

Chairman's Report March 2014

Ivybridge Tennis Club/South Devon Tennis Centre has enjoyed a relatively successful year and the following report will briefly outline both the achievements and the future proposed and expected developments;

Financial Report and Sinking Fund

Full details of the financial report have been distributed to the members and Verity shall discuss and take questions regarding the content during item 4 of the agenda. The committee were tasked at last year's AGM to set aside a minimum of £15,000 into a "sinking fund". The club and members are aware that both in and outdoor surfaces will need replacing in time, and there is always a slight anxiety regarding the future funding of this cost. The "sinking fund" represents a commitment to this financing (with probable need for external grants) and also, importantly, is where the money saved yearly by extending the payback period of the outstanding £180,000 LTA loan is placed (the previous loan repayment was £20,735 per year and is now £11,750). It also represents a healthier financial position of the club which enables us to place money into savings. The sinking fund stands at £20,303.

Membership and Subscriptions

As with any club, there is always a movement of members from and to other clubs – our income from subscriptions has increased (over the 2013 5% increase in membership rates) and our membership is up slightly.

The Newbie category has almost doubled in number and is providing a successful stepping stone to players new to, or returning to tennis, who are then altering to a full membership. The committee's goal is to further increase membership in all categories and court occupancy suggests that there is still capacity for further members. Indoor court bookings 9am-10pm over the 7 days is 67.9%. Obviously there are fluctuations in time popularity and, with the Mycourts system, it is relatively easy to assess court availability. Outdoor usage for the same period is 31.6% and the club still has a challenge regarding these courts and how to encourage usage. An alternative surface may be a solution, however this would cost in excess of £60,000.

Committee proposal is to increase all subscriptions by 2% roughly in line with inflation. Subscription price shall be rounded to the nearest most sensible figure.

Court and Club Session Prices

The court rates and play fee continue to confuse and frustrate staff and club users alike. The committee would like to move a straightforward court fee only – it would be between £10 - £14 per hour (depending on the time and whether winter or summer). Visitors would pay a £6 visitors fee irrespective of the time they played, junior visitors £3. We would need to work out the logistics of singles play as this would now give a large increase in fee for singles (doubles would be a very small increase). Some suggestions have been a 25% reduction for singles, it is how we manage this price

difference – online booking only allows for one price per court. This could be a job for the club manager (see below) to solve.

The committee propose to increase club sessions to £2 per hour and to increase the morning club sessions times, starting at 9.30. Comments from members please.

Club Manager

Hopefully the members have seen the advert for the 20 hour /week 12 month contract for a new position of club manager. This post has been needed for some considerable time, and we are now financially able to commit to it. The post will be responsible for the organisational day to day running of the club, developing into marketing the club and aiming to optimise all income revenues (membership, court occupancy, rental space, events etc). This post will also work in conjunction with the LTA encouraging the joint club/LTA objectives of increasing participation, the Great Tennis Weekends and regularly competing juniors. This post has been funding with a grant from Devon LTA, a grant from the LTA and, obviously by the club (the Carbon Trust Loan is halved from £4,992 to £2,496 this year and then nil next). We have received some very good applications with the closing date being the 24th March.

TennisMad

Our working relationship with TennisMad continues to develop well. The club championships had its highest entry (94 individuals) for many years and culminated in an excellent, well attended finals day. The coaching team are very involved in many aspects of the club, organising social events for adults and juniors, an adult coaching programme and playing in the teams. Two of the coaching staff will also appear on the committee in their other roles as club members and team captains. TennisMad provide an excellent role linking the club to the professional aspect of tennis and the activities and objectives of the LTA. Many thanks to Paul, Ben and their team.

Thanks

A lot of ongoing thanks goes to the Duty Staff, Jean, Nicole, Ali G, Ali B, Mia, Abby and now Megan and Anna. Their good will and flexibility had ensured that the club has never been closed this year due to unavailability of staff. They do a excellent job, even in the face of the occasional querulous member. Thanks again to Richard Soper and Ben Semmence for their ongoing indoor and outdoor maintenance work.

Conclusion

The club in is a reasonable financial position, has a strong core membership, provides an excellent venue for junior coaching programmes and tournaments and has strong links with the LTA. The position of Centre Manager should unload most of the duties encumbered to the Chairman and Committee, allow the latter to spend its volunteered time in supporting the members in future developments. I am tendering my resignation as Chairman at this point, and wish the new Chairman every success in the future.

Nell Clotworthy