

Chairman's Report to the Southbourne Tennis Club 2024 AGM

Although the last 12 months seems to have flown by there has been a number of tennis events of note but very little to report in terms of infrastructure and large maintenance projects.

Tennis at the club has been very active over the last 12 months although we have had spells of weather that have left us all watching the rain pouring down from indoors. Attendance at club sessions seems to have stabilised with most sessions being well attended. We have tweaked a couple of sessions to encourage more players and will continue to monitor numbers of members at all sessions. The committee was asked to consider an afternoon club session but there does not appear to be enough interest at the current time.

Our annual club tournament organised by Zoltan followed a different format this year to ensure that all competitors in all competitions played at least two matches. The feedback on this new approach was universally positive and so this new format will be repeated in 2024. The finals were played in very good weather and there was some excellent tennis across both the age and ability range of the club. Unfortunately we were unable to run a barbecue this year due to lack of volunteers but there was an abundance of cakes and pastries that were welcomed by players and spectators alike.

A Learning Disability tournament was held in mid-summer. It was very well attended and thanks go to Dave, the coaches and helpers for making it such a success. The event was attended by the Lady Mayoress of Bournemouth and her husband. They had a great afternoon watching the tennis, meeting the players and their parents and presenting the medals at the end of the afternoon. The barbecue manned by Colin Gilbey went down very well with the children and their parents.

In March the Mayoress invited Dave Sanger and me to a reception at the civic offices in Bournemouth. The event was to say "thank you" to a range of people who had contributed something to the wider community. The invitation acknowledged the work that Dave puts in to the disability tennis programme at Southbourne and is a great accolade for him.

The Scala Singles League has been running throughout the year with an increased level of participation across the club. Most players enjoy the competition and the opportunity to play singles at their own level.

Our teams are doing well across the divisions although at the time of writing, due to a large backlog of matches due to the weather, teams are playing two matches a week! We had 11 teams entered in both the summer and winter Dorset league. In the coming summer we are entering an "over 60s" mens' team for the first time.

There were no major projects carried out over the last year. However we did have an issue with a car ploughing through part of our car park fence. Luckily no one was hurt. As with all insurance claims, it took an age and a day to get the fence fixed.

A wide range of maintenance issues arise out of nowhere from plumbing to electrics and fence painting to gardening. We are grateful for the efforts of Colin Reeves who keeps on top of the majority of our issues. Unfortunately Colin has recently had an operation and will be out of action for a while. We wish him a speedy recovery

Social events have again been thin on the ground this year. Feedback from our 2023 Christmas party at the Christchurch sailing club was excellent and so we have booked the venue again for 2024. Unfortunately the 10 Pin Bowling Evening had to be cancelled due to lack of numbers but by the time of the AGM we will have had our Quiz Evening which is always well attended.

Zoltan and Elaine Murphy (Lenny) organised an excellent fun mixed tournament which was attended by 20 players. The proceeds of £195 were donated to the Southbourne Food Bank. They hope to organise further tournaments to coincide with the major professional tournaments through the year. If anyone would like to organise an event or evening out then get in touch with the committee and we will provide as much support as we can.

I would also like to thank Neil Mackley for his offer to update our web site and help us improve our social media presence to improve our profile in the local community. Thanks also go to Adam Spicer, who has now moved away from the club, for looking after our web site for a number of years.

There are always opportunities for people with a bit of spare time to contribute to the club whether it is organising the kitchen for tournaments, keeping the weeds at bay or wielding a paint brush on the fence.

We were pleased to welcome Claire Mackley to our committee meetings. Claire has been helping Colin Gilbey with lease negotiations with BCP council. I would also like to thank Henry McKeown for his invaluable advice in this area.

Finally I would like to thank the committee members, coaches and helpers for all their efforts during the last 12 months which I believe has created a happy and safe environment for people of all ages to play tennis and enjoy the company of fellow players.

I hope to see you all at the AGM and on court during the coming season.

Best wishes

David Bull

Chairman Southbourne Tennis Club

April 2024