

# THE ROYAL TENNIS COURT

## Hampton Court Palace



## BEST OF THREE?

CHARLIE CROSSLEY AND TOM FREEMAN TOOK ON THE WATSONS  
IN A THIRD STRAIGHT HARRIS WATSON TROPHY FINAL

*Find out who prevailed on page 3*

The Spring Newsletter 2014  
*Number 107*

# chairman's chat

On Monday 5 May the club held its first Open Day when 19 visitors (ladies and men) attended for a taster session. Nick Wood and Josh Smith gave a short talk and handouts about the history of the game, the rules and how to play. Each visitor was on court for about an hour, interspersed with short breaks when members played doubles. All those who attended appeared to enjoy themselves and were fascinated with the game and trying to get to grips with the scoring system!

Some members have questioned the logic of holding an open day at our club. As one of the principal real tennis clubs in the world, we do have a responsibility to reach out to the wider community. I hope that our Open Day visitors might take up the game and spread the word that it is not an elitist sport. A greater awareness of real tennis is beneficial for the future health of the game in terms of helping to raise standards, to support existing clubs and to increase the chance of additional courts.

High court usage and the difficulty of getting courts has been an issue for many members over the past few months. In recognition of getting courts, we are trying to limit the number of friendly and other matches during the spring which should help to ease the pressure.

Following requests from members, we are setting up a facility where members and visitors can pay for the court, drinks, merchandise and lessons by credit or debit card. In order to cover the bank charges and our operating

costs, we propose to charge all users a small facility fee. We hope that as many of you as possible will make use of this new method of payment.

A number of junior teal tennis coaching sessions were held by the pros in February and were well attended. Four more dates have been allocated for junior coaching sessions at the end of May. In January we applied to the Dedanists Foundation for a grant to assist us with the costs of running our Junior Real Tennis Programme. I am pleased to report that we have been notified that our application was approved and we hope that we will be successful in obtaining future grant monies.

Lastly, may I bring to your attention some forthcoming events. On Saturday 31 May we have the Club Singles final (the Barker Camm Cup), and I would encourage you to come along and see some real tennis played at a very high standard and enjoy a complimentary glass of champagne courtesy of Pol Roger. Then, on Saturday 28 June, we will be hosting the Summer Barbecue in the garden (see elsewhere in this newsletter for details). I look forward to seeing you at these events, so please put the dates in your diary now!



**Julian Sheraton-Davis**

## DATES FOR THE DIARY

### Barker Camm Cup Final

☛ Charlie Crossley will defend his club championship at 4pm on **Saturday 31 May**. Whereas in 2012 and 2013 he took on Peter Wright in the final (Peter winning in 2012 and Charlie last year), this time he faces James Sohl, who pulled off an impressive win over David Watson in the semi-finals.

### National League Division 7 Final

☛ Paul Wright's crack squad host Hatfield from 7pm on **Sunday 1 June**. Find out more on page 6 about the club's National League successes.

### Summer Barbecue

☛ Fingers crossed for sunshine on **Saturday 28 June**, when the club holds its annual cook-out. More details on page 8.

### King's Goblet Doubles

☛ The King's Goblet, which runs from **4-6 July**, is the most social of all the club competitions, and anyone of any handicap can prosper in it. Will it be you? There's only one way to find out.

## COMING UP

### RTC

**31 May:** Barker Camm Cup Final

**8 June:** RTC v Bristol (social match)

**28 June:** Summer Barbecue

**4-6 July:** King's Goblet Summer Handicap Doubles

**19-20 July:** Club Under-25s tournaments

### ELSEWHERE

**1-8 June:** US Pro Singles (Newport)

**6-8 June:** Jesmond Dene Cup

**27-29 June:** Moreton Morrell 50th Anniversary Handicap Doubles tournament

## CAN YOU HELP?

Due to present business commitments, Fraser Shorey is temporarily unable to give the time required to look after the club premises. The board are therefore looking for someone who could assist with building maintenance matters for about the next four months. If you think you could assist, please call Julian Sheraton-Davis on 07977 503394.

# Doubles champs make it a double

*The Harris Watson Trophy saw a repeat of last year's final – and the same winners*

**D**efending champions Charlie Crossley and Tom Freeman retained the Harris-Watson Trophy on a balmy May Sunday, holding off the determined challenge of former champions David and James Watson.

The 6-5 6-1 scoreline does not tell the full story of a match that was close throughout, with the crucial point coming when the Watsons failed to convert their one set point.

Watched by a healthy crowd of members following that morning's annual general meeting, both pairs started rather tentatively, before James Watson upped the ante when he hit the grille followed by the winning gallery to level at 1-1. By the middle of the first set, club singles champion Charlie started to find his range, peppering the tambour, and Tom started to up his percentage of winning volleys while playing up at the service end. Crucially, David Watson, seeking to win his 142nd Harris-Watson title (*sure it's not 143rd? – Ed.*), had his radar slightly off, as he fired several returns into the net.

Momentum was shifting to the defending champions when the younger Watson's radar also faltered as he started finding the penthouse. The



*Two's company: Charlie Crossley and Tom Freeman*

match's turning point came at 5-5 and 40-30 in the Watsons' favour, as Charlie forced a service return high on to the penthouse to give David a straightforward chance to take the set from a high bouncing ball in the middle of the court. However, having mulled over his many choices, he promptly dumped it in the net: a rare mistake from a player of such consistent ball-striking. Champagne Charlie breathed a sigh of relief, saw his opportunity, and played two consecutive main wall forces into the dedans to take the set.

The second set could also have been a tight affair, but everything went the way of the defending champions at

crucial times. The momentum was squarely with them as the mixture of Charlie's accurate forcing and heavily cut cross-court strokes and Tom's assured volleying and good length play continued to frustrate the Watsons. The second set ended 6-1 to Charlie and Tom, as they won the trophy for the second year in a row.

Tom was gracious in victory, recognising the valiant challenge of his opponents. Charlie, meanwhile, can now look forward to attempting a 'double double' of winning the club singles and club doubles two years in succession, which will be a remarkable feat should he achieve it.

**Owen Saunders**

## HARRIS WATSON TROPHY CHAMPIONS

- 2014** Charlie Crossley & Tom Freeman
- 2013** Charlie Crossley & Tom Freeman
- 2012** David & James Watson
- 2011** David & James Watson
- 2010** David & James Watson
- 2009** David Harms & David Durham
- 2008** Richard Harris & David Watson
- 2007** Richard Harris & David Watson
- 2006** Richard Harris & David Watson
- 2005** Richard Harris & David Watson

This and cover photo by John Halliday

## • NEWS IN BRIEF •

### **Junior development programme**

J P Guillonnet, Nick Wood and Julian Sheraton-Davis have continued their diligent work on the club's junior development programme. So far the club has held four junior courses and 22 players have attended. Two more courses are planned during half-term week, starting on 28 May with a three-hour junior real tennis workshop. The other course is a four-day one consisting of one hour per day.

The programme has had not just great feedback from Josh Farrall and David Mills of the Dedanists Foundation, but also financial and moral support, for which the club is very grateful. JP and Josh Smith have been invited to attend a Dedanists/CPD junior coaching workshop at Seacourt, supported by the Dedanists Foundation.

### **Open Over-40s**

Peter Wright retained his title at Seacourt in an event he has dominated in recent years. After he beat Seacourt specialist Luke Danby in the semi-finals, a 6-1 6-5 win over Oxford's Roman Krznaric gave him a fifth Over-40s title in six years.

## Winter Night Pennant

As so often happens in night pennants, the final came down to the very final set. The team of Matthew Nash, Patrick Griffith and Ian Scoffield led 3-2 in sets against Paul Mather, Gitte Dunkley (sub for Jack Marriott) and Ian Wimbush (sub for Andy Anderson) – but with the games tally tied, the winner of the final rubber would take the title. Ian and Patrick stormed away early in the final rubber to lead 5-2. However, Paul and Gitte rallied, tightening up their serves and applying great pressure with their returns; all of a sudden the match was tied at 5-5. The whole competition thus came down to one game. Ian and Patrick managed to gather themselves and took their opportunity at the first time of asking to take the spoils.



# Fahey does it yet again

*The world champion defends his title against Camden Riviere in stunning style at 46*

**B**y now most of you will already be aware of the phenomenal achievement of Rob Fahey in defending his world title for an 11th time, thus extending his reign for another two years beyond the 20 years he has already notched up.

Not for the first time, Fahey entered the World Championship challenge amid doubts over his chances of retaining his title. While he had only been entering tournaments only occasionally in the past two years, and rarely winning them when he did play, Camden Riviere had been racking up the titles like a man possessed. How could the 46-year-old defy the 27-year-old American? The answer, he decided, was fitness. The champion lost 10kg (a stone and a half in old money) and took to the court in Melbourne on 6 May lighter and stronger than he had been in many years.

## Day 1

Fahey was clearly prepared for a long battle – but a 0-6 drubbing in an 18-minute opening set made some observers wonder just how long the battle might be. Both players had set out in cagey fashion, but it was the champion who was making the errors while Riviere, surely the fastest player in the game, settled into his familiar chasing and retrieving style.

The second set saw something like the Fahey we're used to, but leads of 4-2 and then 5-4 evaporated as he fell two sets behind. Riviere's slow serve was preventing Fahey from forcing (or he was choosing not to), and at this point Fahey's cut-volley return was more tentative than usual.

That didn't last. Spurred into action, Fahey went up about three gears. The volley return gained pace and bite, the

railroad serve found its length and the hormones started to flow, and the final two sets saw a significantly more aggressive champion.

Blood stopped play in the third set after Riviere ran into the main wall and suffered a cut near his eye, but the break changed little – by that point Fahey had already turned things around. He was sublime in the final two sets of the day, his fitness clearly showing as the younger man wilted.

**End of day 1: 2 sets each (Fahey first: 0-6, 5-6, 6-4, 6-3)**

## Day 2

Fahey may have ended day one with all the momentum, but it didn't last. Again he was slow to settle, and although the fifth set was tighter than the first had been, it was always going Riviere's way and he had the lead again.

This time, however, Fahey would find top gear rather earlier in the day. Both players were adopting a more attacking approach than on day one, but Fahey was soon the one dictating play. His railroad was becoming dominant, while he was even controlling points from the hazard end too. For every desperate retrieval made by Riviere, there was an even tougher one to follow a couple of seconds later.

After levelling the match in the sixth set, Fahey put in a masterclass to move ahead with a 6-1 seventh. By the final set of the day Riviere was beginning to look a beaten man, reduced to trying different serves and tactics to disrupt the champion's rhythm.

**End of day 2: Fahey leads 5 sets to 3 (2-6 6-4 6-1 6-3)**

## Day 3 (part 1)

Heavy rain and the resulting high humidity meant problems with a

sweaty court on the Saturday. Despite the best efforts of organisers, play was delayed and delayed and eventually postponed until the next day.

## Day 3 (part 2)

Thankfully, the next morning all was well with the court. Fahey required just two more sets to seal victory; the challenger needed four. Would the champ stumble out of the blocks again?

Quite the opposite. He was on top right from the start, and any attempts by Riviere to try something new were merely met with more accurate winners from his opponent. Fahey took the ninth set and was rampant in the tenth, storming away to a 6-0 clincher that gave the final score a neat symmetry, given he had lost the first set 6-0 five days earlier. He celebrated by wrenching his shirt off, his relief palpable after months of preparation.

**End of day 3: Fahey wins 7 sets to 3 (6-2, 6-0)**

It was a remarkable performance from a remarkable man – supreme physical and mental toughness allied to great skill. Riviere will be back to challenge, of that there is no doubt. Will Fahey be back in 2016? We can only hope so, but for now he has other matters on his mind: his impending wedding to ladies' world champion Claire Vigrass.

IRTPA chief executive (and RTC member) Susie Falkner wrote in these pages in 2010, the last time Fahey defended in Melbourne: "For those of you who have not yet seen Rob Fahey play, I would urge you to make the effort to see this extraordinary champion play. I don't believe we will see such a complete player again." Four years on, those words carry even greater resonance.

## MISSED IT? FEAR NOT

☛ If you haven't seen it already (or, frankly, even if you have), you can catch up with the online broadcast of all three days' play on YouTube, at [www.youtube.com/user/realtennis2014](http://www.youtube.com/user/realtennis2014)



# Ladies' British Open

*RTC members enjoy fine wins before Claire Vigrass confirms her dominance*

**W**hile Claire Vigrass was continuing her domination of the women's game, the British Open at Seacourt was also productive for RTC members.

First to make her mark was Harriet Ingham. Just a few shots are enough to convince any observer that we have a player on our hands here, but Harriet had remained a secret from the ladies' real tennis community beyond the Palace walls. This all changed when she disposed of Seacourt's Jess Garside 6-2 6-2 in the first round. She has work to do before competing with the likes of Sarah Vigrass, who beat her in the quarter-finals, but the potential is clear.

In the quarter-finals, Nicola Doble was up against another Seacourt specialist, Jess Garside's mother Alex, the fourth seed. After taking the first set 6-5, Nicola fell behind in the second

before fighting back to win it 6-4 and advance.

Sue Haswell also reached the semi-finals, defeating Freddy Adam 6-2 6-3. Although she then battled hard against Sarah Vigrass, the older Essex sister was just too strong. Nicola, meanwhile, had the small matter of Claire Vigrass, who now plays off 5. She did at least succeed in taking a game off the world champion.

Despite a mid-match wobble, Claire defeated her sister 6-2 6-3 in the final. In the doubles, the sisters beat Sue Haswell and Freddy Adam.

☛ Sue Haswell also came up just short in the International Invitational event at Holyport. With her sister in Australia,



*Regally blonde: Sarah and Claire Vigrass*

Sarah Vigrass took the crown, beating Penny Lumley.

☛ After three years at RTC, the British Ladies' Masters Championship for those aged 40 or over took place at Holyport. RTC's Linda Sheraton-Davis reached the second round, while Carolyn Nicholls made it one stage further. Elvira Campione, who reached the final on her debut last

year, ran into the 2013 champion Penny Lumley in the semis this time. The former world champion eased past Elvira and then Holyport's Jill Newby to retain her title.

**Thanks to Linda Fairbrother, Candida Nicholls and Lucy Hutchinson**

## The pro's view: Nick Wood on Fahey's masterclass

**F**or those who watched the amazing online coverage of the 2014 Real Tennis World Championship challenge between Rob Fahey and Camden Riviere, you are likely still to be in awe of the magnificent performances of both players.

The court at Melbourne is known for its speed off the floor and a fast, low bounce off the back wall, but both competitors made the electrically charged game and court look majestic.

Yes, Rob and Cam played at the top of their games, but for me these two players demonstrated THE way to play the game. Never have there been rallies of such consistent quality, never has there been such control of the ball, nor has there been so much variety in the use of all court areas. All played at speed and with such athleticism.

For me, this match was of a different calibre from any other I have witnessed; the title was won with tennis that I have always aspired to and dreamed of playing. It was not won with the dominance of one or two shots such as the cut volley or main-wall dedans, but with a huge array of delicate, strategic and punctuated shots. The overall quality of ball-striking was outstanding, effortless and clean as the balls were punched over the net. Balls struck at full speed were not only returned, they were caressed and shaped back to the floor and into the corners. Skilled shots over the high net under the winning gallery were used regularly, purely for strategic purposes. Volleys played at ankle height to a cutting length under the grille were of unashamed brilliance.

The speed, movement and retrieving from Camden,

along with his relaxed hitting style, made for very few errors on his part; he worked the court well and equally worked Rob hard. But it was the strong, robust and technically sound execution of shot that once again made Rob the champion that he is.

Having had some insights into Rob's preparation for this match (from his practice partner, Chris Chapman), it was noticeable to me that there were clear, distinct and calculated methods to the way Rob went about countering his opponent, whereas Camden, although playing brilliantly, was clearly looking for alternative answers midway through the second day's play. For me, at this point Camden's only strategy would be to hang tough, be the amazing retriever that he is, and work and stretch every sinew of Rob's body, in the hope that at some point the 46-year-old would tire. If Camden had been able to sneak the fourth set on day two, the final day would have been an enthralling strategic battle that would ultimately have come down to sheer stamina and willpower. Instead, he was left with too much to do.

### *Inspirational*

I leave you with this thought to ponder: for 20 years Robert Fahey has dominated, excelled and inspired, yet where is the generation (maybe two generations) following this man's example? In 25 years in the game, I have not seen an individual play the game the way Fahey plays, yet he is there for all to see and to learn from; he has coached, mentored and encouraged youngsters. Yet despite his amazing and inspirational achievements, where are the players of the future?

# National League

*Two titles are in the bag, with three more finals to come...*

## Division 2

Having finished in second place, the RTC duo of Charlie Crossley and David Watson faced a home semi-final against Oxford. However, both RTC players had to withdraw through injury, leaving subs Tom Freeman and James Watson with a huge task. Tom was clearly inspired, thrashing Craig Greenhalgh despite the visiting pro's nine-point handicap superiority. Although James lost to Miles Jackson, he teamed up with Tom to great effect in the doubles for an 8-2 win and a startling overall success. Charlie and David will be hoping to be fully fit for the final against MCC/Prested Hall.

## Division 4



Our boys were dominant in this division, not losing a single rubber until their seventh match. Fittingly the two players at the top of the MVP table faced off in the first-string singles in the final. Phil Dunn (RTC) and Jules Camp (Cambridge) traded games to 3-3 in the first set but then tight serving and a few errors from Jules gave Phil the set 6-3. The second set was even tighter, with Jules reaching 5-4, but he was unable to reach set point and went on to lose the set 6-5.

The second singles, between Alex Evans (Cambridge, youth) and Simon Barker (RTC, experience), was characterised by relentless retrieving from Simon and a few too many unforced errors from Alex. The game points all seemed to go one way, with experience triumphing over youth 6-1 6-2, giving RTC an unassailable 2-0 lead and with it the division title.

The dead-rubber doubles was always going to be difficult for RTC without James Sohl in the team (tonsillitis keeping him away). Cambridge dominated the service end on their way to an 8-4 win – but the overall spoils went to RTC after a fabulous season.

## Division 6



The RTC team chased Cambridge all the way to the line in the league, and they duly dispatched Canford in the semis to set up a final showdown up in Cambridge. RTC were quick out of the blocks, as second string Stephen Goss took the first set 6-0 against William Russell – but the home player is a fighter and he clawed his way back, eventually prevailing in three sets.

In the third-string rubber, Chris Bartley also started well against Charles d'Oyly, making full use of his long reach and adept retrieving. After a 6-1 first set, he carried on the good work until, at 5-1, that last game began to prove elusive. Thankfully he steadied the ship to take the set and match 6-4.

That left Simon Edmond in a winner-takes-all battle with opposing skipper Jimmy Campbell. Simon broke the trend by starting terribly, and a comeback from 1-4 down proved too much in the first set. He got on top early in the second and took it 6-3, and from 2-3 in the third he made the crucial move ahead, eventually taking it 6-4 to seal the title. For the second year in a row, RTC had won an away final in this division.

## Division 7

RTC is going for a fourth consecutive title in this 30-35 division. Having topped the table despite a late wobble, they will host Hatfield House in the final at 7pm on Sunday 1 June.

## Division 8

Peter Mather's team made a late rally but just missed out on the play-offs – and then Petworth, who had denied them third place, unexpectedly won the title!

## Division 9

With Justin Gregory and Harriet Ingham to the fore, RTC have a strong squad. But so do Moreton Morrell, who earned the right to host the final. Best of luck to Justin's team on 31 May.



*Top: Jules Camp, Phil Dunn and Simon Barker  
Above: Simon Edmond, Stephen Goss, marker Peter Paterson and Jimmy Campbell*



## NATIONAL LEAGUE FINAL TABLES

### DIVISION 2 (5+ hcp)

MCC/Prested Hall	6	3	32
<b>RTC1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>31</b>
Oxford	6	4	28
Canford	6	1	16

*Eliminator: RTC1 beat Oxford 2-1*

### DIVISION 4 (15-20)

<b>RTC2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>59</b>
Cambridge	8	6	45
Jesmond Dene	8	4	36
Hatfield	8	2	16
Oratory	8	1	13

*Final: RTC2 beat Cambridge 2-1*

### DIVISION 6 (25-30)

Cambridge	8	7	49
<b>RTC3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>45</b>
Canford	8	5	36
Leamington	8	3	35
<b>RTC4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>30</b>
Hatfield	8	3	25
Oxford	8	2	21

*Eliminator: RTC3 beat Canford 3-0*

*Final: Cambridge lost to RTC3 1-2*

### DIVISION 7 (30-35)

<b>RTC5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>44</b>
Hatfield	8	5	44
Cambridge	8	4	36
Prested Hall	8	4	33
Middlesex U	8	4	32
MCC	8	3	24
Petworth	8	2	20

*Final: RTC5 v Hatfield, tba*

### DIVISION 8 (35-40)

Oxford	8	5	47
Middlesex U	8	5	39
Petworth	8	5	35
<b>RTC6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>34</b>
Seacourt	8	4	34
Leamington	8	2	23

*Final: Petworth beat Oxford 2-1*

### DIVISION 9 (40-45)

Moreton Morrell	8	6	50
<b>RTC7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>46</b>
Oxford	8	5	40
Middlesex U	8	4	39
Newmarket	8	4	32
Hatfield	8	4	30
Leamington	8	3	29
Canford	8	0	6

*Semi-final: RTC7 beat Oxford 3-0*

*Final: Moreton Morrell v RTC7, 31 May*

### OTHER DIVISIONS

**Division 1:** Queen's topped the table and await the winners of a play-off between Manchester and Holyport/Petworth (who include Peter Wright of RTC in their team).

**Division 3:** Seacourt led the way and were victorious in their home final over Queen's, taking the decisive doubles.

**Division 5:** Moreton Morrell dominated this division from start to finish, ending with a 2-1 final win over Petworth.

# Queen's regain Pol Roger Trophy

*RTC hosted a surprisingly tight final of the national inter-club knockout competition*

As you may recall from the previous newsletter, the Royal Tennis Court team fell to Queen's at the semi-final stage of the Pol Roger Trophy, the amateur team event known as the Field Trophy until 2009. Our conquerors duly made the short trip down to the Palace in March to reclaim the title they won in 2012 and lost to MCC last year. It wasn't as easy as some might have expected, however.

For once this was not a battle between the behemoths of Queen's and MCC. The holders MCC had come unstuck in the quarter-finals at Seacourt, who then themselves fell to a young and improving Cambridge outfit.

Queen's, however, began this sunniest of spring days as a very warm favourite, and the opening rubber, the first-string singles, illustrated why. Cambridge had managed to strengthen their line-up since the semi-finals with the recruitment of Alexis Hombrecher, who had played for MCC in last season's final – but he was up against

his nemesis from that 6-1 6-1 defeat in 2013, Conor Medlow, and this match was similarly one-sided. A 6-0 6-1 win for the talented left-hander gave Queen's a perfect start.

The second-string singles was next, and Cambridge had cause for optimism here. Student Ed Kay had claimed notable scalps in previous rounds and here he was on home turf, being an RTC member. Right from the start, Ed was striking the ball crisply, invariably choosing the right times to attack, and when required he used his great pace around the court. The experienced John Prens had no answers, and soon Ed was completing a very impressive 6-0 6-2 victory to level the tie.

The final singles match was not supposed to be close – but Cambridge's Freddie Kalfayan had other ideas, defying a seven-point gulf in handicap to give Tom Seymour-Mead all manner of trouble. It was only in the third set that Tom settled for a spell at the service end and Freddie's level finally

dropped off slightly, enabling Tom to serve his way to victory. Crisis averted.

With Queen's one rubber away from regaining the trophy, skipper Chris Herbert took to the court with James Coyne. They took the first set but rackets specialist Coyne's power game was not consistent, and Cambridge captain Jules Camp and partner Alex Evans stuck to their task. They reaped rewards in the second set and well into the third, but in the end their resistance ran out and Queen's managed a last sprint. A 6-3 final set gave Queen's victory and the Pol Roger Trophy.

A presentation out in the afternoon sunshine took place before the 'dead rubber' first-string doubles, in which Cambridge's Duncan Colquhoun and Jamie Giddins upset Alistair Lumsden and Harry Eddis 5-6 6-5 6-3 to make the final score 3-2 to Queen's.

Many thanks must go to James Simpson and Pol Roger for sponsoring this premier event, and to Nick Wood and his pro team for top-class marking.

## Club competitions latest

### **Barker Camm Cup**

February saw the competition reach the sub-30 handicap brigade, and Geoffrey Russell stamped his authority on the Grade B weekend, beating both the best-handicapped players on the Sunday.

First he outplayed Simon Edmond 6-5 6-1, accelerating away after a tight first set. And then, in the final, he dug in at 2-4 down against Robert Frost, setting off on a run of games that would only be broken when he was 5-0 up in the second set. He finally took the match 6-4 6-2.

Although Geoffrey was unable to take his place in the Grade draw in early April, Robert was there and managed to give James Sohl some difficult moments before bowing out. James then faced David Watson in a semi-final that turned into a battle of attrition, and with David struggling with injury James pulled off a notable victory, 5-6 6-5 6-3.

In the other half of the draw, James Watson beat Simon Barker with eye-catching ease, 6-2 6-2, but his semi-

final opponent was a tougher obstacle: defending champion Charlie Crossley. Charlie advanced comfortably and will take on James Sohl in the final at 4pm on Saturday 31 May.

### **Lathom Browne Cup**

The race to find the club's handicap singles champion is well under way, with all grades but one decided.

The new rule for this season that means current handicaps are used, rather than a fixed 1 September handicap, promises a more open competition in which any rapid improvers do not carry forward such a huge advantage through the rounds.

The quarter-finalists are  
Grade A: Fred Satow or James Sohl.  
Grade B: Owen Saunders.  
Grade C: Adrian Larkin.  
Grade D: Dan Callaghan.  
Grade E: Karen Prottey.  
Grade F: Zac Jopling.  
Grade G: Will Cockerell.  
Grade H: Giles Doy.

Only one thing is guaranteed: there will be a new name on the trophy.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### **Amateur Championships**

Peter Wright reached the semi-finals at Queen's before suffering a tough five-set loss to eventual champion Matthieu Sarlangue. He did at least gain some consolation in the doubles, teaming up with Jamie Douglas to defeat Sarlangue and Alistair Lumsden... in five sets.

Ed Kay reached the singles quarter-finals, also falling to Sarlangue.

### **Ben Matthews**

Prodigal son Ben is on the move again after a couple of years at Hatfield House. The next step in his career is an exciting one, as he prepares to become head professional at Leamington. From September Ben will work alongside current head pro Kevin Sheldon for a few months until Kevin retires and Ben takes sole charge.

### **Varsity matches**

RTC members fared well in the Varsity matches at Lord's. Cambridge skipper and No 1 Ed Kay had two easy wins as his team romped home 6-0, while in the ladies' match Maggie Henderson-Tew won twice as Oxford triumphed 5-1.

# Open for business

The club hosted its first Open Day on Monday 5 May, during which newcomers to the game were welcomed by board members and given an introduction to real tennis and all its foibles (well, perhaps not all of them) by professionals Nick Wood and Josh Smith



*Loosen your belts – it's time for the RTC*

## SUMMER BARBECUE

**SATURDAY 28 JUNE, 4.00–10.30pm**

**Tickets: £20 adults, £5 under-16s, infants free**  
(tickets available from the professionals)

*Premium-quality food, including lamb pit roast  
Live music*

### RTC Top Ten

Singles handicaps  
May 2014

1	Peter Wright	2.9
2	Charlie Crossley	5.0
3	Dave Harms	10.0
4	Ed Kay	11.7
5	Tom Freeman	13.2
6	James Sohl	13.5
7	David Watson	13.9
8	James Watson	15.3
9	Phil Dunn	16.6
10	Simon Barker	17.1

### RTC Top Ten

Doubles handicaps  
May 2014

1	Peter Wright	3.8
2	Charlie Crossley	7.9
3	David Watson	12.2
4	James Watson	12.4
5	James Sohl	12.7
6=	Tom Freeman	14.9
6=	Simon Barker	14.9
8	Ed Kay	16.1
9	Phil Dunn	18.8
10	Sue Haswell	22.0

## 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

### Harris Watson Trophy

**Final:** Charlie Crossley & Tom Freeman beat David & James Watson 6-5 6-1.

### Barker Camm Cup

**Grade B, semi-finals:** Geoffrey Russell beat Simon Edmond 6-5 6-1; Robert Frost beat Chris Bartley 6-3 6-2. **Final:** Russell beat Frost 6-4 6-2.

**Grade A, quarter-finals:** James Sohl beat Robert Frost 6-2 6-2; James Watson beat Simon Barker 6-2 6-2. **Semi-finals:** Charlie Crossley beat James Watson 6-2 6-2; Sohl beat David Watson 5-6 6-5 6-3.

### Winter Night Pennant

**Final:** Matthew Nash, Patrick Griffith and Ian Scofield beat Paul Mather, Gitta Dunkley (sub for Jack Marriot) and Ian Wimbush (sub for Andy Anderson).

### Pol Roger Trophy

**Final:** Queen's beat Cambridge 3-2.

### Field Trophy

**Final:** Manchester beat Holyport 3-2.

### Brodie Cup

**Final:** Middlesex U beat Radley 4-1.

### British Ladies' Masters (Holyport)

**1st rd:** Linda Sheraton-Davis beat Carolyn Armstrong-Smith 6-2 6-1.

**2nd rd:** Pam Tomalin beat Sheraton-Davis 6-3 4-6 6-3. **Quarter-finals:** Elvira Campione beat Pam Tomalin 6-2 6-1; Penny Lumley beat Carolyn Nicholls 6-0 6-0. **Semi-finals:** Lumley beat Campione 6-1 6-1. **Final:** Lumley beat Jill Newby 6-0 6-3.

### British Ladies' Open (Seacourt)

**1st rd:** Nicola Doble beat Lucy Hutchinson 6-1 6-1; Harriet Ingham beat Jess Garside 6-2 6-2. **Quarter-finals:** Doble beat Alex Garside 6-5 6-4; Sue Haswell beat Frederika Adam 6-2 6-3; Sarah Vigrass beat Ingham 6-1 6-0. **Semi-finals:** Claire Vigrass beat Doble 6-1 6-0; Sarah Vigrass beat Haswell 6-2 6-2. **Final:** Claire Vigrass beat Sarah Vigrass 6-2 6-3.

**Doubles – Semi-finals:** Claire & Sarah Vigrass beat Nicola Doble & Alex Brodie 6-1 6-0; Sue Haswell & Frederika Adam beat Alex & Jess Garside 6-2 6-3. **Final:** Vigrass & Vigrass beat Haswell & Adam 6-0 6-1.

### Amateur Championships (Queen's)

**1st rd:** Luke Danby beat Phil Dunn 6-4 6-2 6-5; Ed Kay bt Benjamin Jacquin-Turretini 6-1 6-3 6-3. **Quarter-finals:** Matthieu Sarlangue beat Kay 6-2 6-4 6-2; Peter Wright beat Tom Seymour-Mead 6-5 6-0 6-3. **Semi-finals:** Sarlangue beat Wright 6-2 6-5 5-6 5-6 6-3; Jamie Douglas beat Danby 6-3 3-6 6-0 6-2. **Final:** Sarlangue beat Douglas 6-5 6-5 6-3.

**Doubles – Semi-finals:** Jamie Douglas & Peter Wright beat Harry Eddis & Tom Seymour-Mead 6-1 6-1 6-1; Alistair Lumsden & Matthieu Sarlangue beat Miles Jackson & Roman Krznaric 6-4 6-3 6-4. **Final:** Douglas & Wright beat Lumsden & Sarlangue 6-4 6-5 5-6 3-6 6-5.