

# THE ROYAL TENNIS COURT

## Hampton Court Palace



## WARM HOSTS?

THE COLDEST MARCH IN MEMORY TESTED THE METTLE  
OF COMPETITORS IN THE LADIES' MASTERS

*See page 5*

The Spring Newsletter 2013  
*Number 103*

# chairman's chat

RTC has been privileged to host two major events in recent weeks: first the Pol Roger Trophy final, in which MCC narrowly gained revenge over Queen's for its defeat in last year's final, and more recently the Ladies' Masters, which we have supported for the past three years. Unfortunately our own Sue Haswell was unable to defend her title due to injury, but fellow RTC member Elvira Campione stepped up and advanced all the way to an entertaining final against former world champion Penny Lumley. The LRTA were grateful to the professionals for marking and also thanked Linda Sheraton-Davis for assisting with the event and organising lunches and the dinner.

As we went to press, the RTC team of Nick Wood and Chris Chapman were still involved in the IRTPA National League Premier Division playoffs, facing a final eliminator away against Hatfield House on 18 April for the honour of playing Prested Hall in the final back at Hampton Court on 24 April.

Details of the Summer Barbecue, to be held on Saturday 29 June, are announced at the bottom of this page. Please make a note of the date and bring along friends and family to support this event. I would also remind members that the Summer Handicap Doubles, perhaps the most sociable of all the club competitions, is being held on the weekend of 21–23 June.

For the first time, the Royal Tennis Court is to host a Grand Wine Tasting on the evening of Thursday 23 May. The court is to be turned over to a selection of wine merchants, all of whom are members of the real tennis community and will be bringing an interesting selection of individual wines. These will be available to taste on the evening and then orders can be placed for delivery or collection at a later date. See page 7 for more information.

Members will have noticed the new interpretation displays which now adorn the tennis court corridor. This has involved close co-operation between the professionals and the Palace staff and I'm sure everyone will agree this is a huge improvement not only for the benefit of visitors but also for the club itself. Congratulations to all concerned.

Finally, I would like to remind members that the AGM will be held on Sunday 19 May at 11.30am. The board has decided to revert to a weekend date to improve attendance, so please do come along.

**Paddy Sweetnam**



*Henley? Wimbledon? No, the hottest ticket in town this summer is the Royal Tennis Court...*

## SUMMER BARBECUE



**SATURDAY 29 JUNE, 4–10pm**

**Tickets: £20 adults, £10 under-16s  
(from the professionals)**

*Premium-quality food*

*Entertainment including live music*

Keep an eye out for more details  
nearer the date itself

## COMING UP

### RTC

**24 April:** National League Premier Division final  
**27-28 April:** Barker Camm Cup Grade A weekend  
**27 April:** National League Div 5 semi-final: RTC v Oxford  
**5 May:** National League Div 2 final: RTC v Seacourt  
**19 May:** Annual General Meeting (11.30am)  
**23 May:** Wines of the World tasting evening  
**2 June:** RTC v Jesters (social match)  
**21-23 June:** Kings Goblet Summer Handicap Doubles  
**29 June:** Summer Barbecue  
**24 July-2 Aug:** Junior Development Programme coaching course

### ELSEWHERE

**6-14 May:** Australian Open (Melbourne)  
**13-26 May:** Over-50s/60s/70s Masters events (New York)  
**31 May-2 June:** Over-40s British Open Singles Championship (Seacourt)  
**2-9 June:** US Pro Singles (Newport)  
**6-9 June:** LRTA Handicap Mixed Doubles (Seacourt)  
**14-16 June:** Ladies' US Open (Tuxedo)

From 17-29 June, Middlesex University will be hosting the British Challenge, a brand-new event for the best eight players who are either British citizens, amateur or professional, or non-British pros who are working full-time at a club in the UK (such as Chris Chapman). The final will be a best-of-13-sets affair spread over three days.

# The only winner is Essex

*Prested Hall completed a stunning charge to top the National League table*

**R**TC's Premier Division pairing of Nick Wood and Chris Chapman were beaten by Prested Hall by the narrowest of margins in the final group game of the National League's Premier Division.

The result meant that Prested Hall leapt to the top of the league table and thus advanced directly to the final back at RTC, while Nick and Chris had to travel to Hatfield House five days later for a play-off to determine the second finalist (the result of which will be known by the time you read this).

Nick was up against a spirited Ricardo Smith, who took control of the first set and ran away 6-1 winner. Smith kept hitting his targets, while Nick's tactic of going for the forehand corner from the service end rather than the tambour didn't bring much reward.

Both players delighted the 50-plus

crowd with a series of through-the-legs and behind-the-back trick shots, but it was Smith who found more consistency and made fewer unforced errors.

In the second set Nick eliminated the unforced errors and led 5-4. However, the Essex boy held his nerve to take the final two games and win 6-1 6-5.

In the first-string match, Chris was up against Petworth pro Tom Durack. Despite nursing a heavy cold, Chris raced into a 5-2 lead, employing much more boasting than normal. Struggling to find a good length on his railroad serve, though, he let Durack pull back to 5-5, and the home man had to save a set point with a fierce cut volley return of serve. Chris then immediately took his first set point by forcing an error.

In the second set both players changed to a backhand drag serve with good effect. Following some phenomenal

retrieving from Chris, the set also went to 5-5. After spurning the first of his match points, Chris nonchalantly took the second with a clipped shot into winning gallery (one of many on the night) to secure a 6-5 6-5 win.

In a frenetic deciding doubles match, the momentum swung back and forth, going to 5-5, then 6-6, then 7-7. In the deciding 15th game, RTC took the initiative and had two match points, but they ran out of steam as Prested Hall won four points in a row to take it 8-7.

If you happen to be reading this before 24 April, the Premier Division final is at RTC on Wednesday 24th. Come and support the boys – or if they don't make it past Hatfield, come and watch some world-class tennis and see how prodigal son Ben Matthews – the division's 'MVP' – gets on.

**Owen Saunders**

## NEWS IN BRIEF ● NEWS IN BRIEF

### **Barker Camm Cup**

Soon we will know the finalists in the club championship, with the earlier rounds of Grade A being played on the weekend of 27-28 April. Peter Wright defends his title.

In Grade B, Robert Frost pulled off one of the great upsets of the season. Having sprained his wrist in a motorbike accident, he was forced to use his weaker left hand for his semi-final against Fred Satow – only it's not as weak as you might think, and incredibly Robert defeated Fred 6-5 in the third set! Even though Simon Edmond defeated him 6-2 6-1 in the final, getting that far still means Robert qualifies to take part in Grade A... in which he may well make use of both hands.

### **Harris Watson Trophy**

The top seeds have eased into the final of the doubles club championship. David and James Watson, who are going for a fourth consecutive title, will face Charlie Crossley and Tom Freeman.

### **Lathom Browne Cup**

Things are warming up in the handicap singles competition. Chris

Bartley, Peter Mather, David Best and Larry Furness have reached the quarter-finals, while holder John Mather was also still going as we went to press. Watch out for the improving Bartley, who has won 27 games and lost just three in winning Grade B while reducing his handicap by nine points.

### **Seal Salver 2011-12**

David Watson sprinted into the final in his debut Seal Salver campaign with a 9-0 crushing of Graham Prain. He will be up against Mike Seymour, who beat John East in his semi-final.

### **Ladies' British Open**

Claire Vigrass continued her dominance of the women's game with another double at Seacourt. In the singles final she beat her sister Sarah, before they teamed up to add the doubles title. Sadly, Karen Hird had to withdraw in an earlier round of the singles with a sprained ankle. Happier news for Elvira Campione, who won the plate competition.

As the newsletter went to press, the women's world championship was just getting under way in Paris. More on this next time.

## **BOOMERANG CUP 2014**

*(Melbourne, 9-23 January)*

The Boomerang Cup is a wonderful two-week festival of tennis, the main event being a team doubles handicap event. There are plenty of social events laid on at prestigious Melbourne venues, and opportunities to see the sights, watch the Australian Open lawn tennis and see Australia v England at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Costs are reduced by local members offering to billet overseas guests, often leading to long-term friendships.

RTC is normally keenly represented and hopes to be so again in 2014. The event is open to all players, regardless of handicap. The only requirements are a willingness to travel, an enjoyment of competitive tennis, and an ability to commit fully to the trip over six months in advance.

To find out more, please get in touch with Owen Saunders at [osaunders@hotmail.com](mailto:osaunders@hotmail.com), as expressions of interest from teams are required by the Royal Melbourne club by 17 May.

# Bristol whipped, Hyde bound

*Richard East reviews a challenging tour of the West Country for the RTC Marauders*

**M**y heart fails as I review the lamentable results for this tour. And now it falls to me to disclose all to public scrutiny. Will my management style be criticised? Will I survive in post? Reader, be warned, this is not a happy tale.

## **Bristol, Friday 15 March**

Seven stalwarts set off early in the morning ready for battle – six of them veterans of previous West Country tours, plus new boy Robin ‘Feelgood’ Mulcahy, who was more trouble than he was worth. [*Management style already being questioned – Ed.*]

Julian Sheraton-Davis ferried Keith ‘Smuj’ Smith, with predictable impact on Julian’s tennis. Nick Carew Hunt ferried our ultimate in gravitas, John Clark (recently refilled with somebody else’s blood), our travelling quack Feelgood, and your scribe, skipper and tour manager. Peter Flood, in view of the eponymous event of biblical proportions at the time in the West Country, drove himself.

Arriving safely at Bristol in the deluge, we were greeted by Kevin King, new deputy pro Ben Jax and David Pigott, ambidextrous match manager.

Julian stepped up to start the proceedings and, horror of horrors, went down 0-8 to said David. No explanation, nothing obviously wrong – he just lost every game. A soothsayer would have advised us to quit before it got worse, but there was none at hand.

Utterly reliable Carew Hunt was next up, and, my, how things changed! Nick just zipped along against Alec Mullan (a rapid improver; words of dread), and shot away to a controlled 5-0 lead, when his fear of winning struck him in the throat and sounds of choking started to emerge as his impregnable lead vanished to leave him gasping at 5-5. Nothing if not a fighter, he pulled away to another impregnable 7-5 lead, only to be left unable to breathe again as he choked his way to a 7-8 defeat. Only the second match, and two disasters, of different styles, so far.

The third singles featured sprightly 73-year-old Feelgood against Chris Willows, who induced in Robin a feeling of such despair that he eschewed any lateral movement at all

(not so good a move in singles), and came off court having gone down to a 2-8 defeat, complaining as usual about the handicap. There was nothing wrong with the handicap. But Feelgood had not taken enough of his own medicine that morning and was distinctly under the weather. [*Management style ‘less than inspirational’, then – Ed.*]

Fourth up was Peter Flood, and in a change of tactics we persuaded his opponent, Sam Beale, to play using his wrong hand. Finally something worked for us, and Floody took us through to a perfectly controlled 8-5 win.

A 1-3 deficit, then, at lunch. Clearly it was to be the turning point, with five doubles matches yet to be played. But the post-lunch session started badly, as Feelgood and tour manager failed to hold Chris Willows and the rampant tattooed Ben Jax, and succumbed 2-6.

We crashed back in the sixth rubber, with Clark and Flood destroying Rob Butler and Ben Jax 6-3, *mirabile dictu*. Well done Peter for winning twice on the day: outstanding performance, and unique on this tour. But then we got back into our normal routine. Smuj and Julian went down 2-6 to Alec Mullan and Bob Coleman. I then learnt that Smuj had an immobilising ankle injury.

Then Carew Hunt was back on with Clark. Better, but the choke returned to haunt Nick, even though we had once again persuaded an opponent, David Pigott, to play with his wrong hand.

So now 2-6 down, and playing with a crippled Smuj, what is a distraught skipper to do, up against rapid improver Alec Mullan and Henry Wood? Complain about the handicaps and cave in 2-6, that’s what.

Two rubbers to seven, then. What a start. And there was more to follow.

## **Bridport, Saturday 16 March**

We all made it to Bridport in our various charabancs, and Nick marshalled us to get to the Taj Mahal for what turned out to be a ludicrously large curry. But we were all up betimes on Saturday morning, determined to right the wrongs of yesterday, to slaughter them. Reader, it was not to be.

First up, Julian again. He got to 3-3 against James Wilson (an RTC turncoat) but then succumbed to 3-8. Then

another cameo from Nick, 3-2 up against Chris Brinson until struck down with a fetlock injury, which removed his negligible lateral mobility entirely. No choke at all in this simple 3-8 defeat.

Young Robin was so appalled by what was going on that he refused to recover from the curry, his injuries and his illness, and simply gave up against the beautiful (as Robin put it) Simon Corfield, to run out a predictable 1-8, and retired from the court chuntering again about the handicaps. Then Peter looked as if a combination of the curry, alcohol and general despair of the team was too much for him to bear, and also gave it away 1-8 to Mr Brown. So 0-4 at lunch, with five rubbers to play.

This situation got the skipper’s dander up and, carrying the injured and ill Feelgood as a partner, he played a stunner, never let anybody else into the game and came out a winner at 8-3.

But the sixth rubber reverted to type. Unable to repeat their form of Friday, Clark and Flood declined to a sad 3-8. Match lost, one rubber to five.

In the dead seventh rubber, Julian and Smuj produced a stunning 8-3 victory. Why isn’t it always like this? It isn’t. The eighth saw Clark and Carew Hunt slide to a 2-8 defeat against Huxley and Corfield. The final rubber was even worse, as a suicidal East and an injured Smuj managed to produce a 1-8 defeat. What a day. 2-7 again.

You probably understand now why I wonder whether my post is secure. Not only that, but we then all endured the indignity of watching England losing 3-30 to Wales (compared to our 30-62). We then went to the Anchor at Burton Bradstock – which was out of crab.

One dreadful day, apart from all the fun, food, and company.

## **Sunday 17 March**

We hauled our miserable bodies out of bed, played a couple of hours at Bridport and enjoyed a magnificent lunch at James Wilson’s place on our way home. An overwhelming vote of confidence in the tour manager was carried, with one vote against (so he won’t be picked next year), and the tour has been reconfirmed for next year. We may need to take handicap-related action to improve our win rate.

# Lumley turns back the clock

*RTC again hosted the Ladies' Masters, where a former world champion made up for the biting cold and the absence of defending champion Sue Haswell*

One would never have known it was the first few days of spring – snow, sleet, rain, biting winds... but, nothing daunted, the entrants for the Masters gathered at Hampton Court for the third year running and were made very welcome. Sadly, the holder and winner for the previous two years, Sue Haswell, was injured and unable to defend her title.

The early rounds produced enjoyable tennis and many matches were closer than the scores might indicate. The last match of the day was the longest – in fact, it was the only three-setter of the whole tournament. Linda Sheraton-Davis and Lucy Hutchinson did battle for two hours, with almost every game going to deuce (often several of them). In the end RTC's Linda triumphed.

Linda's prize for beating Lucy was to play Penny Lumley the following day – a real treat for Linda, but with the inevitable result of a win for Penny (6-0 6-0). There was much hard hitting and volleying between another RTC entrant, Elvira Campione, and Katie Leppard, but Elvira kept the ball lower over the net and won through.

On Sunday, a bitter wind continued to blow through the corridors, but the action was warm on court as the tournament moved into its final stage. The semi-finals started with Elvira against Manchester's Tiff Fielden. This was a fascinating battle between what might be called the 'modern' game and the traditional. Elvira used her height and (for the Masters) extreme youth to whack double-handed drives and volleys into the corners, while Tiff concentrated on low shots sliding down the sides, especially towards the backhand corners, to cut into the angles



*Above: Penny Lumley and Elvira Campione. Below: the two finalists in action, plus Bordeaux's Savannah Poolman in full disguise*

and make the ball all but unreturnable. The high leaping intercepts and power of Elvira proved the more successful, and she won 6-2 6-4.

In the second semi, RTC's Carolyn Nicholls was outclassed by Penny Lumley, but she never gave up and, whatever the score, continued to play attacking shots, winning many points. But Penny kept her down at the hazard end and just always had one more shot in her locker, whatever Carolyn tried.

In the final, the dedans hoped for a good battle between the talented Elvira and the six-times world champion Penny, who was yet to drop a single game. First blood, though, went to Elvira, who took the opening game after four deuces. She was up in the

next two games, too, but Penny clawed back each time and was soon on her way. Elvira was still getting some great high volleys back, but she had to work for them by stepping closer to the net and was then vulnerable to the next shot whizzing past.

The first set went to Penny 6-2, and then in the second she began to really use the sides, keeping the ball low, low, low. Not surprisingly, Elvira began to get frustrated, sternly muttering to herself after lost points. The first three games of the set each went to deuce, but from 4-0 on Elvira began to make mistakes under the pressure, even on her formerly invincible backhand. Penny calmly kept the crafted shots coming to take the title 6-2 6-0.

In the other Sunday competition, the handicap doubles final saw Sarah McGivern and Trish Morris against Savannah Poole and Lucy Hutchinson. Despite the formidable appearance of Savannah on court as a bug-eyed superhero(ine) with padded body armour and black glove, she and Lucy had a struggle. They won 40-all points at 3-7 and 4-7, but when the next 40-all point arrived Sarah delivered a perfect bobbie to give her and the match 8-5.

Thanks to RTC and its members, and the many markers: Nick, Les, Chris, and Stef; to Helen Crossley from the RTC board for presenting the prizes; to Katy Weston for all her organising; and to Linda Sheraton-Davis and her team for the delicious food. Finally much gratitude is due to Katy's company Burnham Rosen Group for the sponsorship of the tournament, and to Pol Roger for the champagne prizes.

**Linda Fairbrother and  
Lucy Hutchinson**



# National League

*It's 'squeaky bum' time for several strong RTC teams*

Following up last season's three-trophy National League campaign was never going to be easy, but the club's representatives have made a fine fist thus far in their attempt to match that achievement.

You can read up on the Premier Division on page 3, but in finishing third they became one of six (out of seven) teams to have made it through to the playoffs in their respective divisions. Leading the way were the Division 2 outfit of Charlie Crossley and David Watson, supported by Simon Barker, who have all had some fine wins on their way to securing top spot and earning a home final against Seacourt. Charlie just missed out on the award for the division's most valuable player.

Our Division 3 squad of James Sohl, Tom Freeman and Phil Dunn were up against a few players whose handicaps were considerably lower than theirs, but they acquitted themselves well in pushing the top two all the way before losing out at Oxford (featuring Amateur Championship semi-finalist

Miles Jackson) in the eliminator final.

Things didn't go so well in Division 4 (20-25 handicap), where Sue Haswell had a very strong season but her teammates suffered a number of frustrating narrow defeats. All eight matches ended in 2-1 losses.

The lead changed hands countless times in Division 5, where RTC won their final match 3-0 to become the fourth table-topper, only to see Canford then become the fifth. Still, RTC earned a home semi-final and have the division's MVP in unbeaten skipper Simon Fox.

Division 6 (30-35) is becoming RTC's favourite. The club won the title in 2011 and 2012, and Paul Wright's team have again been dominant, earning home comforts on final day. Fraser Shorey has shone with six wins.

Our Division 7 team still had two matches to play as we went to press, but they were in an excellent position to become our third table-topper. Strength in depth is abundant here, with Dick Cowling, George Sleightholme and Scott Levy all prospering.

## Club social matches

The calendar of social matches is almost complete for the season after recent fixtures against Old Etonians, Manchester and Brigands.

Old Etonians hosted us at their adopted Holyport home, with a distinguished RTC line-up. The annals of history do not record the results, but our opponents were fine hosts, and we have already agreed to support their endeavours to grow their club by hosting them next season.

The trip to Manchester saw us assemble a fine collection of tourists of all standards. We were treated, as usual, to the traditional Manchester hospitality in their wonderful facilities. Man of the match Peter Brown solidified his reputation as a great tourist and fierce competitor.

The match also coincided with Robin Mulcahy's birthday, leading to a peculiar sight of a warm-up being halted by the arrival of a chocolate cake on court. After that, the balloons in last gallery provided an unusual extra target. In the evening the team

headed off to sample the delights of Manchester's nightlife, making several new friends in the process.

The Brigands came to RTC, bringing with them many familiar faces. With several married couples each playing one game with their beloveds and one without, the dynamics changed curiously throughout. Needless to say, my phone has not been ringing off the hook with requests to re-pair the couples in future... Anyway, a great day ended in a solid victory for RTC.

There is one fixture left: the hotly anticipated match against the Jesters on Sunday 2 June. Many thanks to all the match managers, especially Peter Flood, Richard East and Simon Edmond. Look out for next year's fixtures, and please let Owen Saunders (osaunders@hotmail.com) know if you would like to play.

Remember, socials are open to all standards – in fact, they require all standards in order that we can provide suitable opposition for our visitors. So there's no excuse...

## NATIONAL LEAGUE TABLES

### PREMIER DIVISION

	P	W	Pts
Prested Hall	6	4	31
Hatfield	6	4	30
<b>RTC</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>23</b>
Queen's	6	2	14

*Eliminator, 18 April: Hatfield v RTC  
Final, 24 April at RTC: Prested v tbc*

### DIVISION 1

Radley/Petworth	7	6	45
MURTC	8	4	40
Holyport	8	5	40
Queen's	6	4	29
Oxford	6	2	22
Oratory	7	0	7

### DIVISION 2

<b>RTC</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>53</b>
Seacourt	8	6	50
Cambridge	7	4	33
Queen's	7	2	22
Petworth	7	2	22
MCC	7	1	12

*Final, Sun 5 May: RTC v Seacourt*

### DIVISION 3

Prested Hall	8	7	50
Oxford	8	6	43
<b>RTC</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>40</b>
Hatfield	8	2	23
Holyport	8	0	8

*Eliminator: Oxford beat RTC 3-0*

### DIVISION 4

Cambridge	7	6	39
Moreton Morrell	8	4	37
MURTC	8	5	35
MCC	8	4	34
Oxford	7	4	27
<b>RTC</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23</b>

### DIVISION 5

Canford	8	5	45
<b>RTC</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>44</b>
Oxford	8	6	44
Leamington	8	5	41
Hatfield	8	5	37
Cambridge 3	8	4	36
MCC	8	0	15
Cambridge 4	8	1	14

*Semi-final, 27 April: RTC v Oxford*

### DIVISION 6

<b>RTC</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>43</b>
Petworth	8	5	39
Holyport	8	5	36
Prested Hall	8	3	31
Cambridge	7	3	25
Canford	7	1	12

*Final: RTC v Petworth or Holyport*

### DIVISION 7

Oxford	8	5	42
<b>RTC</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>34</b>
Oratory	7	4	29
Petworth	8	3	27
Hardwick	7	1	19

# Professional news

By Nick Wood

## Junior programme

We now have a list of interested youngsters for the Junior Development courses, with the first course taking place from 24 July to 2 August.

The seven-day course will cover: introduction to Real Tennis; groundstrokes; back-wall shots; service; return of serve; competition (skill tests). The cost of the course is £60. If you know of any youngsters who would be interested in learning to play, please contact the professionals.

The aim of the Junior Development programme is to create playing and learning opportunities for youngsters to enjoy the game. Through coaching courses and tournament play, we hope to inspire the next generation, as part of the Royal Tennis Court's contribution to the future of the game.

## Club rules and etiquette

The club and professionals encourage the continuation of real tennis etiquette on court, such as:

- Be courteously quiet in the court's viewing areas
- Share the responsibility of calling the score
- Refrain from using inappropriate language
- Wear predominantly white clothing
- Report the score to the professionals after each game

## New interpretation

The new-look corridor is now complete (well, almost). The Palace has very generously spent a substantial budget on the project, all to improve the appearance of the corridor and to enhance the Palace visitor experience.

The exhibition has made an immediate impact, with RTC members



commenting on the high quality and thoughtfulness of the interpretation. The Palace visitors have been overheard making quite sensible comments and are able to come to more pertinent conclusions about the game.

## Wines of the World at the Royal Tennis Court

For the first time RTC is to host a Grand Wine Tasting, from 6-8pm on Thursday 23 May. The court is to be turned over to a selection of wine merchants, all of whom not only are members of the real tennis community but will also, more importantly, be bringing individual wines from great producers around the world. All will be



available to taste on the evening and then orders can be placed for delivery (or indeed collection from RTC) at a later date.

The following experts will be showing wines:

- James Handford MW, Handford Wines
- Chris Herbert, HS Liquid Assets
- James Fleetwood, Delibo Wines
- James Simpson MW, Pol Roger Champagne
- Stephen Cronk and Angela Muir MW, Mirabeau

Tickets are £30. Numbers are restricted, so sign up today. Proceeds from the sale of tickets will be committed to the RTC maintenance fund for the replacement of the court lights.

## Wood's Words

Head pro Nick Wood on how to plan your way to success

Over the past few years, we have gradually introduced different methods of encouraging members to improve their play, such as drill sessions, Fitness Factory, improved individual coaching and changes to tournaments. We have, in Chris Chapman, a young tournament-playing professional to inspire members as a role model.

So, as we are approaching the end of another busy season, why not sit down with one of the pros and set out a programme of real tennis training over the summer months.

- **Individual coaching:** In-depth look at specific areas of your game
- **Drill sessions:** Opportunity to practise certain areas of your game
- **Fitness Factory:** Develop the correct physical attributes



- **Games:** Further opportunity to practise specific areas
- **Tournaments:** Test your skills against the opposition
- **Chris's play:** Watch to see how the pros do it

The professionals are very happy to lay out a plan to help you achieve appropriate objectives, through a course including the above resources.

We will look at your availability, help narrow down your goals, programme coaching and other sessions to help you achieve your objectives.

All it takes is a little commitment and discipline; we'll be guiding you all the way and will make it an enjoyable process.

If you would like more information, have a chat with Nick.

**Chris Chapman** heads home to Melbourne in May to compete in the Australian Open, where he is seeded fifth. Barring disasters he should meet a familiar foe in the last eight: Kieran Booth, the third seed and the world's leading amateur. Best of luck to Chris. The entry list is headed by Camden Riviere, who has his beady eye on the world No 1 ranking.

# A winning service

*The Ides of March saw a private informal dinner party in the club rooms organised by **Jon Clark**, a 25-year member. Guests included the Bishop of Southwark (who said grace), the deputy speaker of the House of Commons, actress Olivia Hallinan, founder member of Genesis Anthony Phillips, Mr and Mrs Will Cockerell, Mr and Mrs Dermot Smurfitt and six others*

**I**nspired by a tiny editorial in this newsletter six months ago, I availed myself of the facilities at the club and had all my favourite people for a sit-down dinner for 14. Nick Wood helped greatly with the organisation, including getting the caterers in as close as possible to the club, given how much needed to be carried. Tom Weale was our 'Fiddler-on-the-hoof' and provided sublime background music. Every guest gave a speech and I have since been inundated with appreciative emails, texts and notes.

The dining room is ideal, with two useable kitchens nearby, an excellent

stock of crockery and cutlery and wine/champagne glasses and exactly enough chairs. Non-tennis people were thrilled at being in the oldest tennis club in the world and I would thoroughly recommend that members take advantage of this sumptuous facility. The Palace was cooperative throughout.

Fourteen is really the maximum number for a sit-down and requires the extra leaves in the table, but it is still a very cosy number where everyone could interact with everyone else. Thanks to all at the RTC who made it such a memorable evening.

*When our former pro Ben Matthews headed south to Cadiz for some respite from the cold, he made a surprising discovery (see below). Sadly, of course, the 'Real' in the name merely claims regal status for the local lawn tennis club (rather less convincing claims than our own, at that), rather than revealing a 'real' hidden gem.*



*John Yarnall and Richard East had a productive trip to Leamington in February, storming to that club's over-60s handicap doubles, aka the 'Zimmer Frame Trophy'. An inspired John and Richard remarkably won both semi and final 6-0, presumably prompting calls for drug tests...*

## RTC Top Ten

Amateur handicaps  
April 2013

1	Peter Wright	3.3
2	Dave Harms	7.6
3	Robert Hird	9.4
4	David Watson	11.5
5	Tom Freeman	14.8
6	James Watson	15.1
7	James Sohl	15.6
8	Phil Dunn	16.1
9	Simon Barker	16.8
10	Ed Kay	20.4

## The Royal Tennis Court Newsletter

*is published four times a year and the editor would love any contributions from members. Please get in touch if you have any ideas for the summer issue, either via the professionals or by email at the address below.*

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## RESULTS

### Barker Camm Cup

**Grade C, semi-finals:** Fraser Shorey beat Paul Wright 6-3 5-6 6-4; Chris Bartley beat Scott Levy 6-2 4-6 6-5.

**Grade B, semi-finals:** Simon Edmond beat Sue Haswell 6-3 6-4; Robert Frost beat Fred Satow 3-6 6-5 6-5. **Final:** Edmond beat Frost 6-2 6-1.

### Seal Salver

**Semi-finals:** David Watson beat Graham Prain 9-0; Michael Seymour beat John East 9-5.

### Harris Watson Trophy

**Quarter-finals:** Phil Dunn & James Sohl beat Sue Haswell & Simon Edmond 6-3 6-1; Simon Barker & Bernard Weatherill beat Fred Satow & Stephen Goss 6-1 6-3. **Semi-finals:** Charlie Crossley & Tom Freeman beat Simon Barker & Bernard Weatherill 6-0 6-5; David & James Watson beat Dunn & Sohl 6-5 6-2.

### Spring Night Pennant

Anderson/McEvoy/Cooke	32
Price/Crossley/Gray	28
J Mather/Humphrey/Morris	28
Bronstein/Beard/Wimbush	27
Hopcroft/Peregrine-Jones/P Mather	19
<b>Preliminary final:</b> J Mather/Humphrey/Morris beat Price/Crossley/Gray 9-5.	

### Lathom Browne Cup

**Grade A final:** Phil Dunn v Chris Swan. **Grade B:** Chris Bartley beat Dick Cowling 9-3. **Grade C:** Eric Butterworth v Dorian Drew. **Grade D:** Harry Walker v James Simpson. **Grade E:** Peter Mather beat John Harbord-Hamond 9-4. **Grade F:** David Best beat Nick Edwards 9-6. **Grade G:** Martin Bronstein v Mike Shattock or John Mather. **Grade H:** Larry Furness beat Matthew Nash 9-6.

### US Open

(Philadelphia) **Semi-finals:** Camden Riviere beat Bryn Sayers 6-2 6-0 6-1; Steve Virgona beat Tim Chisholm 4-6 6-1 6-2 6-1. **Final:** Riviere beat Virgona 6-2 6-4 6-1.

### Bathurst Cup

(International amateur team event, Holyport) **Final:** Australia beat GB 3-2.

### Amateur Championship

(Queen's) **Singles final:** Jamie Douglas beat Julian Snow 6-5 6-2 3-6 6-4.

**Doubles final:** Conor Medlow & Snow beat Douglas & Peter Wright 6-2 6-4 6-5

### Pol Roger Trophy

**Final:** MCC beat Queen's 3-2 at RTC.

### Field Trophy

**Final:** Cambridge beat Jesmond Dene 3-2 at Moreton Morrell.

### Brodie Cup

**Final:** Seacourt beat Hatfield 3-2 at Bridport.

### Varsity Matches

(Lord's) **Men:** Oxford beat Cambridge 4-3 (after doubles playoff). **Women:** Oxford beat Cambridge 5-1.