Chairman’s Report 2017

Welcome to the (acting) Chairman’s report for 2016/17 and thank you for taking the time to read it. If you can, please join the committee and myself at the AGM on Tuesday November 28th at 7.30 in the Function Room.

If you are a new member then welcome to the club and I hope you are able to make full and regular use of the courts and other facilities and that you will remain with us for many years. If you are an existing longer term member, then please accept the thanks of myself and the committee for your continued support of our excellent club.

Membership numbers are slightly up from last year, due in part to the rationalisation of tennis -only pricing introduced to make this section of the club more competitively priced and attractive to potential new members. It was a gamble but with the valuable support of the membership it has been a successful initiative with tennis membership increased, especially in the junior section, and producing much greater participation in club sessions and league teams of all ages.

Although membership numbers have increased we still need to work hard to encourage new members in all areas and your help in this is essential. Please continue to encourage and introduce potential new members.

Whilst on the subject of membership, please remember that as a member, even if you have elected to pay via monthly direct debit, you are committing to a full year’s membership and fees. If you cancel your direct debit within the year and later decide to rejoin you will have to pay for the new year’s membership in advance. I realise this may sound a little draconian but as a club we rely solely on membership fees for our existence and budgeting our finances is a continual balancing act.

Our esteemed treasurer, Malcolm Watts, continues to do a fine job in overseeing our month to month and year to year income and expenditure. We are currently husbanding our resources carefully and do not have the funds for any major initiatives or indeed emergencies – hence the continual need for new members. If you have any suggestions regarding external source of additional income then the committee would be glad to hear from you.

The Squash and Tennis Club continues to enjoy a close and mutually beneficial association with the Recreational Trust and this year the Trust have worked closely with us to keep fees down to a level in line with the outside economic conditions.

The Trust have also continued to promote the social life of the associated clubs and the Sportman’s Bar and Function room bookings have both continued to show impressive levels of useage. Well done to all those who have made this possible. I am well aware that the very existence of ourselves, the football club and the cricket club depends upon your continued progress and commitment to sport.

Sadly this year we lost our friend Keith Harris – a well loved and respected long standing member.

I would like to add a special mention also for Dave French who has played his last game on the squash courts after providing many, many years of great service to the club. You have been an inspiration to us all Dave. Enjoy your retirement from the great games you so loved – squash and racketball.

On the courts we have maintained a lively, competitive and enjoyable atmosphere and environment for all.

Squash continues to be the dominant racket sport and commitment to league teams, club nights, junior coaching and involvement with national and Devon based events has been impressive. The squash junior section has enjoyed an outstanding year with high levels of entry in the Devon Championships in the 11-19 age categories. There were indeed 2 winners, 4 runners-up and a plate winner from our youngsters. Well done to all involved, players, coaches and parents alike. Saturday morning junior training continues to attract good support.

Our thanks are due to Wignall’s for their continued generous sponsorship which has enabled the Premier League team to continue its fine levels of competition.

Racketball has also shown continued pleasing levels of participation and development with 2 ladies’ teams, Friday night and Sunday morning club sessions and continuing increasing amounts of ‘casual’ play throughout the week. Thanks to all those of you who have been a part of this encouraging progress.

The tennis section has also enjoyed an active year, building on the momentum provided by the addition of new members. For the first time in many years there were two mens’ and two ladies’ teams in the summer leagues, a mixed team and junior teams in the Aegon league. Add to this Sunday round-robins and the club tournament and two ladies’ teams already competing in the winter league and it combines to a very active and enjoyable time indeed.

I would like to thank my fellow committee members for their continued hard work and experience in keeping the club alive and moving. We really do need more committee members, a new Chairman and Vice-Chairman and now a secretary. Don’t be shy. You may well be the person or persons needed to carry this great club into the future.

Thanks finally to all of you for your continued support, to players, coaches, team captains, competition organisers, social organisers, parents, social members and everyone who helped to make it another great year at Marsh Road.

With very best wishes,

Glyn Davies.