

MARLOW TENNIS CLUB
(A Section of Marlow Sports Club Ltd)
POUND LANE, MARLOW, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Minutes of The Annual General Meeting held on
Thursday, 15th November 2012
In the Old Pavilion, Sports Club at 8.30pm

Present: Ann Dunn, Guy Tomlinson, Mary Crawford, Alan Hely, Wendy Aitken, Mary Green, Libby and Colin Upcott, Ann Gordon Cumming, Helen Roberts, Helen Strube, Sarah McDonald, Sue Gallagher, Jonathan Slack, Andrew and Jane Johnson, Rachael Bone, Diana Anderson, Miranda Robson, Emma Hellewell, Ros and Eugene Augustin, Jonathan Welch, David Boorman, Chris Rawlings, Jane Pyke
(apologies to anyone not on the register but who attended)

Apologies for Absence: Joss and John Finch, Colin Lavis, Mike Anderson, Julia Hick, Ian and Victoria Benning, Thelma Craig, Caroline O'Connor, Graham Sweet, Alison Rae, Anna and Nigel Bacon, Sue Hill

Minutes of the 2011 AGM were taken as read and approved by Andrew Johnson and seconded by Chris Rawlings

Matters Arising there were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

Ex Chairman's Report and Liaison with MSC

Mary Crawford summarised the year's activities and reported that the Clubs' relationship with MSC Trustees was much more positive and supportive than it had been a year ago. Paul Hick played a crucial role in facilitating meetings with the Committee, some long standing members and the Trustees to determine areas of common interest and ambition. The need to work together constructively while recognising that MTC's independent Governance was acknowledged.

The building of the three new courts and painting of court 4 has provided excellent playing surfaces. Ann Dunn, Alan Hely and Colin Upcott are thanked for their hard work and support.

The decision to amend the coaching specification and agreement was difficult to make but deemed critical in enabling the Club to develop. Justin's comments were sought on the new expanded role and he was given 9 months notice of our intention to consider a range of options. The expanded role reflects the Club's need to better align the coaches' objectives with those of the Club and MSC, to grow the membership, help pay off the MSC debt and achieve LTA Clubmark status. A rigorous selection process was instituted and 27 applications were received for the role. The interview team comprising club members and David Reeve from the LTA deserve enormous thanks for the hours they have put into the selection process. We also thank Sir William Borlase's Grammar School Head of PE Craig Robertson for organising pupils for the practical assessment sessions. Given SWBGS commitment to MSC it is positive that the tennis section worked with them over this.

The MSC Trustees also allowed Emma Hellewell (MSC fundraising coordinator and MTC member) to use some of her paid time to support the selection process as a sign of their support. They have also provided free legal advice on the agreement itself.

Throughout the year there have been many MSC meetings – fundraising, operations and with the Trustees. Ann Dunn attends the Operational meetings. The Club is now working more collaboratively than ever with MSC to a common goal. This is as evidenced by the support for the Olympic Sports Night; tennis members undertook the bulk of catering, as well as a fun tennis experience.

Finals day saw some great tennis and if your name was Paul Morgan it was a good day. Some of the junior/intermediate members boycotted the day as a protest about the potential loss of their coach. Thanks to umpires and supporters.

Looking ahead the 2013-14 MSC Usage Agreement will require more collaboration and hard work with the Trustees. The new coaching contract should help us move forward in a much more positive way now as hopefully the Trustees will see the courts better utilised and income generated from the use of the courts.

As there is no chair at present the Committee discussed and agreed that the John Field trophy (the Chair's award) should be presented to Jocelyn Finch in recognition of her diligence and support over the last year. Thank-you Jocelyn.

Appointment of New Director of Tennis

As Chair of the Selection Committee, Jonathan Slack, together with Emma Hellewell expanded on the selection process for the new enlarged role of Director of Tennis. Four members of the club and David Reeve from the Bucks office of the Lawn Tennis Association all independently assessed the candidates against thirteen criteria that reflected the skills and experience required. The top 4 scoring candidates were then invited to interview. A live coaching session was also viewed.

While we are sad to lose Justin, we send him our thanks for his loyal service over the years. He was pipped by an outstanding candidate. We are therefore delighted to announce that we will be appointing Paul Davey as Director of Tennis. He will be backed by the extended "Tennis Angels" team who scored 87% in our assessment. An announcement will be made in "Tennis Balls" tomorrow (see attached document). The appointment is for two years with a six month review. A retainer of £3,000 will be paid to "Tennis Angels". Individual/group coaching will be paid for directly to "Tennis Angels" and the Club will receive £2 per hour per hour for hire of the courts.

Jonathan and Emma Hellewell were impressed by the coaching skills observed; their management was impressive and they have many innovative ideas to breathe more life into the Club. They were convinced this appointment would enhance the membership experience, drive up numbers, and increase income. The company has a good reputation and enthusiasm and contacts to reach out to the community. They provide exhibition matches, will help with fund raising events and will work with other sections of Marlow Sports Club.

Everyone who has coaching must be a member of MTC.

Treasurer's Report

Jonathan Slack presented the accounts (recorded as a separate attachment). In summary, income is down and outgoings are up, and future income needs to increase. These figures were accepted – Approved by Ann Gordon-Cumming and Helen Strube

Auditor's Report

Rosalind Gillet (Augustin) reported that she had audited the accounts, and that all was in order.

Membership Secretary's Report

Andrew Johnson explained that membership has declined in all areas, especially juniors, but except Off-peak. (Details are recorded on a separate attachment.)

2013-14 Membership Fee Proposals

Subscriptions to remain the same.

Guest fees to go up to £2 but guests are able to play six times in a year, hopefully to encourage member's guests to join after a taster session. (It is the member's responsibility to ensure guests place their guest fee in the box)

Keys will now be £4

Light tokens to remain the same (50p going to MSC)

Gift Aiding proposals were discussed a means to raise additional money to benefit the Club and MSC. This will require members to write two cheques, one to MTC and another to MSC (to create a ring-fenced court refurbishment fund). As MSC is a charity while MTC is not, only payments to MSC can be gift aided. This mechanism is currently being considered by the Hockey section. Ros and Jonathan raised concern that some members may not pay MSC proportion of membership fee, if fee was split into two elements. The committee needs to investigate whether there are risks, and if so, if, and how they can be managed. An EGM will be called if there appears to be a practical solution.

Ladies' Match Reports

Helen Roberts reported on the Ladies 2 Summer matches; the team won 3 and lost 2 of their matches and came second in the league. The team has found its level as these results mean that the team will be promoted next season to Division 3 from Division 4. Well done and thanks to all the team players.

Miranda Robson reported on the Ladies team in Division 2 of the Bucks County Shield. The team had some good matches against strong teams such as David Lloyd, Milton Keynes and David Lloyd High Wycombe, but their results were mixed. Hopefully the teams will not be plagued by injuries this season and regular match-play will enable their results to improve in the winter league.

Men's' Captain's report – Winter 2011/2012 + Summer 2012

Jonathan Welch reported that we offer members competitive match tennis in three different leagues in the winter season and one league in the summer.

Winter 2011/ 2012

Two Men's Teams play in the Thames Valley Tennis League

Mixed doubles veterans in the Bucks Veteran's League - Ladies + 40 & Men + 45

Farnham Common League - Mixed doubles with Men's & Ladies Doubles

Thames Valley Tennis League.

The Men's A team finished in 6th and Men's B finished 12th in Division 1 comprising of 13 teams. These are excellent results.

Bucks Veteran's League Mixed

Our team finished in 3rd of 7 teams in Division 3 just missing out on promotion. There are a total of 6 Divisions.

Farnham Common League

Our second season in the winter Farnham Common League saw us in Division 5, having been promoted from Division 6 in our first season. Four players play 2 ladies & 2 men's each match playing ladies and men's doubles and pair up to play mixed doubles. No age restrictions. Promotion 2nd season running, from Division 5 to Division 4.

Summer 2012

We have one team that plays in the Bucks Tennis League top division of 6 divisions. The Men's A team finished in 6th place (7 teams) and hopes to stay in the top division.

28 members participated in matches. Thanks to those that played: Guy, Tony, Rob, Nick, Paul M, Andy, Alan, Jon, Damian, Oliver, Andrew J, Richard, Ed, Harry, Dan, Connor, Dale, Mary, Mo, Emma, Sue H, Chris, Tania, Helen R, Annabel, Joss and Miranda.

Report from Junior Section and Club Coach - not submitted

Off Peak Report

Wendy Aitken reported on the Off Peak mornings on Tuesday and Wednesday. These sessions continue to be well attended with anything from 4 – 12 players. New members have been welcomed and have raised the standard of play.

Five round robins were played this season with refreshments afterwards; this has proved an enjoyable way of raising funds for purchasing balls.

Once again a New Year lunch at the George and Dragon was very well attended.

Social Report

Sarah McDonald and Jane Pyke organised two social events during the summer season.

On May 23rd, the annual Cheese and Wine evening was held. The weather was lovely, with a great turnout and enjoyable tennis.

July 11th saw the Grand Opening of our fabulous new courts, the ribbon being cut by our Lady Mayor, Jocelyn Towns. Everyone enjoyed Pimms and Afternoon Tea and christened the new courts!

Many thanks to all the volunteers who made delicious sandwiches and cakes.

The next event will be January 11th, 2013. Venue likely to be "The Prince of Wales". Save the date in your diary now!

Election of Officers and Committee

The committee's proposals for the officers and committee for 2012/13 were accepted unanimously. Sadly the roles of Junior Representative and Ladies' captains remain vacant and we are actively seeking volunteers. Ideally we would like one or two parents of Juniors to step forward and help us fill the Junior role. The committee has many plans to improve the junior coaching, personal development and social scene and believe that this will be a very fulfilling role, at a very exciting time. We'd also like a lady member to become Ladies' Captain. If you would like to find out more about these roles please contact Guy as soon as possible (07768 292736).

The Committee for 2012/13 is as follows:

Chair – Guy Tomlinson

Membership Secretary – Andrew Johnson

Treasurer – Colin Lavis

Secretary – Ann Dunn

Junior Representative – Vacant

Jocelyn Finch – Fixtures Secretary

Men's Captain – Jonathan Welch

Ladies Captain – Vacant

Off Peak Representative – Wendy Aitken

Social Secretaries – Jane Pyke and Sarah McDonald

Communications Officer – Alan Hely

Appointment of Auditor

Ros Augustin (Gillet) agreed to continue to audit the accounts. This was approved by all present.

To consider any formal resolutions received from members in advance of the meeting

None received

Any Other Business

David Boorman expressed concerns about what was going to happen to the Juniors when Justin leaves and asked what plans were being prepared to meet their needs. The Club appreciates David's comments, and welcomes support to improve the Junior scene. Guy agreed to discuss his views and ideas in more detail.

The Club also recognises that there has been a degree of miscommunication on this subject and is keen to correct any misconceptions. To be clear, however, the change in coaching arrangements is designed to improve the club experience for all juniors and adults alike. Thus a series of "meet the new coaching team" sessions will be arranged for all members in the next few weeks. All juniors and adults are encouraged to attend to experience what will be on offer, and allow everyone to judge the benefits first hand. It is also recognised that some members will have strong personal relationships with Justin and the Club has no intention to impede those relationships.

Eugene Augustin suggested that more courts should be made available for booking. The booking sheet now allows court 4 to be booked on Thursday evening during the designated club night. This can be reviewed to see if more than one court can be released for pre-booking, if this club night is not well attended.

Will the booking of courts change? No drastic changes are envisaged.

Anne G-C expressed concern that there are many keys still held by ex-members and suspected that non-members are using the courts. It was suggested that we politely say hello to strangers and enquire whether they are members or would like to join the Club. Andrew will place a list of current members in the club house. Members would have to pay for new keys.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.45pm