate Meads Tennis Club is in having one.

Since it was installed five years ago the yellow piece of equipment by the pavilion door had never been used.

These automated external defibrillators are easy to use with clear instructions that guide even untrained bystanders through the process.

As we now know the defibrillator can mean the difference between life and death.

Please, members, learn how use it.

Clare, the club's welfare officer, is organising classes on using a defibrillator. Hazel says classes will become an annual fixture.

August Bank Holiday Round Robin

You would have thought that several rounds of 20-minute matches, a change of partner after each match, would have decided a winner. Far from it. Players' scores drew closer and closer until the mens and ladies events could only be decided by tie break play offs.

Johnny Fogarty narrowly won the men's event. The two other finalists were Tony Baxter and Nick Price. Val Clark won the ladies coming back from a deficit to defeat Julie Boon.

The Rompa Recorder Interview



This edition's member interview is with **Bernard Lien Lambert** pictured above at the sponsorship photoshoot with **Miles Hardy** and **Hazel**. A staunch competitor he serves on the club committee and has done sterling work researching court surfaces, helping members choose their preferred surface for courts 1 and 2.

1. **Why, when and where did you start playing tennis?** When I came to the UK in 1974, one of my best friends Murray Adams lived in Sevenoaks. I spent two months in his house helping him restore an old Citroen (a Traction Avant/Big 15). I already had the classic car bug then. He lived in a beautiful big house which had a tennis court. Murray's father was something big at Coutts Bank. He lent me a Dunlop Maxply racket and I was hooked. I subsequently joined the Rhiwbina Tennis Club in Cardiff where I lived for over ten years. After two years I managed to make the second team. I was chuffed!

2. **Apart from tennis what other interests do you have?** Classic cars (currently Italian cars i.e. Alfa Romeos of the 1950s/70s. Prior to this MGs, Jaguars and VW Beetles.)
3. **Have you played other sports?** As a teenager, athletics (sprint and long jump) to a good standard, as well as handball. In my mid-teens I skied a lot, culminating in skiing for my University (Bordeaux) in the Pyrenees as a slalomer. Sadly, I broke my leg very badly in a downhill competition (I entered it to help the team), which put an end to my sporting ambitions.
4. **Is there a difference between club tennis in France and in England?** Yes, for various reasons. Tennis clubs in France usually have indoor courts and most play is indoors, even in the summer! Play is also based much more around singles rather than doubles.
5. **What has been your career?** I've always been in education, from a languages teacher, to a head of department, senior teacher, advisory teacher, County Advisor/Inspector(Devon) and Ofsted Inspector. I finished my career 5 years ago as a Teacher Trainer, training secondary languages teachers to gain a PGCE/Qualified Teacher Status.
6. **Do you have a favourite tennis player? If so why?** Roger Federer of course, and before him Pete Sampras. Brilliant all round players with one-handed backhands.
7. **Which guests would you ask to a special dinner party?** I assume you mean famous people ...Mmm . People I look up to, I suppose; Barack and Michelle Obama, Jean-Jacques Goldman, my favourite French singer, David Milliband, Rita Chakrabarti and James O'Brien, broadcaster on LBC radio) Weird choice, I know.

8. **Where is your favourite part of England?** I love it here in East Sussex, but also very much like Devon and Cornwall where I lived for nearly 30 years. I've never visited the whole of England so I can't say much more. If you'd asked my favourite part of the UK, I would probably have chosen Scotland. But if I take everything into account – beauty, proximity to London and to Gatwick (I like travel), Eastbourne is perfect.
9. **Do you prefer England or France?** I prefer France in terms of its variety of landscapes, climates, its food and its culture. But I live in England and have no plan to live anywhere else.
10. **Is there anything about you that would surprise members?** Not really. I'm not the type who keeps himself to himself. Saying that, ROMPA has the most welcoming, friendliest, nicest people of any club of which I have ever been a member. That won't exactly surprise any ROMPA member!

Thank you, Bernard for your responses.

Macmillan Coffee Morning – Friday 27th September 10.00 – 1pm

Organiser – Val Rimmer – 07739 690594, Valrim54@gmail.com

Bring your friends and family

11am EASTBOURNE ROCK CHOIR

Homemade cakes, raffle, book stall, quality clothes rail.

Clay's Coaching Corner



80% of sets are won from a 3 game difference – 3-0, 4-1, 5-2. Therefore, when there is a 2 game difference - 2-0, 3-1, 4-2, 5-3 – points during the next game are crucial. If

you are losing by 2 games winning the next game puts you within striking distance with a possible consequent effect on your opponent's game. If you are ahead by two games get the next game and you are in the winning percentage category.

The Benham Trophy is awarded each year to the junior member who has improved the most and contributed in their attitude and willingness to help. Luciano has recommended this year's award should go to **Anna Rayner**.

French Visitors from Dieppe



At the end of August a small group of members from the French club Tennis de Puys in Dieppe visited Meads Club for the weekend. It was an all male group of good team standard and above. They joined in with our members during Saturday and Sunday. For some of the French team it was their first experience of playing on grass. The

Tennis de Puys club courts are the true clay court surface. Like us with grass, their clay courts close, throughout the winter. We are planning to visit their club next May. Members interested in joining the trip please contact Bernard.

News of Members

Nick Price and John Haining– won silver medals in the British over 60's Pickle Ball Doubles Champs at the Telford International Centre, Shropshire.

Lemuel Cassidy - you'll sometimes see his scintillating hitting at Meads and are bound to ask, 'who's that? Who's that?' It'll be Lemuel. His ability on the tennis court has always been evident. Lemuel just 21 yrs, was a recent semi-finalist in the Devonshire Park tournament grade 3 event. He won the doubles. During the Rothsay International Tournament earlier this summer he was a hitting partner to Emma Radacanu and also to the two tournament winners Taylor Fritz and Daria Kasatkina.

Luciano – He was a semi-finalist in the Devonshire Park British Open over 40's tennis champs.

Lucy Parkin and Mike Dixon entered the historic Benenden Mixed Doubles Charity Tournament in Kent for the 8th year in a row. They won their group of 8 couples before exiting at the quarter finals stage.



Mark Curry – the actor appeared for the last 16 months in the highly successful musical ***Wicked*** at the *Apollo* theatre Victoria. Mark has also recently featured in *Singing in the Rain* at Kilworth. A staunch tennis fan, for the last 10 years he has presented the prestigious pre - Wimbledon tournament at Edgbaston. Watch him during November and December at The

Mill at Sonning where he will be appearing in **White Christmas**. Whenever his acting schedule permits you can see him playing at Meads

Caroline Robson – raised £1500 in May for the Charity Motor Neurone Disease, Carol did this by swimming 900 lengths of her garden pool, a distance of 5 kms that she completed in 4 swims.

Meads Teams Report - Round Up by Mike Dixon

“In a somer seson whan soft was the sonne...” William Langland (Piers Plowman)

Well, the sun did shine sometimes on a busy and action-packed summer season for the 50 or so members who play competitive team tennis for Meads LTC in Sussex Leagues.

Our first team ladies play in the highest division of any of our teams (Div. 4).



Captained this year by Lucy Parkin they finished in a very satisfactory 3rd position after a topsy turvy campaign with a playing record of Won 3, Drew 0 Lost 3. Pictured are four members of the first team minus Mary S and Ella.

It was a tough season for the **second team ladies** who have been relegated from Division 5 but Captain Wendy Lambert is confident that the team will bounce back next summer. Certainly, a playing record of Played 7 Won 2, Drew 2, Lost 3 did not really do justice to some of the excellent tennis played by members of the twos.

The **third team ladies** captained by Maria Louka had an excellent season and finished with a playing record of Played 6 Won 4, Drew 1, Lost 1 in Division 9. They have secured promotion after finishing second in the Division and it is the third year in a row that the thirds have enjoyed a promotion clinching season. Impressive!

The men's section enjoyed a gloriously successful season under the leadership of Bernard Lien-Lambert. After a period in the doldrums for the men of Meads with both teams in Div.11 it was a case of quelle situation and que faire? However, with Bernard's splendid organisational efficiency and clear-sighted approach to selection policy **the first team** stormed away to secure the title with a record of Played 6, Won 5, Drew 1 Lost 0. They finished top by an impressive 6 points with Peter Bray, Jamie Francis, Ben Clennell, Daniel Wasp and Zane Axten all making significant contributions. The season included an entertaining fixture between our firsts and seconds when the seconds graciously allowed the firsts to have all four points!

Below the ones and twos about to engage in amicable battle.



The **men of the seconds** enjoyed a very strong season with a record of Played 6, Won 4, Drew 0 Lost 2. Although they ended in fourth position they missed a promotion place by just one point. During the season Bernard used a total of 19 players in the ones and twos.

Bernard adds: *“As the new men’s captain and having as my first objective promotion for the first team and my main other to be as inclusive as I could be I ensured that the second team involved no fewer than eleven players. Kevin Boakes, Chris Kilroy, Ben Hopper, Rob Currie, Johnny Fogarty, Noel Bennett, Mike Dixon, Barry Winn, Eric Jackson, John Kulenicz and I all played in at least one match...and didn’t they do well! The seconds gaining promotion was not one of my objectives so I feel we had a very successful season that went according to plan.*

I am planning to expand the men's teams from one to two this winter and from two to three next summer, the objective being that both the first and second teams gain promotion so that in 2026 we have men's teams in Divisions 9, 10 and 11."

The Mike Comber Cup is a small, mixed veterans league for women over 40 and men over 45 played on weekday evenings. The standard is very challenging, and we often encounter men, in particular, who play at a very high level for their clubs. Co-captains Mike Dixon and Lucy Parkin are grateful to the brave souls at Meads who have been up for the challenge this season and trust that a record of Played 4, Lost 4 is not too dispiriting! Congratulations to Sarah King-Spooner and Noel Bennett, playing together for the first time, who secured our only rubber of the season away at Southdown recently.

Many thanks to all our team captains for taking on what can sometimes be a time-consuming job and particular thanks to Bernard who is managing multiple teams.

New Courts - Courts 1 and 2 are to be replaced early next March with a different surface, Tiger Turf artificial grass, the same surface as courts 3 and 4. The contractor is Trevor May and the work should take about 2 weeks.

Your Committee – *(Mike Dixon writes – “the hard working committee would very much welcome reinforcements as a couple of roles still need to be filled. Please speak to our outstanding Chair, Hazel, if you feel you could help. To paraphrase JFK ‘ask not what your club can do for you – ask what you can do for your club...’”*

The committee pictured below before a meeting minus Jess, Maria and Luciano.



Our Christmas Party – 20th December at the Hydro Hotel. Dinner and disco. £50 per person. Places are limited. Contact Anne Backshell before the end of September if you want to attend.

Finally with great sadness we remember Mike Hadlow and Richard Rumary.

Two staunch members, regular players, who passed away earlier this summer.

If anyone would like to contribute to the next edition of THE ROMPA RECORDER

please contact Clay Iles _clay.iles1@hotmail.com

Thank you, Mike, for formatting, distribution and photography
