

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

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held on
Thursday 17th November 2011
In The Old Pavilion, Marlow Sports Club at 8.30 p.m.

Present: Eugene and Ros Augustin, Jane and Andrew Johnson, Jocelyn Finch, Helen Strube, Mike Anderson, Georgina Jagger, Colin and Libby Upcott, Mary Crawford, Justin Cook, Tania Smith, Chris Rawlings, Wendy Aitken, Mary Green, Jonathan Welch, Victoria Benning, Guy Tomlinson Jonathan Slack, Sarah McDonald, Jane Pyke, Richard Mole, Damian Topping

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Julia Hick, Alan Hely, Thelma Craig, , John Finch, Sue Gallagher, Miranda Robson, Alison Rae , Ann Dunn

MINUTES OF THE 2010 AGM

The Minutes of the 2010 AGM were taken as read and approved by the meeting as a correct record. Proposed by Libby Upcott and seconded by Jocelyn Finch.

MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the previous Minutes.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The year has been a busy one with much time and effort going into working with the other Sections in delivering the ambitions of MSC. This was not always easy, as while the interests of tennis had to be represented there was a need to look at the issues for the whole Club as well. There have been a number of successful events especially the MSC open day that Justin had organised for the tennis sections . Approximately 250 children and many parents attended the afternoon and participated in all of the sports. Court 4 was used for mini tennis and was full most of the afternoon. All who attended were able to treat themselves to delicious home baking and thanks to all the members who baked for the day. MTC ran the tug of war on behalf of MSC at the Marlow Carnival and we attracted people to our area by having an exercise to do with a racquet and ball.

The Usage Agreement has been the most challenging aspect of our negotiations with MSC and has taken a considerable amount of time and to date has not been signed. Clearly we need to compromise and ensure that the courts are more available for non exclusive use but in a way that they are not damaged, or if they are, liability rests with MSC. We have agreed that non exclusive use does not mean that individuals can use the courts as public ones; the use will be by groups or a recognised organisation or institution. Work will continue on this and agreement will be key to the financial agreement MTC has with MSC.

Overall I feel that the tennis section is more behind the whole MSC development now – it may be that we see there is no option or that we see the greater use of the ground, recognising that now we own it, our future in Marlow is more assured. We, like all the sections, do need to increase our fund-raising efforts and success.

On the tennis front we have continued to have teams in local leagues and now have 2 mixed teams but sadly the ladies' and the men's have both had to withdraw teams mid-season. This has caused considerable additional work for Jocelyn and not necessarily done our reputation any good with the league organisers. On the positive side the men's team won Division one and we were

also promoted in the mixed league.

Finals day went off well, with the usual number of matches being played way beyond their play by date, and a semi-final injury on the evening before finals day resulting in the mixed doubles being retained by the holders, without a finals match being played. Thanks to all who entered and to those who umpired and supported on the day. Well done to Rob Daly for winning 3 finals.

Sarah and Jane ensured that our social calendar remained active and interesting and we had some different events. This year we gave the profits to the Sports Club.

The spring clean was attended by few, as so often is the case, with those present ranging from 3 to over 70. The gardening skills of the off-peak members are always much appreciated.

Membership has fallen and while this may be expected it is of concern that we have virtually no members aged between 20 and 40. This is an area that we will need to address. We also lack active engagement of the parents of junior members in the wider life of the club.

The committee consider the courts are in need of replacing now and it is intended that we replace courts 1,2 & 3 shortly – ideally before the next summer season.

All committee members were thanked for their hard work and support.

The John Field Cup, for the member, that the Chair considers, has done much to support the whole club was presented to Jocelyn Finch.

Treasurer's Report

Jonathan Slack presented the accounts (recorded as a separate attachment).

These were accepted – proposed by Jane Johnson and seconded by Jonathan Welch.

Auditors Report

Rosalind Gillet (Augustin) reported that she had audited the accounts.

MSC issues

In advance of the AGM there had been an open session with the MSC Trustees, where the recent history and the current position regarding events, loans and fund-raising were discussed. John Fordham reminded the meeting that the Town Mayor has selected the MSC as the key areas of her financial support and that she had attended the MSC open day in September and held a fund raising dinner with an auction for the Club. The Trustees emphasised the need for all sections to work to help raise the funds required to pay the loans taken out to purchase the ground upon which all Sections play their sport or use the club house facilities as a base. There has been a very low take up of the donor scheme across all the Sections with 57 members in total having “joined”. This made it more difficult when approaching external donors, as it was not possible to evidence strong member support and effort towards fund-raising. The Trustees have requested that all Sections present them with their fund raising ideas for the coming year, the target is £70k in total.

Within this context the Chair gave an update on the key issues for MTC. These were the Usage Agreement – with tennis being the last Section to reach an agreement. One of the issues to be resolved was the times of the week when the courts were available for non exclusive and exclusive use. Andrew Johnson, Jocelyn Finch and Mary Crawford were the main committee members involved in this negotiation.

There were three issues relating to governance of the Club and fund-raising ability that needed to be addressed as soon as possible to enable MTC to demonstrate its commitment to the MSC and its charity status. There was also a requirement to change our rules to comply with new LTA

changes. The committee proposed that as we had not been able to source a volunteer that we would identify someone that we would pay to carry out this work for us. This was agreed by the meeting.

Fund raising – there was discussion re a levy on subscriptions, a one off increase in subscriptions or a donation from our funds to help MTC with its contribution to MSC fund raising. While all these ideas were seen to have some merit none were agreed. The donation from our funds was not discounted totally but the view was the funds would be required to get the courts replaced early next season. It was agreed that from January 1st 2012 tokens would increase to £2 each with 50p of each token going directly to MSC as part of the MTC contribution. Social events would continue to be used to raise small sums of money; the donor scheme should be pushed hard with personal approaches to members and that we would support any MSC wide event that brought the Sections together and was organised on that basis – ideally organised by the fund raising co-ordinator to be appointed by MSC shortly.

Guy Tomlinson offered to organise a tournament, supported by a sub committee, that would promote the club and help increase membership and with fund-raising.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Andrew Johnson gave an over- view of the current membership numbers, reporting that numbers had reduced over last year. Current numbers are 278; 14% down on last year with adult membership (173) having reduced more than juniors 105. Adult members make up 62% of the total membership

LADIES CAPTAIN'S REPORT

Tania Smith reported that for Summer 2011 the Ladies 1st Team was in Division 2. The players: Jane, Emma, Mary, Thelma, Chris, Tania, and Mo. Unfortunately we had to pull out after just one match, as we were unable to field a team. Sadly Jane was no longer able to play and Emma announced her pregnancy.

For the winter it was a good, balanced season and we finished up in the middle of the league. However at the end of the season we lost Jane to a knee injury.

Miranda Robson sent the following report: Ladies B team's activities for the TVL 2010 Winter League: 'The ladies B team, made up of a number of new players to the league, played 14 matches over the winter season in division 4 of the Thames Valley Winter League 2010, with mixed results. The team has had to withdraw for the 2011 winter season in order to allow other MTC teams to continue to compete.'

MENS CAPTAIN'S REPORT

Jonathan Welch gave the following report

We offer members competitive match tennis in three different leagues in the winter season and one league in the summer.

Winter 2010 / 2011 - 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
A treble success.

Thames Valley Tennis League.- The Men's A team defaulted from the top Premier division and will start Winter 2011 /12 in Division 1. Men's B team finished top of Division 2 earning promotion to Division 1.

Bucks Veteran's League - Our team finished runners up in Division 4 of 6 Divisions, winning promotion to Division 3.

Farnham Common League - We entered a team in the Farnham Common League for the first time and were placed in Division 6, we won all our matches and promotion. Four players play 2 ladies & 2 men each match, playing ladies' and men's doubles and pair up to play mixed doubles. No age restrictions.

Thanks to the following that played matches in the above leagues; Jane, Mo, Emma, Sue H, Chris, Tania, Helen R, Mary, Guy, Tony, Rob, Dan, Nick, Paul M, Paul V, Ian and Jonathan

Summer 2011 - We have two teams that play in the Bucks Tennis League top division of 6 divisions. The Men's A team finished in 3rd place (8 teams) and the Men's B finished 8th. Thanks to the following that played matches; Guy, Tony, Rob, Nick, Paul M, Paul V, Andy, Alan, Ian, Peter, Jon, Mike J and Jonathan

REPORT FROM JUNIOR SECTION/COACHING /GROUNDS

Adult coaching numbers were about the same as last year. Groups ran on Thursday & Friday mornings until the end of summer. These groups will continue again next year when the weather improves. On Tuesday evenings an adult group is running and will continue until Christmas. This group will continue again in the New Year.

Junior coaching is continuing throughout all 3 school terms. Mini tennis was very busy in the summer and has tailed off now that winter is coming. On average, 120 places were filled in the summer term. This always drops down in the winter. (We faced a new challenge with hockey on our doorstep).

We have met our targets set by the LTA and our club is seventh in the player participant's league. This league shows how many juniors 18 or under have 6 or more LTA matches. Sam Hirst is our most active junior; he is 9 years old and has played over 70 matches in the red and orange LTA sanctioned tournaments. In May he won his first tournament at mini tennis red. In September he was moved to mini orange and in only his third competition, he won the Burnham Orange Tournament. 4 junior summer teams were entered, 3 boys and 1 girl. The girls withdrew due to many annoying excuses! (Eyelash problems, wrong lipstick!) The boys on the other hand won the 18 and under captained by Ed Francis and also won the 14 and under captained by James Boorman.

James won all 4 singles and all 4 doubles, in the doubles matches he won 3 out of 3 champions tie breaks. Had he lost them, the team would have ended up 4th out of the 5 teams, well done James. The 16 and under boys finished up third out of the 5 teams that entered.

On June 9th, Marlow Tennis Club held the schools festival in which 28 boys and girls from around Marlow junior schools attended. Represented were children from Danesfield, Spinfield, St Peter's, Sandygate and Holy Trinity. Both Libby and I helped run the competition as it progressed throughout the day. The eventual winner represented Marlow in the area finals. Most of the above schools have after school coaching with Libby and I, they are a strong school club link along with Borlase. These schools are important in order for Marlow to achieve Club Mark status. 3 of the schools have signed up for coaching next year.

New projects for 2012.

Everything mentioned for this year will also run next year. New projects will include achieving Club Mark status (our programme is already running to Club Mark standards). A fund-raising event with a tournament for local businessmen to enter in the summer. Leslie from the sports committee has promised to help in marketing this event.

And finally, to get a girls team to actually play their matches!

REPORT FROM OFF PEAK SECTION

Wendy Aitken gave the report - Not a great deal to report this year. We continue to play regularly

on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, which are usually well attended anything from four to twelve players, but could do with more.

Sadly John Paten, our oldest member died in August, he played regularly on a Wednesday morning.

Five round-robins have been played this season which is an enjoyable way to play to raise funds for ball purchase, with refreshments afterwards.

We had a New Year Lunch at the George & Dragon, which was very well attended.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

The committee's proposals for the officers and committee for 2009/10 are as follows:

- Chair - vacant
- Membership Secretary – Andrew Johnson
- Treasurer – Jonathan Slack
- Secretary – Ann Dunn
- Match /fixture secretary – Jocelyn Finch
- Junior representative- Justin Cook
- Men's captain – Jonathan Welch
- Ladies Captain – vacant
- Off peak representative – Wendy Aitken
- Social Secretaries- Jane Pyke & Sarah McDonald
- Communications Officer – Alan Hely.

Jane Johnson proposed that these members be elected; seconded by Chris Rawlings.

There was concern about the lack of a Chair although it was noted that no one had offered to take on the role and none of those approached had agreed to stand for the position. Mary Crawford offered to take on the role of being the liaison officer with MSC – taking instruction from the committee on key decisions. This was agreed. She agreed to advise the MSC Trustees of this as they had expressed their concern that the Section may be without a Chair.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The committee proposed that membership fees increase by 5% to reflect rising costs and inflation. At the end of a debate on whether they should remain the same; a levy be applied to aid fund-raising; be reduced to support a drive to increase membership it was agreed that a 10% increase be applied.

There would be no changes to any membership category.

The 10% increase was proposed by Jane Johnson and seconded by Ros Augustin.

APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

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

OTHER BUSINESS

Match fees – it was proposed by Eugene Augustin that the requirement to pay match fees to the club be ceased. The effort required by the treasurer to collect the money from Captains far outweighed its value to the club. He suggested that each team captain make their own arrangement for purchasing balls and that as now each team makes its own arrangements for refreshments. The club would continue to pay entry fees for teams. This was agreed and from the start of the summer 2012 matches, team captains will not be required to collect match fees but will have to ensure the supply of balls and make their own arrangements with players for the payment of these.

Lights – concern was raised about the number of times that the light token boxes record “coll” and are not able to be used. It was agreed that this was not satisfactory as getting the issue resolved took away from time on court and often required Colin and/or Libby Upcott having to travel to the club in evenings to clear the problem. It was reported that Andrew Johnson had agreed to check the token boxes on a Wednesday evening in advance of club night. He will also update the notice by the lights with guidance of who to call if there are problems.

Eugene Augustin proposed a vote of thanks to the Chair

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10 15 p.m.