

OCTOBER 2019

BEHIND THE GREEN DOOR...

The ND LTC Newsletter

North
Dulwich
lawn tennis
club

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2019 Club Championships

Davis Cup Report

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Editorial

Welcome to this Autumn edition of the Newsletter. I hope you like the new fanzine-style title – in our scratch poll, it came second to Racquet McBallface, but we decided in this instance to overrule the public vote...

Lots of things happened in the last 6 months, from the amazing Davis Cup Charity day, the Club House Renovation and then the wonderful Finals day, evening and indeed early morning revelry..

As always, we have tried to take a slightly informal look at life at our friendly club – to bring you up to date with things, introduce you to new faces and encourage those of you who want to get more involved to help with the running of the club!

Thanks in advance to our expanded editorial team who bravely interviewed people, tenaciously extracted updates from team captains and wrote poetic descriptions of tournament days.

Particular highlights in this edition are interviews with our Northern Powerhouse, Anna Doble and ND LTC's own international man of mystery, Oleg Levitin. Plus, a special double page spread of the annual tournament.

We hope you enjoy the newsletter and let me know if you want to join the growing editorial team for the Spring/Summer edition!

Ian

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Approach view

Social Tennis Conversations

Ambra :

Nigel , you know a lot about tennis right ?

Nigel :

Well , other than how to play the game properly , I guess so - fire away

Ambra :

Ok , in Doubles , am i allowed to stand directly behind the tramlines when serving ?

Nigel :

Er.....yes Ambra ...but only the tramlines of the Court you're playing onnot the adjacent one !!

Get a grip!

Whilst having an enjoyable doubles game one Sunday social with Anna, our conversation turned to the tricky subject of the right way to hold your racket.

She introduced me to a great New York Times article which - for those of you reading this electronically - all you need to do is click in the link below! I didn't even realise the handle was an octagon which shows how much I know...

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/30/sports/tennis/tennis-evolution-four-grips.html>



The handle is an octagon. The name of the grip is determined by which bevel the bottom knuckle of the index finger and the heel pad of the palm rest on.



Keith's Top Tips #1 Getting ready for Wimbledon..

If a member signed up to British Tennis last season, please renew your membership! You should have had a reminder email - the more members the club has, the greater the number of Wimbledon tickets allocated to us.

Here is the site link for those not already members - <https://www.lta.org.uk/member/> - and opt for 'Lite' membership which is free!

Go on - do it now!

Social Tennis Conversations

Kev :
Hey Wei - what's with the thigh-length black socks?

Wei :
They protect against deep bone thrombosis , gout , and the mumps.

Kev :
Oh , so you're not a Britney Spears Tribute Act at the weekends then ?

[Wei , chuckling , not surprisingly throws in a double-fault]

Kev :
Oops you did it again !!

Team Update

Our regular in-depth (well – in some cases...) review of the highs and lows of our teams in the last few months – as we get to the end of the summer league, we now know whether we are promoted (congrats to the Men's 1 and Women's 2 Teams), stay the same or – as in the case of the Vets team, can't go down any further!

Thanks for the Captains for their pithy summaries....

Mixed Doubles – Southwark League: Laura Ansell

So it's been another good year for ND Southwark mixed, though it's looking like we will take second spot. Was neck and neck with Dulwich LTC for most of summer, both sides winning their matches, but Dulwich did it slightly better not dropping a single rubber til we played them and drew. We have one more match to play, but looking like 2nd place again. Thanks as ever to all that played this summer, looking forward to getting that winter title back!

Men's 1 - Surrey League: Gerry Howell

The Men's First Team won their summer doubles league by one point, but came second in the aegon team league even though we finished on equal points - it's a cruel world!

So next summer we'll go up to the dizzy heights of league 13, the highest we've ever been!

In the winter doubles, we're currently in league 12, and should have a great season apart from the fact that half the team are injured and it's raining all the time every day just like in that film where it rains all the time every day

Men's 2 – Surrey League – Harry Collins

With one rain delayed match remaining, we are a win away from promotion! At least 1 player will end the summer season with a 100% winning record, more could join pending the outcome of our final match. Our biggest loss this season has to be Pedro's car, and we face an even bigger loss this winter... Pedro (please don't go!)

Men's Southwark League – Jack Davis

We won 1 and drew 2. It turns out we actually did win the league. I'm not entirely sure how but I was informed last night!



GERRY HOWELL
MEN'S 1 – SURREY LEAGUE

Women's 1 – Surrey League – Kirsty Sanders

ND women's 1 had another great season – top of the division again. This means moving two places up the ladder. The team has done incredibly well and deserves to move ahead.

Apart from the clubhouse and grounds being commented on (favourably) by visiting teams, a special mention was given recently by a visiting team about Karla's quiches being the best they'd had!

Women's 2 – Surrey League - Lisa Muten

In our first season as a team ND LTC Women's 2 went the summer unbeaten!

Across the five matches the team won on hard court and on artificial clay, a new experience for all, and for our initiation of playing on a grass court the team was drawn into two epic tie breaks in searing 35c heat to walk away with a draw in their longest and most physically and mentally challenging match of the season.

Finishing the season under the threatening rain clouds of a potential September downpour the team walked away with a 3:1 victory at Telford Park securing our position at the top of our league!



LISA MUTEN - WOMEN'S 2 – SURREY LEAGUE

Men's 55+ - Surrey League – Ian Hirst

After the last 2 seasons of 'varied' results, we felt that this season would be ours for the taking. We have a new youngster in the squad – Jack Galloway – a graduate of the Vets academy system and we have all been coached by our mentor Matt – so what could go wrong? Well...

In the first game against Honor Oak, which included a guest appearance from Peter Wright, we did manage a 2-2 draw and actually won more sets, so we called it a victory, but sadly that proved the highlight of the season...On reflection, I'd like to think we were clearly the team everybody wanted to beat and raised their game – even Purley Bury, who we normally beat, managed to scrape a 3-1 victory on our home turf.

We have our last game on the 17th October and victory will see us up to the heady heights of 6th place. Like Manchester United, this season is one of transition for us...

On the positive side, the Vets games always have a brilliant atmosphere and we met, played and drank with some really nice guys and the vibe in the dressing room remains optimistic. Our regular social drinks and pub quiz evenings also help keep us all motivated and bonded...

So a big thanks to Nigel, Rupert, Richard P, Yen-Lin, Maish, Andy Mc, Steve F, Jack, Peter and Charlie, plus the supporting cast who couldn't make the games, which are mostly midweek daytime.

Being gluttons for punishment we have now signed up for the Vets Winter League, so will get more practice in ahead of next Summer.

We have also just found out that the league are OK with spritely 54 year old's playing – as long as their next birthday is 55, which I guess it normally would be – so if you want to join in the fun, let me know – we try to be inclusive and make sure everybody gets a game or two.

Go Vets!



HARRY COLLINS
MEN'S 2 – SURREY LEAGUE

2019 Club Tournament Report

From our special correspondent, with a beer or two in hand...

LEAD UP TO FINALS DAY...

The 2019 ND LTC Adult Tournament was rather like a particularly eventful running of The Grand National. Non-runners, early fallers, refusals, unseatings the lot. At least nobody had to be put down I suppose – and all credit to Ben for managing the ever-changing field of runners!

The Men's Doubles saw particularly heavy casualties with at least three strong teams having to forfeit which made the draw somewhat interesting. It included a classic, full distance quarter-final (yes quarter-final!) where Ian and John edged out Ben and Gerry – a match that ebbed and flowed and definitely deserved a wider audience. Similar carnage and withdrawals in the Mixed Doubles meant that one pair who shall be nameless (Ok, Nigel and Naz...) who were delighted to have got to the quarter-finals, suddenly found themselves catapulted into the Final itself !!

The silver lining was that many Social Tennis regulars found themselves going far deeper into the Tournament than they could have ever envisaged and rising to the task – certainly giving more established teams a scare or two as the results below will testify.

Booking courts was always a challenge, but Foon managed this rather effectively by playing both his men's doubles and mixed doubles at the same time....In fact Foon had a pretty good tournament, with a Plate semi-final victory over Pedro a special moment.

We cannot let this section finish without reference to an amazing Ladies Quarter-Final Singles match on the hottest weekend of the year – a high noon shoot-out between Jo Morris and Sarah Bell. A see-saw contest of fabulous quality in front an enthralled crowd of er...one (yours truly) !! Ladies – you were brilliant.

FINALS DAY

*“Just a perfect day
Drank beer and wine on the lawn
And then later
When it got dark, we er..didn't go home..”*

Anyhow I'm definitely glad I spent it with you guys...

Under clear blue skies, families, friends and guests happily mingled, drank, dropped hot dogs on the lawn and were entertained by 10 Finals.

The opening Men's Singles match may have been the best of the lot. You have to feel for John Selby, if there was a competition for shot of the day then he must have blazed across a dozen contenders – several in the same rally ; a rally eventually lost !! However , in boyhood friend Ian Poole, he faced an opponent of near superhuman athleticism and resilience on the day. John certainly found his line and length early in the 2nd set and forged a good lead , only for his opponent to gradually erode the advantage and sail on. Hats off to Ian though – it's one thing to run all these wide shots down – but quite another to keep giving your opponent yet another problem to solve.

The Men's Plate Final had to be re-scheduled but at least Foon only had one game to play at once this time – he had excelled to reach this Final but met his match in Harry Collins who got his power game on target

The Ladies Singles Final promised much – Laura started it with a thunderclap of booming serves and finished it very well, sharing the last six games, but in-between reigning champion Jo raised the bar, with effortless serenity and grace which is a joy to behold even if slightly daunting to us artisans who have to scamper, scuffle and scurry to altogether much less effect .

The Ladies Plate Final is difficult to pass much comment on as Catherine Bichard asked , cheerfully enough it must be said, that we did not watch her match. Chivalrously, we departed straight to the bar. Karla sportingly told us afterwards just how well Catherine had played in her victory “She gets everything back you know “ as though



this should be disallowed...which perhaps it should.

The Men's Doubles Final was a bit of a Catchweight contest as the Barnsley Bombers, John & Ian , reunited to see off valiant scratch duo Harold Freeman & Jack Galloway who might not have won many games but definitely won a few hearts with their good natured defiance.

The Ladies Doubles Final also saw the Singles Finalists , Jo & Laura, combine to see off a serious challenge from sprightly Ellie Sanders-Wright & the enigmatic, utterly inscrutable Francesca Lewis. At one point, perilously close to the net, Francesca hit an amazing inside-out forehand winner which flashed across from her own tramline to the corresponding spot in her opponents' alley. Now some of us would embark on a lap of honour at this feat - but not Francesca...no fist pump, no "come on", no smile, no nuffink – just steely determination !! What composure.

Now to the Men's Doubles Plate Final : Ok Gary & Harry - the game's up chaps. You are comfortably QF calibre for the main draw but you obviously deliberately tank it in the Pool Stage every year so as to get a clear run at the Plate.... what an outrage ☹️. A cracking good runners-up showing here from Steve French & Richard Pemberton, much loved and valued members of the Corinthian, if slightly underachieving, Vets Squad.

The Ladies Doubles Plate Final resulted in now battle-hardened Surrey Leaguers Lisa & Lucy overcoming Harriet & Livia in straight , but competitive sets. You've got to love Lisa's gung ho attitude - whilst others approach the net cautiously as if it were an electrified fence, Lisa strides right in - you're half expecting a Fosbury Flop...

The Mixed Doubles Final drew as much laughter as applause but Pedro & Francesca have developed into a seriously good team, and always had a little too much in hand against fast improving Naz & fast declining Nigel...

The Mixed Doubles Plate Final saw delightful newcomers Harold & Helen Freeman stave off a spirited 2nd set

comeback from Kirsty Sanders & Andy Carter.

Now, let's be honest, a Mixed Doubles Court can be dangerous terrain for even the stablest of marriages. Funny how when friends team up - goodwill abounds every good shot rewarded with a jaunty little hand slap , errors shrugged off with a consoling word. A married couple? Forget all that mate, a much less charitable atmosphere pervades. A big sigh, a dropped racket and worst of all - complete silence. It's the unspoken subtext of course "Cocked that volley right up Barry didn't you - and you still haven't started decorating the spare room" or " Three double-faults in one game Barbara - that'll cheer me up on the 3 hour drive to your Auntie Enid's 80th tomorrow ". Not saying that Harold and Helen are like that of course....

And so, combat concluded , we were treated to live music from The Thirty Mondays, including our own Andy Cox and Steve French whose flawless musicianship along with Andy's rootsy vocals provided a perfect soundtrack for a hazy indian summers early evening. As darkness drew in we were then treated to some avant-garde jazz piano - or was it the neighbour's cat prowling across the keyboard?? And as the revelry staggered relentlessly on towards all-out shameless bacchanalia, somebody unearthed a CD by Belinda Carlisle [oh those cheek-bones] and as that honeyed vibrato decreed that " Heaven is a place on earth " , you had to admit that , for a few blissful hours - she might have been on to something.

Yours truly staggered home after this, but from all accounts the revelry went on to the later hours – wonderfully captured by Hamish's camera...

Huge thanks to everyone who helped organise/mow/umpire/photograph/cook/serve/clean/clear away - a wonderful team effort.

Summary of results

MENS SINGLES

Semi-final

Ian Poole beat Will Bell 6-1,6-0
John Selby beat Dave Hill 2-6, 6-4, 6-4

Final

Ian Poole beat John Selby 6-2, 6-3

LADIES SINGLES

Semi-final

Jo Morris beat Francesca Lewis 6-3,6-3
Laura Ansell beat Georgina Anderson 6-2, 6-3

Final

Jo Morris beat Laura Ansell 6-1, 6-3

MENS DOUBLES

Semi-final

Ian Poole/John Selby beat
Lewis Flood/Hamish Mackenzie 6-1, 6-3

Jack Galloway/Harold Freeman beat
Richard Brown/Nigel Flay 6-1, 4-6, 1-0

Final

Ian and John beat Jack and Harold 6-0, 6-0

LADIES DOUBLES

Semi-final

Jo Morris/Laura Ansell beat
Georgina Anderson/Kirsty Sanders 6-2, 6-0

Ellie Sanders Wright/Francesca Lewis beat
Karla Pappon/Sarah Bell 6-3, 0-6, 6-4

Final

Jo/Laura beat Ellie/Francesca 6-3, 6-3

MIXED DOUBLES

Semi-final

Francesca Lewis/Pedro Corvo beat
Paul Miles/Laura Ansell 4-6,6-4,1-0

Naz/Nigel beat Lucy Pickles/Jack Davies w/o

Final

Francesca/Pedro beat Naz/Nigel 6-3,6-2

PLATE FINALS

Men's Singles

Harry Collins beat Foon Tse 6-3, 6-1

Ladies Singles

Catherine Bichard beat Karla Pappon 6-1, 7-5

Men's Doubles

Harry and Gary beat Steve and Richard 6-2,6-4

Ladies Doubles

Lucy and Lisa beat Livia and Harriet 6-1, 6-2

Mixed Doubles

Helen and Harold Freeman beat Kirsty and Andy 6-1, 6-4



Sunday November 10th Great ND LTC Bake-Off

A new event, which will become monthly if it is a success. There will be a topical theme for each one, this first one being Brexit and/or Halloween (the same thing essentially). More info to come, but basically around 6-10 of you can enter, baking a cake which everyone else will eat and vote on (for a small donation) before, during or after social that morning. Voting will be based on edibility and interpretation of the theme. Prize will be a slice of cake and an EU passport (subject to availability).

Sat November 24th Table Tennis Tournament

A chance to dust off your ping-pong skills. Ian H's money is on the Juniors parents - he's seen them in action, and says they do spend a lot of time practicing on a Saturday morning - although he believes Oleg could be a good outside bet...

Sunday 15th December from 10am Christmas Celebrations

Not sure yet what this might entail...but its going to be fun!

Sat January 18th Battle of the Bands

If we have enough interest - anybody want to compete with the Thirty Mondays?

Also we are planning to start a *monthly pizza night* after Friday night social - more info to come (and hoping to start in October or November). Basically this will be a chance to have some pizza and beer, meet new members, start the weekend (possibly with a hangover).. It will be a small donation of £3 towards the pizzas, and the bar will be open.

If anyone has any ideas or suggestions for social events, or comments on the above ideas, please email me at lrpickles@yahoo.co.uk or Karla Pappan at karlapappan@gmail.com



Keith's Top Tips #2 Avoiding an expensive tennis visit...

Don't park on narrow double lines in Gilkes Crescent, even on a Sunday; every so often a Southwark parking attendant appears magically on a moped & gives out tickets to those parked on these lines - we know at least two club members who have been caught recently!



Junior Coaching

By Peter Wright

We have an extensive after school and Saturday morning Junior Coaching Programme.

Junior coaching is provided after school 3:45-6:30 and on Saturdays. We cater for under 5's 'Tots' through to Senior players aged 16-18. We don't currently cater for the very young <4, so send these players to 'Tots Tennis' run by Matt Cowie and played in local halls around Dulwich.

However, we are constantly approached by parents wanting to start their very young children on their tennis careers. We are currently evaluating how to do this and may well introduce a third party to run Tiny Tots (2-5yos). As a Club we are keen to extend our community links and getting more young people visiting the club though Tots Tennis is the way forward.

For those interested in their children joining the Junior Coaching Programme, the schedule is displayed below. You will see that the younger children take the earliest slots and the teenagers, who often have after school commitments, the later slots.

Charter Tennis Club

On Friday afternoons, after school 3:30-5:30, we host the Charter Schools coaching years 7&8 for the first hour and years 9+ for the second hour. Those wishing to join on Friday afternoons need to do so through their school.

Junior Squads

For the players keen to move their tennis forward we run Squad Training on Monday and Friday evenings 5:30-6:45. Squads are based on the Spanish system of repetitive drills, movement and hitting many many balls with a coach. To engage in the Squad sessions, players need to commit to attend coaching at least two times each week, one time of which will be a Squad session.

This is not just about 'the best players' but more about a commitment to improve, and it is making a difference. For the summer season our Red Level team were top of their division beating some notable competition from Wigmore and Old College. Last season our 11U team got to the county knockout final and our 12U boys came top of their division – see Andy's summary later in this section!

Each year the coaches run Road to Wimbledon (<14) and the Junior Club Championships and assist the junior team captains in setting up and managing the teams that compete within Surrey.

We also run Holiday Tennis Camps!

An exchange visit with Porto...

Recently Ian Irving moved his family to Portugal (his wife is Portuguese) taking star Juniors James and Alistair away from their tennis club, but not from tennis. We are talking to Ian about establishing an exchange visit with a club in Portugal, which will happen as soon as he is settled in and has found the club he likes.

Junior Coaching Schedule

	Age Group	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sat	Sat
Tiny Tots	< 5 years	3:45 4:30			3:45 4:30				8:15 9:00
Mini Red	5-8 years	3:45 4:30	3:45 4:30	3:45 4:30				8:15 9:00	9:00 10:00
Mini Orange	8-9 years			4:30 5:30	4:30 5:30		9:00 10:00		
Green level	10-11 years				4:30 5:30		10:00 11:00	9:00 10:00	
Junior	12-14 years	4:30 5:30	4:30 5:30				11:00 12:00		2:30 3:30
Senior	14-16 years		5:30 6:30	5:30 6:30	5:30 6:30	School Club			3:30 4:30
Org/Grn Squad	9U/10U	5:30 6:45				5:30 6:45			
Junior Squad	11U/12U	5:30 6:45				5:30 6:45			



Junior Competition Finals Day Report

By Andy 'titanium-knees' McCulloch

If you're seeking reliable weather forecasts, forget the BBC, ITV or the Met Office. Go directly to our own Peter Wright.

All over the web the prognostications for Sunday's Junior Final day was rain, rain and more rain all afternoon! But Peter calmly predicted that the weather round North Dulwich would clear. With mystic skill, he delayed the start. Thus it was... the clouds parted, and the Finals went ahead with huge success!

On the way to the finals, our juniors have been making a mark in the Surrey tournaments. At 14U level Ben Isaacs and Thomas Henderson played four matches, winning three out of the four. Watching the pair contest the club final, I think a few senior players should be looking over their aching shoulders! The 11U Surrey Winter tournament finished a few months back. Our team of Lewis Henderson and Sam Crane reached the Final in Sutton. They were runners up. It is the first time in memory an ND team has reached a Surrey Final. Lewis and Sam won their first match in the new 12U Surrey Winter league against Southfields on Saturday, the day before contesting the ND club final. The full results for Sunday's Club Final were:

Category	Champion	Runner Up	Plate Champion	Runner Up
6U Mixed	Thomas Monks	Hector Herriger		
8U Mixed	James Fletcher	Thomas Callaghan	Vedaant Salota	Cassian Herriger
9U Mixed	Joshua Spooner	Charlie Mander	Max Bell	Edward Goodlad
10U Boys	Lewis Henderson	Sam Crane	Sean Kilduff	Mylo Spence
12U Girls	Liv Uppington	Sophia Stewart	Maise McIntosh	
12U Boys	James Callaghan	Gyles Bicknell		
14U Boys	Thomas Henderson	Ben Isaacs	Matthew Pierce	George Rybinski

Interview with a member

A cup of Yorkshire Tea with Anna...

Our roving reporter pinned down Anna after yet another successful Ladies B game and asked her the questions we know you needed answers to. Stand by to be amazed by the idea of glow in the dark tennis and what happens when you get your Yorkshire vowels wrong...

By Lucy Pickles

Hi Anna – well played - how long have you been a member and what led you to NDLTTC?

Well, I joined in the summer of 2017 after Yen-Lin spotted a tennis racquet in my hall as he fixed my thermostat! I played as his guest at a couple of social sessions and knew straight away - what a lovely, friendly club! - that I wanted to join. I hadn't played regular tennis for over 15 years and now I play at least twice a week.

So – other than the friendly people, what do you like most about the club?

The recent overhaul of the clubhouse is amazing - big thanks to Peter, Gary and all those involved. I'll miss the Pulp Fiction sofa seats though... Also, I love the gardening - so beautiful and uplifting to play in such nice surroundings.

Agreed! How do you think we could we make things even better - if the club won the lottery what other changes or improvements would you like to see happen there?

An indoor court would be nice :) Also a Tennis TV and Amazon Prime subscription on the clubhouse telly. Please!

Outside of tennis, what keeps you busy?

I used to be a newsreader and reporter on the radio. Classic FM, Radio 1 and others. I have sneezed on air, partially sworn on air and got the time wrong...

That's exciting, can you tell us more, who did you swear at?

Well, it's slightly more embarrassing than that. When you work in local radio you say the word "county" a lot. E.g. "North Yorkshire County Council is pledging blah..." But when you move up to national radio you say "country" a lot more. E.g. "The Prime Minister says his approach will unite the country..." But imagine what happens when you start saying country and it becomes county half way through. Not good. Happened twice!

Haha, that's amazing, hope you didn't get fired. I haven't heard you swearing much on the tennis court so maybe that got it out of your system. How has your experience been of playing in the newly formed (and victorious) women's seconds team this season?

This was my first experience of competitive tennis since playing in the North Yorkshire schools' league in the mid-90s. It's been really great and Lisa is a fantastic captain! There have been some tense moments - and very dodgy line calls - but we've been so positive all season and really playing, practising and drinking responsibly as a team. I love it. It was a thrill to win our final two matches of the season in the Wilson Surrey League. Best moment was me shouting "I love you!" when my doubles partner Naz hit a clean winner to seal the match against their top pair.

Thanks Anna, I'm sure Naz returned your feelings. Which tennis players would you invite to dinner, for more responsible drinking and what would you make them to eat?

Andy Murray, Serena Williams, Boris Becker & Goran Ivanisevic. I'd make spaghetti bolognese. I might do a sushi starter for Andy.



Only sushi for Andy and not the other 3? I'm not sure Goran would turn up if women were involved, didn't he used to be so superstitious he wouldn't let his mum or girlfriend come and watch him at tennis matches?

Andy Murray swears by sushi so he can have both. I bumped into him once at the Davis Cup in Glasgow and he was clutching chop sticks and sushi! I chose spag bol because it's a dish I can definitely make well!

As for Goran he'd better behave and frankly I should have invited more women so I'll add Steffi Graf, my childhood favourite, plus the lesser known Ora Washington. She was an early pioneer of black women in tennis during the days of segregation in the US. She was the 1930s Serena or Althea Gibson figure and there should be more said about her!

That'll whip Goran into shape. And will you be playing over the winter or will you be going in to hibernation?

Playing. I grew up playing in drizzle and fog. This is my time.

Yeah us Yorkshire people don't need sunshine and blue skies, it's highly overrated. I also heard you're going to be organising glow in the dark tennis over the winter months, can you talk us through that?

The idea is to play in the dark over Christmas, with neon strips on the lines, nets, racquets, balls and obviously the players need to wear glow-in-the dark shirts and face paint. They may also be permitted to wear fairy lights. It's a tennis rave and I hope it becomes a reality!

Sounds great maybe we can start a new glow in the dark league...

Ha yes. It's actually a thing if you check it out on YouTube although I think we'd be the first fairy light league.

Improving your play....

We get asked a lot about the different ways to get coaching – so your friendly editor pinned down Peter to find out more...

Peter – Loads of new members in recent years – some I've played with clearly don't need coaching (!) but others might – so what's on offer at NDLTC and how do they get involved?

Let's start with these 'Drop In' sessions – tell me about these...

So – we run these 1-hour sessions on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday mornings – at the same time so it's easy to remember! Drop-in is just that, turn up and be taught by our experienced and knowledgeable coaches, no booking required: All sessions are £10.

- New Starters are at 11am – so if you want to learn the basics, this is the one for you.
- For Intermediate players, its 10am – so if you are getting back into tennis or feel comfortable playing social tennis, but want to improve, then come along and learn some tricks!
- For more experienced players – maybe you are potentially part of a team squad? – then its just Saturday afternoons at 1.30pm

Great – who runs these sessions?

New Starters are carefully looked after by:
John Connelly and myself

The intermediates are developed by John

And the club players are challenged by Matt Cowie

For beginners – what do players need to wear?

Just flat soled sports shoes and loose-fitting sports clothing, there is no dress code.

Why are correct shoes important?

Flat soled sports shoes proved better grip and support for changing direction, unlike running shoes or trainers which are designed for forward momentum. We want you to stay safe when engaged in tennis!

What about if New Starters or Intermediates want something a bit more structured?

Good question – and it's something we get asked for! John runs a course designed to get New Starters playing tennis competently in just 6 weeks, it runs at 6:30pm on Tuesday evenings.

For those already making their way in tennis, Tennis Express Plus runs 7:30pm on Thursday evenings. Tennis Express is a 6 week course, not a drop-in, so you need to 'sign up' to participate just send me an email

OK – that's great – On a Saturday though I see people running around like maniacs, with Matt barking out orders to them – what's that all about?

Ah – that will be the Cardio Tennis – brilliant for anybody wishing to incorporate fitness training into their tennis calendar. Cardio Tennis incorporates games and upbeat exercise to improve fitness and burn calories. So – if you find the Gym or running a tad boring, give it a try! Saturday at 12:15 is the time and the first session is free to try, thereafter just £5/session.

What if members want to have something a bit more tailored – or have drawn Ian Poole or Jo Morris in the tournament and need some urgent help??

All coaches provide 1-1 coaching on an individual basis. For the strongest players, or players who have a very specific technical requirements, our level 4 coaches are John Connelly and Matt Cowie. They are best approached via their drop-in coaching sessions.

All our coaches are Accredited by the LTA which means they are qualified tennis coaches, comply with the LTA strict rules on safeguarding and are insured.

What other services do the coaching team offer and exactly what do you guys get up to in your man-cave?

We string and grip on site using modern equipment and quality strings. If you need a same day service, this can usually be provided as long as you make your requirements known.



MEET THE COACHES

Tell me something about stringing? My strings seem to last forever, as long as the racket in some cases.

Rackets these days come in all colours and weights and incorporate many different features. Stringing is similar, many colours patterns types and tensions. Many players leave their strings until they break, a bit like only going to the dentist when you are in pain. As a rule of thumb, strings should be changed as many times a year as you play each week. A common misconception is that high tension equates to power and low tension to control, when the reverse is true. Before rushing out to buy a new racket, consider a restring, you will think you have a new racket for a fraction of the price.

I have thought about a restring but frankly know nothing about the process; strings, tension, what do I ask for?

These days the most common string is a mono filament polyester in a variety of gauges and finishes. Although durable, the trouble with this string is that it is stiff, not very flexible and lacks 'feel'. A good compromise is to use a multi-filament string on the crosses at a slightly lower tension. This restores 'feel' and is the most popular format I use at the club.

What about rackets?

Well, rackets are available to borrow and we do sell good value 2nd hand rackets for those choosing a racket for the first time. For those wishing to try out new rackets, we arrange 'Racket Demo' days and invite InterSport to provide the rackets and expert advice.

So finally Peter – if anybody reading this wants to know more – who do they contact?

If you have any enquires regarding coaching of any sort, at any level, in the first instance contact me, Peter Wright on 07776 130500 or peter@rightcall.co.uk

Who's who in coaching at ND LTC

Peter Wright

Coaching administrator, coach and racket services

John Connelly

Junior coaching programme, Tennis Express and Team Practice

Charlie Casey

Assistant, junior coaching programme

Matt Cowie

Club player drop-ins, Cardio Tennis and older juniors on Saturdays

Jonathan Pearson

Junior Squads

Enatina Stamati

Assistant coach, Junior Programme and Squads

Matt's Top Tips

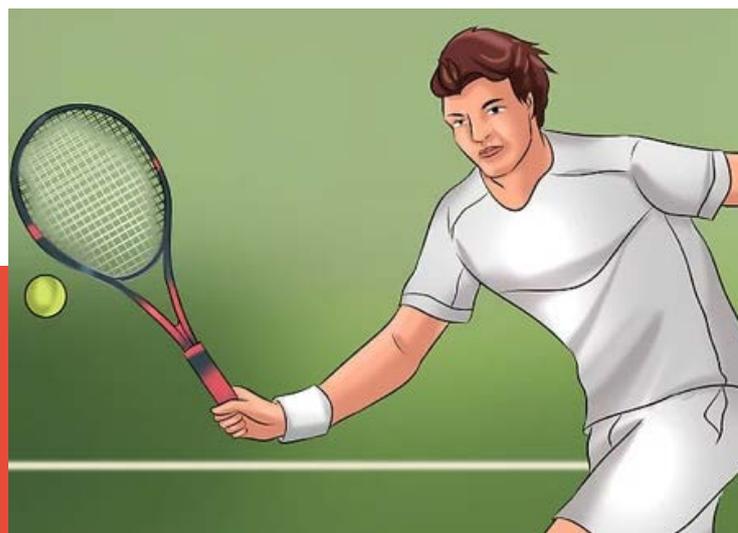
Matt's regular column – in this edition he is counselling against swinging...

The biggest mistake on the volley - Don't Swing!

The most common error on the volley is having **too big a swing at the ball**. Make sure your volley is a compact stroke. If you are swinging your racket at a volley, two things can easily happen:

You'll miss-time your shot. When you're at the net you don't have much time to react to the incoming ball – if you swing too much you will be late on the ball and not make the contact, or shot, you intended.

You'll hit the ball out. It's very easy to overhit the ball when volleying – especially if you swing too much. Remember, compared to a groundstroke from the baseline, when you are at the net the ball only has half as far to travel before it is out!



Top Tip

When volleying, you should always be able to see your racket strings.

1. If you can't see your racket strings **before** you make contact, you've taken your racket too far back in preparation.
2. If you can't see your racket strings after you've made contact with the ball, you have followed through too much.

If you want more details – [click on this link!](#)



About Matt

I'm a full-time tennis coach and have been coaching at North Dulwich since 2015. Currently about to complete the LTA Level 4 Senior Club Coach qualification, for which I was awarded a Surrey Coach Bursary (awarded on merit to selected coaches working in Surrey). It's my belief that every coaching session should be different and fun, while still providing technical, tactical, physical and mental instruction. I teach all ages from 2 to 92 and love my job.

To book a lesson, call 07838251866
or email matt@coachcowie.com

Club Shots



New Starters

Welcome to some of recent new starters – mates of Angelina, faster than a speeding bullet and a short-term Brazilian with a fondness for fish – enjoy and say hi to them next time you see them!



Andrew Baldwin

Beat a rugby league legend

A bit about yourself.

I am a 54 year old College Lecturer, father of a 7 year old (I know left it very, very late). Live in Herne Hill

Why did you join the club?

I played in the Lambeth Local Single league for a about 7 years and just found the 3 set format a bit too much at my tender age. I wanted to play doubles format and I liked the idea of the ladder format over 11 games.

One interesting fact about you.

For those of you that follow Rugby and are over 50 - I once was in the same 100 metre final with the Legend Rugby league star Martin Offiah when we both 13 and he trailed home in 2nd behind me. I still have the pictures...



Mike Almond

Angelia Jolie's lunch date

What prompted you to join NDLTC?

I played tennis regularly until my early twenties but have since have not played for about 20 years. I've been wanting to play tennis again and started to investigate options locally early this year.

Having joined - what's your favourite thing about the club?

It is a really friendly club, nice people, beautiful grounds and good courts, it has made getting back playing regular tennis easy!

One interesting thing about you that people might not know?

I have climbed Mount Kilimanjaro and had lunch with Angelina Jolie, not at the same time!



Stephen Crawford

He lived in Rio and he dances on the sand (maybe?)

What prompted you to join NDLTC?

To get back into tennis and this club is local to me.

Having joined - what's your favourite thing about the club?

The relaxed and friendly atmosphere

One interesting thing about you that people might not know?

I have lived in Rio de Janeiro for a short time.



Meet our members

A glass of something strong with... Oleg

Interviewing our resident secret diplomat, our brave editor steps into the world of closed-door peace negotiations, redrawing the borders of the countries, presidents and dictators, and unlikely party guests and thankfully finds Oleg is more Kofi Annan than Johnny English.... That said, given all the things he heard from Oleg (only a tiny bit of it went to print obviously), he may from now on have to be extra cautious when drinking his pint of IPA in EDT...

So, Oleg – if I asked 10 people what your nationality is and where you were born, I'd get at least 10 different answers – so tell me about your childhood...

Oh that's really simple. I am proud citizen of Israel... born in Soviet-era Moscow. I lived there until my early 20s, when my diplomatic career started in earnest, and after that my stays in Moscow were infrequent and short. And I haven't been there for the last twenty years.

Why did you decide to become a diplomat?

You see, my favourite game as a 5-year-old boy was not football, but drawing the maps of countries, real and imaginary, and constantly changing their borders! This came helpful later in life, when I was negotiating the end of the Balkans conflict, but the main motive, I have to confess, was rather pragmatic: in the 1970s Moscow, when I firmly made up mind what I wanted

to do in life, this was the only legal (ok, comfortable too) way to leave the USSR and see foreign countries.

So what did you specialise in?

I specialised in what is today called Western Balkans – countries of former Yugoslavia and Albania. I chose it as I literally sensed the future armed conflict in that fascinating corner of Europe. I then worked in all of them eventually!

And which one did you like most?

Each in its own way was unforgettable, but the most exotic was Albania of 1990, just as it decided to come out of its bizarre self-isolation. This is when I was sent there to open the first Soviet Embassy after a 30 year break in diplomatic relations.

Wow, so you were an Ambassador?

Probably the youngest one in the late Soviet history, at 26.

Do you speak Albanian?

Yes, I am fluent in it. Which is why they sent me there - nobody else could understand those Albanians...

So how many languages do you actually speak?

Let me count...more than 10 I suppose.

Cool – so what did you do after Albania– and did you get a Q – style briefing and an Aston Martin??

I wish....it was mostly old Sikorsky helicopters. I moved on to be the Russian envoy for the Balkans at the time of the most severe war Europe has seen since WWII. Throughout the decade that followed I participated, first as Negotiator for Russia and then as UN Official, in all major high-level negotiations on the Balkans crisis, during which we ended, one by one, the Bosnian and the Kosovo wars.

What's your main memory of that time? And since you mentioned your strange hobbies as a child, is it true what I heard that some of the new borders for ex-Yugoslav countries were drawn on the napkins in the bars?

(Laughing) It is actually true. By the way, as I child I preferred blotting paper...those among the Club's veterans may know what this is...or younger generations fond of detective stories.

Amazing – and definitely beats my 'main life achievement' story about how I nearly got into the quarter-finals of the club tournament – what did you do then?

I continued with the UN working as political advisor for Kofi Annan and using my Balkan expertise.

My last posting, before permanently moving to London, was as Head of the UN Mission in (now) North Macedonia. This is where I met my wife Rachel, who worked in the French Embassy in Skopje, so this was a happy time!

So – what brought you to London?

I am a Political Director in the EBRD - The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which is neither a bank nor, strictly speaking, European!

Your greatest achievement when working for EBRD?

I was the first to bring the 6 Western Balkans Prime Ministers together for the first time since the war in such a format. They all may look very similar, and some of them speak similar languages, but they still mistrust each other - so it took a lot, largely using personal relationships, to convince them to sit at the same table.

Later on, Angela Merkel replicated this EBRD Summit, so it is now of course called the "Berlin Process". Unfair of course, but I am a generous man and do not want to compete with Merkel!

I still organise summits every two years in our HQ in London. Next will be in February 2020, so you have an early invitation – come, it's fun to see these giants (most of them are about 2 meter tall) together on the stage trying to be nice to each other in front of the audience.

Perhaps you could get them here for a special Tennis tournament – the 'Balkans Cup?' - you could umpire it...

Well, they are more into basketball honestly, and those shorter among them...into martial arts...but I'll work on this, good idea, Ian.



So – of all the heroes and villains you have worked with, who have you most enjoyed spending time with?

Villains prevailed unfortunately...As for the company I most admired during my UN time, even if it was sadly only for a few days, I think that has to be Nicole Kidman – she was the UNIFEM Goodwill Ambassador and I showed her round the Balkans. She was definitely more of a hero!

Amazing – so that brings me on to my next question – 2 people for a dinner party to join you and Rachel - I assume Nicole would be top of the list?

I guess so, although Rachel might have something to say about that! I'd also invite my favourite writer, Mikhail Bulgakov, the author of "Master and Margarita".

Er...great – can't imagine what the dinner table conversation would be - probably not football and Love Island though...So I guess we should have one tennis question – have you always played?

No – I basically started when I joined the Club a few years ago...before that I used to play table tennis.

Brilliant – let's have a game! Thanks for letting us know a bit more about you Oleg – I think you have set a fairly high bar for the next newsletter!

Postscript: Oleg bt Ian 21-10 and demonstrated all the feints, flicks and tricks that has made him the successful diplomat he has become!





Clubhouse Development

Lots happening this year!

As we all know, after the weatherproof roof, Peter, Gary and the team, ably 'supervised' by Wei have done great work on renovating the inside of the main building and insulating the walls.

The recent Comedy night was almost warm and cosy, despite there being no heating yet!

There is now likely to be 2 phases to the work

Phase 1 - Completing the main building

After next year's membership subscriptions are in, we can begin work on completing the main building - in particular

adding some heating.

Phase 2 - The annex (the store, kitchen, toilets and changing rooms)

The plan remains to demolish this annex completely and rebuild it. This will require significant external funding and is likely to be part of a longer-term plan

Francesca has joined the committee to support this initiative and we now have new designs from James Bell, our in-house architect...

The plan is to swap the kitchen and toilets which provides a better footprint and opens the kitchen to the lawn. The committee will consider the plans in detail when the budget for a single and double storey building have been defined.





American Doubles Tournament – a personal view...

by Jo Morrison



Ben cleverly organised perfect weather for our American Mixed Doubles Tournament on 17 August. Seeing the opposition did nothing to still my beating heart. Not used to tournament play the prospect seemed to generate nerves even worse than usual for me at least. However, they all seemed a very friendly bunch – surely, they were just as nervous as I was? Give it a go then and stay calm.

We had a total of 16 people and played 5 rounds of 7 games, with each player getting points for games won. Several rounds were closely contested and the final score (as ever) didn't tell the whole story. Kirsty came out as top scorer for the ladies and Steve top of the men.

Thanks go to Ben for all his hard work co-ordinating this – it's never easy to get 16 people all in the same place at the right time – many thanks for your hard work Ben!

It's great to play a range of different opponents and extend your game. Despite not covering myself in glory I thoroughly enjoyed the games and the camaraderie and am rather looking forward to the next American Doubles!

Your questions answered!

So – we asked you for the questions about the club that you had long-sought the answers to – and that your tenacious editorial team would do our best to answer them. And this is what you asked us...



Q1 (Nigel): As an early arrival for Sunday Social Tennis can anyone explain why the nets are always about an inch or two too high? Are there environmental reasons, moisture or climate-change - or does some mischief-maker deliberately carry out this act of mild sabotage by night?

A1: Well Nigel I have googled this, but can't seem to find an answer. So I think the safest bet is to blame it on Keith as he is always the first at the club on a Sunday morning – either that or Albert gets out of bed early to do this, to ensure we really make the use of the measuring sticks he kindly makes for us!

Q2 (Nigel... again) One for the coaches : Players are generally asked to start their session by rallying from service line to service line....all well and good , but , just when we've mastered it we are then the told , very emphatically , that that is the one place you DON'T stand when play starts “ That's no-mans land “ “ You'll have to half-volley everything “ “ What the hell are you doing standing there ? “ etc etc

A2: Nigel, good point but I think the key thing is not to stand still anywhere – keep moving those knees young man...

Q3: (Anthony) I've never understood why some people use “5” instead of “15” when quoting scores!

A3: Anthony thanks for this - I've just lost 15 minutes of my life googling this and if anybody wants to replicate the joy, then just click on why-do-club-players-say-five-not-fifteen-when-scoring . There does seem to be a range of answers from around the world and I lost the will to live after 3 pages



of answers. No one seems to really know – but most of the answers are around the ‘people are just damn lazy’ theme, but an interesting fact did emerge that it used to be 45 not 40 up until the 60s...honestly not sure how I have managed to live my life not knowing this...

Q4: (Lucy) I wondered if they could remove the branch from the practise wall netting and maybe make the net a bit tighter and no holes in it - I keep losing balls over the edge or top of it. Am happy to help!!!

A4: I am sure that Gary will want to sort this for you if you ask him nicely.

Q5: (Steve French) Uncertainty is starting to creep in about whether a ball has passed over or through the net – are there plans afoot to replace them?

A5: Well Steve as its you, best assume it’s gone through the net... :) Seriously though Peter and I spent an enjoyable 45 minutes changing the net on court 3 recently and there is another one in storage I think. Perhaps this questions will prompt some additional nets being installed!

Q6: (Anon) Can the club confirm the etiquette during social play if all the courts are full and people are waiting – who gets precedent if someone new turns up!

A6: Dear Anon – my understanding is that we effectively operate an informal peg system, without pegs! So if you are waiting for a game then you have precedence over a newcomer, even if you have already played some games... As always common sense should prevail, but basically those who have waited the longest get to play next!

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Easy Fundraising

Did you know that there's an easy, cost-free way for club members, friends and family to help the club raise funds towards the new changing rooms every time you shop on the internet? It's so easy it's a no brainer!



The link below takes you to a video which explains how it works

<https://www.youtube.com/user/easyfundraising>

Basically once you sign up on easyfundraising link and download the reminder, it will pop up each time you go to any retailer and ask you if you want the retailer to donate to ND LTC.

As you can see from the image above, there are 14 of us already doing this...

Amazingly there are over 3,700 shops and sites, including big name retailers such as Marks and Spencer, John Lewis etc, ready to help raise money for your favourite cause when we shop with them this way.

Unfortunately, the reminder doesn't work for Amazon, so you need to log in to the easy fundraising site first and then search for Amazon as the retailer.



From your grocery shop to your next holiday or your car insurance, there are many opportunities to raise donations using the site.

It's a frightening thought but Christmas is only around the corner and if club members sign up before doing the dreaded Christmas shopping then we can take comfort from the fact that we are doing our bit for the club!

Use the link below to register on the easyfundraising site, choose North Dulwich Tennis Club as your cause and retailers will pay a contribution every time you shop.

SIGN UP HERE



Newsletter Editorial Team

We have a committed group of volunteers who lovingly put this newsletter together.

We'd be delighted for you to join us next time – it mostly involves a chat over a glass of wine in East Dulwich, dividing the nice tasks up and giving the hardest ones to those who couldn't make the drink. Then we all use our charm and persuasion to harass various people to provide us with info!

A special thanks to Nigel for helping us with the printing and Bryan at RaisedByBears for his excellent work once again in formatting the newsletter!

Let me know if you would like to join the team for the Spring edition....

ian@greenbankltd.co

OCTOBER 2019

BEHIND THE GREEN DOOR...

The ND LTC Newsletter



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Let's keep in touch

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