



## COURT CIRCULAR

AUGUST 2013

### OWEN-GEORGE CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP

*1st-3rd March 2013. Report by Sir Andrew Hamilton.*

This year's tournament would have had Roland Owen-George purring with delight, not only because of the excellent standard of tennis but also because the average age of the contestants was much lower than in the past!

The first round matches produced close results with Miller and Reynolds's experience outdoing the Cotswold boys. Mike Henman murdered the 'undertaker' serve, asking severe questions of the strength of the netting in the dedans and despite being 3/5 own in the first set, Tom Bomford went up the gears against Alex Reynolds.

Sadly, after 13 victories in the competition, it looks as though 61 year old Philip Shaw-Hamilton's reign as club champion may be terminal but he gave a tremendous account of himself against Bomford whose superior fitness and 'youth' proved too much in a hard fought three set match. In the other semi, Henman successfully pressurized Lewis in the first set and at the start of the second with some fine tennis but Tom fought his way out of trouble to win fairly comfortably in the end.

The final was a fine spectacle with both players displaying athleticism and speed about court. Bomford went 5/2 up in the first set, but once again Lewis hauled himself back into the match and took the set 6/5. The second set was a ding dong affair- Lewis went 2 up, Bomford retrieving the situation to 2/2, Lewis going 4/2 up, Bomford scrapping back to 4/4 and then going 5/4 up. At this point Lewis's superior serve, particularly the railroad, saw him past the winning post- just. The winner was presented his prize by the magnanimous former champion Philip who professed delight at seeing a new generation coming to the fore!



R. WILLS V A. REYNOLDS  
6/3 2/6 5/6

P. KELLY V J. MILLER  
6/2 3/6 5/6

M. HENMAN V J. MILLER  
6/3 6/1

T. BOMFORD V A. REYNOLDS  
6/5 6/1

*Semi-finals:*

T. LEWIS V M. HENMAN  
5/6 6/3 6/3

P. SHAW-HAMILTON V T. BOMFORD  
6/1 2/6 2/6

*Final:*

LEWIS beat BOMFORD  
6/5 6/5

## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Sadly as you will read elsewhere, the editor of this excellent repository of information about the club has decided to hang up his quill and concentrate fully on arresting the terminal decline of his golf handicap! I should like to thank Richard Seymour Mead for his conscientious production of two - three Court Circulars every year since 1997- an incredible effort. The CC has always been entertaining with a blend of comment and history lightened by the use of Jeff Avery's excellent cartoons. As Richard so rightly points out in his valedictory advert, Twitter is an incredibly dangerous medium in the wrong hands, but his editorship of this flagship real tennis publication has skipped clear of litigation and has only irritated the current chairman and his predecessor on a handful of occasions! I hope very much that Richard will continue to support the club- cutting the wisteria, bringing his topiary skills to the hedge at the entrance and most importantly attacking the worrying number of holes that appear from time to time in the floor with his tubes of Milliput... In the meantime if there is anyone out there who would like to take on the mantle of editorship he or she will be welcomed with open arms. The Court Circular is definitely worth continuing- hard copy of Club news is less ephemeral than something that disappears into the bowels of a hard drive!

After six months with us, it's a great shame for the Club that Mark Eadle is moving on to pastures new at Radley College to coach tennis, golf and football- an offer that he could not possibly refuse. Many of us have benefited greatly from his enthusiastic coaching, particularly the juniors. The skills of several have developed noticeably and a number of older lags have been encouraged by Mark to question and improve their techniques. He has always shown interest in our play and we have enjoyed having the dying embers of our matches marked from the dedans. I'm sure I speak for all by wishing him the very best for the future and hope that he has enjoyed his brief sojourn at Moreton Morrell.

I should like to use this opportunity to welcome Ben Coleman as the Club's new assistant professional whose mother Diana, and Mike, have of course been associated with the Club for many years. Ben comes from the Bristol and Bath Club where he has been working part time with excellent reports. I am sure he will fit in well here and members will no doubt afford him the usual friendly welcome. He will be starting on 15 September.

Last year we improved the run down American Squash Court and gallery area which look now much as they must have done over one hundred years ago. This year work has been carried out to improve the lighting- we shied away from a new LED system but re-wired the system, added new lights at either end and replaced old fittings. Touch wood...we haven't had to replace a bulb or fitting all year and importantly the lighting we now play under is as good as at any court in the country. I'd like to thank vice chairman David Bryant for master minding the important work in this area as well as the plethora of other jobs he has undertaken.

You cannot have failed to notice the works carried out in the Bar- the removal of the canopy has opened up the room- it is much lighter and shows the beautifully designed room in its true light. Led by Martin Rogers, a sub group with Keyvan Farmanfarmai and Grant Arthur are currently introducing important improvements to the Bar. 'Kev' has brought in an interesting range of beers and the on tap Becks seems to be to the liking a sizeable number of us! Hopefully the changes will have been implemented by the time of the doubles and barbecue at the end of August.

You will have noticed also major improvements to the garden which now looks markedly better thanks to the efforts of Mike Etherington-Smith, Ed Wiggin and James Richardson. They will be fronting a fundraising effort next year which needs to be supported as works to the lighting, Bar and garden along with the usual ongoing maintenance have challenged the Club's reserves. It is important, therefore, that the courts are filled and that we respond as much as possible to Tom's texts, emails and phone calls to coax us to play and to enter tournaments and matches.



I mentioned in one of my new bulletins that during the next season it would be excellent to generate interest with cup runs in the Field Trophy and Brodie Cup. Captains Philip Shaw-Hamilton and Martin Trees will be running training camps from early in September.

My final note returns to the business of finance. I'm afraid that despite constant requests some members have continued to be dilatory in their payments of bar bills. The committee had decided to enter the age of plastic and it will now be possible to pay by credit/ debit card as well as BACS. There should no longer be any excuse for slow payments. The committee will review the situation after three months and will introduce any measures it deems necessary to speed up recalcitrants in their payments...

## WARWICKSHIRE WORLD SERIES

Report by Martin Trees.

Another fine vintage of matches in the five months of the series. Many of the offerings from Moreton were too young for our colleagues at Leamington, although a mature PS-H made many fine appearances to notable effect. The judicious use of small handicap advantages proved to be very useful for the Moreton team. Tom Granville deserves many accolades for selecting (very carefully) once Leamington had declared their hand of players on any given night. The result on the last evening is best described as "inconsequential". We could not be caught so great was the distance between us, it felt like the last day of the Tour de France in 2012, the Frenchman was trailing behind. Cries of; "it makes it easier for them to retreat"! (Please feel free to share any and all "French" jokes with Marc Seigneur care of LTCC.)

After a magnificent curry the trophy was magnanimously presented back to us by Henry Bryan who has done another great job in keeping the Series running this year. One more year and we get to keep it "a la Jules Rimet"!

There will be a few changes and a full handicap allowance even for small differences is the most likely. Let Tom know that you would like to play in 2013/14 and the handicap change means you should get a good singles and two doubles sets on a Monday night.



## PARSONS CUP

2nd -3rd March 2013. Report by our correspondent.

*Semis:*

Jeffrey v Richardson  
5/3

Arthur v Watson  
5/1

*Final:*

Watson v Richardson  
6/1

Professor Steve Watson was worthy winner of the Parsons Cup- playing with cerebral good sense throughout and helped by effective serving. He was too consistent for the Chairman who left a comeback too late and proved too strong for Grant Arthur. Andrew Jeffrey looked a potential finalist with a comfortable win against David Aldwinckle but found James Richardson's hard hitting a handful in the semis. Unfortunately, unlike some of his race horses (allegedly) James failed to come out of the stalls with positive intent and struggled against the Professor's serves and good length shots to the corners, who cruised to a well-deserved 6/1 victory.

A most enjoyable weekend with thanks to Tom and Mark for marking, general organization and production of excellent tennis balls as per usual. The Chairman did put in a plea that Owen-George candidates set aside the 3/4 days next year without too many conflicts...hockey, National League, etc. etc.!

## GARLAND CUP

Congratulations to Ben Irwin on his triumph! He defeated Mike Etherington-Smith in the semi-final 6/3 and met Andrew Jeffery in the final who had defeated Martin Trees 5/1 but Andrew then failed to fire on all cylinders losing 1/6 to Ben in the final of the club's oldest handicap tournament, named after the court's founder...

## **PONSONBY CUP**

*Report by our Correspondent.*

A slightly jaded squad of players returned to Moreton Morrell after a tough weekend at Jesmond Dene in the Field Trophy. An opportunity of redemption for some! Unfortunately the previous weekends excursion meant the number of pairs available to enter was down, notably the fierce combination of Wills and Kelly were absent.

The previous weekend sojourn to Newcastle may have been telling in the first semi-final. A close fought game, Fattorini/Bomford edged out Shaw-Hamilton/Hamilton. In the other semi-final the defending champions Bryant and Pettiford overcame Miller and Grant. (I think!)

In the final Bryant and Pettiford showed typical guile that saw them defeat their opponents in the semis the previous year. However Fattorini and Bomford displayed effective volley defense of the galleries and deadans respectively. Combined with steady and consistent return of serve, Fattorini and Bomford emerged as eventual winners.

## **THE HOBSON CUP**

*9th-10th February 2013.*

No report was submitted despite the editors repeated requests to the winners- so in the spirit of the Court Circular this cartoon is dedicated to the triumphant pair: Martin Trees and James Richardson.



## **JOB VACANCY**

### **THE COURT CIRCULAR**

I hope there is someone out there who would be willing to take on the editorship of this valuable archive and useful club communication tool.

It has provided information to members- and others - since 1993. This editor took it on in 1997.

This is an opportunity to report results, comment on activities, scribble nonsense, slate opponents, and slag off committee members in return for general criticism, gramatical and spelling advice.

The job is highly unpaid, has irregular hours and involves little more than an ability to think and talk about tennis.

There are one or two issues per year to edit.

I am no longer playing sufficient part in the club affairs to effectively do this job.

The current committee is of the mistaken view that results and commentary, as well as communication with members, is cheaper and more effective through modern electronic media.

It is my view, and that of my trusted colleague Hipocrotease, that a printed page is a more civilised medium with which to communicate and to preserve as an historical record the events of our club.

There is also the chance to comment on outside- even political - matters.

The editor has control of content.

Sledging and slandering for 16 years without being sued! This medium is so much safer than Twitter. Just the odd compliment and platitude to placate the pricklier players.

***I hope a volunteer will step forward and enjoy this role as much as I have.***