Squash and Tennis Committee meeting

Thursday 5th July 2018 7.00 pm

Present: Glyn Davies, Jane Gick, Richard Thomas, Malcolm Watts, Lee Manning, Paul Lennox and Jane Comyns.

Apologies: Tom Boyle, Sally Mutton, Dan Gough and Matt Whalley.

Minutes: Were read but Lee Manning pointed out 4 errors or omissions. These matters will be rectified to the Committee’s specifications and June’s minutes will be re-assessed for approval at the meeting in August. Jane Comyns thanked Lee for his vigilance.

Matters arising from last meeting:  
Glyn confirmed that he had upgraded the First Aid boxes.  
Arcwrights had been to repair the lighting on our squash courts. All except one light have been replaced, as that one requires scaffolding.  
Of the players who had not yet paid this year’s subscription – one has since re-joined and is making payments for the arrears, another has joined.  
Tennis court weeding is ongoing.  
Dave Brown is still collating information for the honours’ board update.  
It was decided that circulating a list of all Members and their contact details would not be necessary – all details are available via the online system (using our own unique PINs), providing that individual Members had authorised their details’ disclosure since GDPR was introduced in May. Paul has a list of PINs if anyone forgets their number.  
A second quote has been received for the cost of sanding the squash courts floors, but in a form which included other remedial work. Paul is to go back to the provider for a replacement quote, exclusively for the sanding work.  
It was decided to proceed with the work on the glass-backed court at a price of £450.00. The missing door bolts had been reported but the company responsible for their repair had yet to visit.  
The repairs to the sticking doors have been completed, following a reasonable quote.

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Chairman’s report –  
Glyn told us that   
a) the tennis courts’ fragile fencing was in an even more dilapidated state than before and probably would not last another winter, and  
b) cracks in the surface of courts 1, 2 and 3 needed to be sealed before next winter, as another season of rain’s freezing in them, would cause larger fissures and therefore a larger bill by next summer.  
Courtstall are visiting us soon, to give us a quote for the work on these projects. Glyn said he would be launching an appeal, within the month, to Members asking for interest-free loans of £1,000.00 per head, repayable over 5 years.   
Malcolm was happy to stand as referee for Glyn’s enquiries into whether grants would be available to help pay for these tasks. He also agreed that the fence repair work should be undertaken asap, as a matter of safety. He also said we must ensure that any quote, for this job and court repairs, should include a guarantee for the work. The previous work’s guarantee had been limited to one year for subsidence and slip.   
Glyn had been advised that most of the cracks had been caused by vibrations through the lighting towers, during the high winds last autumn.  
The Committee voted unanimously in favour of pressing on with obtaining quotes, fund-raising and carrying out the repairs.   
The matter of painting and repairing court 4 was also discussed, but no action is envisaged, at the moment - Glyn told us that his previous enquiries revealed that Court 4 would be a much more expensive job as it would involve controlled ventilation and air conditioning, to keep condensation to a minimum.

Treasurer’s report  
Nothing to report – just back from holiday!!

No secretary.

Membership Secretary: current total 233.  
Last month 231 – very little change – Off peak had reduced to 10 from 13, Tennis only seniors had increased by 1 to 51 and we now have 3 Members in the HM Forces/ Student / Apprentices category (nil before).

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Recreational Trust There had been no Rec Trust meeting since our own last meeting. However, it was reported that the bin store is being replaced and that air conditioning is being introduced to the Bar - during the past few very hot months, it has become necessary, in order to improve the work environment for employees, as well as Members’ comfort! The units will double up as heaters during winter months.  
Arrangements are almost complete for the Cricket Extravaganza on 17 July when Taunton-based Western Storm (Champions of last year’s ladies’ Kia-sponsored Super League) play a gentleman’s Somerset XI at our ground as part of Marcus Trescothick’s benefit year.

Squash:   
Dan Gough (Squash Club Captain) sent out this comprehensive summary of squash matters to date -

* I have finally managed to get on top of the website hackers for the time being, I have also made the necessary changes to ensure we are compliant online with the latest GDPR changes - time jobs that I won't be charging the squash club for.
* I have been in conversation with the Devon leagues regarding the upcoming squash and racketball leagues, entering teams and in discussions with other clubs over league changes proposed. All of this culminated in the following teams being entered by our club this season:
  + Mixed 1st team in the premier division. I will also seek sponsorship to support this team
  + Mixed 2nd team in divison 2
  + Mixed 3rd team in division 3
  + Mixed 4th team in division 4
  + Mixed 5th team in division 5. This is a new team made up of keen members who want to give it a go, an attitude that I encourage highly.
  + Mixed Racketball 1 in division 2
  + Mixed Racketball 2 in division 2. Another new team made up of former squash division players wanting to try something new.
* At the Devon Squash AGM held on Tuesday at our club, aware of the major league changes proposed, I invited captains or representatives of each club team to attend and add their input to proceedings. To summarise there were two proposals put forward:
  + Fort Stamford suggested a new format for the Premier Division of 3 players per side, 2 teams potentially per club.
  + Exeter Golf and Country suggested splitting the league season into 2 leagues, one before and after xmas, with promotion and relegation at xmas. Divisions in this proposal would be split from the current divisions, each one league of 10 teams becoming 2 leagues of 5 teams.
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* Ultimately after the best part of 2 hours consideration the second option was chosen as the new format for the leagues. I voted for this proposal as I believe change is needed but the first proposal was too drastic and not fully formed to implement for this season. With the new format of the leagues it is a stepping stone to change which may be further developed, but with minimal risk of losing any exiting players from the leagues.

In summary:

* Leagues will this year be split over 2 separate seasons before and after xmas
* Leagues will have 5 teams in each division
* The splits will be based on finishing places last season
* Promotion and relegation will be for each top and bottom 2 teams in each of the divisions, only the team finishing 3rd will stay in the same league. This will keep things fresh throughout.
* Each team will play home and away in each mini-season.
* This has no effect on courts
* Match numbers will remain roughly the same

This does not affect the ladies matches, this remains as proposed to Sharon.

Hopefully this will spark some life into the leagues.

I'd also like to mention what a great job the organisers of summer teams are doing again this year, their model of lots of members doing a couple of jobs each really is a shining example to how this club should run.

Thank you to Dan for all his hard work!!  
The band “Skool Daze” has been booked for Summer Teams Finals’ Night 15 September   
  
Tennis:   
Our mixed team has played 5 matches in all, each won though by different margins. The pool of players is larger than last year’s, and all are enjoying the fixtures!   
There has been one round of the Mixed Cup Tournament. It was a very good standard of tennis!! Our Team beat Ivybridge B (who play their league tennis in a division higher than us) 7-1, at home.  
Ladies’ A have yet to lose a match, the closest result was a 5-4 win.  
Becs (Heale) had entered several of our young players in the Devon Development pre-Junior-level get-together at Ivybridge Tennis Centre, recently. She reported that the Devon coaching staff were impressed by

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Tennis (continued)

our entrants, and that they were now aware of Newton Abbot Club and would be visiting soon!  
Ghana Day Tournament had been postponed until September as the original date was not well-supported.

Racquetball:   
Jane Gick confirmed that she had brought the trial period for £3.00 per night Friday night ladies’ squash to a close. Whilst one or two players who had become Members complained, loudly, that their Membership was no longer value for money, many non-Members expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to try out the sport. The 6 or so attendees who were not yet Members would now have to decide whether or not to join. The usual trial 6 visits had been extended to well over 12 months in this project to introduce sport to those previously oblivious to the lure of the game.

Any Other Business:  
Lee reported that he had started a whatsapp group for squash club nights, with himself as Administrator. To date he had 16 members in the group!  
Richard wondered whether this method of contact might be extended to Thursday morning racquetball players?  
Malcolm, just back from his holidays, reported that Russell Bond had not yet signed his new contract, drawn up after their meeting (with Paul and Becs). He would endeavour to chase Russell up about it before the next meeting.

Next meeting: Thursday 6th September at 7pm