

THE ROYAL TENNIS COURT



Ivan, Lesley and Luke Ronaldson at the Hall of Fame ceremony in New York

Fame and good fortune

RTC's Lesley Ronaldson on a weekend to remember with her RT family

See page 3

Juniors to the fore

See pages 4 and 5

We're having a Ball—page 7

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020 8977 3015 info@royaltenniscourt.com www.royaltenniscourt.com

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Sustainability

From the Board's perspective, we have a list of strategic objectives used to guide policy and action related to management of the club. These are underpinned by a commitment to Sustainability. That means sustaining the Royal Tennis court now and through the foreseeable future, my topic for this edition.

Sustainability for our club. Those who follow our accounts will notice that we've been able to make a modest surplus, despite the challenges of Covid. This is a direct consequence of us, the membership, keeping our subscriptions going despite limited opportunities to play. On behalf of all us, many thanks.

The positive surplus is an absolute necessity. There are no other funding sources. We can agree with the oft-quoted Mr. McCawber: "Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen six, result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pound ought and six, result misery."

We must manage such that our incomings exceed our outgoings and make provision for the unexpected. With that in mind, you will see that we are budgeted for an even more modest surplus in 2023, and a commitment to manage to that with a keen eye for the unknowns.

I'll say no more in this forum and am open to a discussion with anyone who is interested in the economics of the RTC.

Sustainability for our Nation's clubs

I've had the benefit of sitting around a table with the chairmen of most of the other UK Real Tennis clubs to discuss common challenges and mutual support, and can report that almost every one faces the same equation that we (and Mr. McCawber) do. We must run at breakeven or be unsustainable. Furthermore, we are not constituted to make a profit, only a prudent surplus. Every club faces a different circumstance, be they a standalone club, part of our historic heritage or a school. However, in the end, there is generally one court with its finite capacity and a limited number of ways to utilise it.

Sustainability for our Professionals

Most of you will be aware that an organisation called "Investing in Professionals" exists, chaired by our own David Watson, and it is working more generally to ensure a steady supply of young people taking on these roles with the tools they need to manage and maintain sustainable clubs. Their mission in this regard is to "Attract, Recruit, Train and Retain". Please check out their website, www.realtennisip.com and support the effort as you see fit.

Speaking of young professionals, over the last year, Jack Joseph's handicap has improved from 28 to 22. Quite an achievement no matter how young or talented you are!

Sustainability for the International Game

With the UK by far the largest tennis playing nation, I hope we can support the others (France, Australia, USA) in small and large ways. An example of this would be going to Bordeaux to play a little tennis and be a tourist in this fabulous place.



Sustainability of the Environment - our contribution will include working with HRP's expert partner in this area as the entire palace progresses to de-carbonisation by 2050.

In other news: You'll see that we have been granted sponsorship for our Champions' Trophy for another year by Mitsubishi Electric and are excited about maintaining a fabulous Professional event on our court. We're hoping



Ben Taylor-Matthews in action at the last Champions Trophy

to have a packed Dedans and upper galleries to see and encourage the best players in our sport during July 17-23rd. Please attend if possible.

International Tennis Day is on the 20th June with the hope that every club in the world does something to recognise it. A rare opportunity for all 45 clubs to recognise each other, at least on social media in this connected world. We are working on how to mark the occasion.

And finally...

Although coming to the game too late to know Nick Carew Hunt personally (*see Obituary, Page 6*), I can feel the impact he's had on so many in our game. We hope to welcome Tom Carew Hunt back to our membership soon.

We are encouraging those who have written on our sport to find a moment to bring their books and other media to your attention. Please watch for these opportunities and come to the club to meet the authors.

A shout-out to Darcie Blaber for winning the LRTA Under 15 National singles and doubles at Wellington and qualifying for the Junior World Championships.

Looking forward to seeing you on 13th May at our party!

Doug Sheperdigian

Lesley in the limelight

Lesley Ronaldson recalls an unforgettable night as she joins the Hall of Fame

I have been asked by our tenacious editor, Andy Anderson, to describe my unforgettable night in NY and induction into the Hall of Fame.

In 1994, the US Court Tennis Association (USCTA) created the International Order of Merit to recognise and honour those who have made outstanding achievements or contributions to the game of Court Tennis. In 2000 the name was changed to the International Court Tennis Hall of Fame. The original names invited were G and J Bostwick, Pierre Etchbaster, Jay Gould, Albert Johnson, Northrop Knox, Alastair, Martin and William Van Allen, all but one of whom I was privileged to know.

Although the Hall of Fame is in Newport, Rhode Island, the award is traditionally presented at a yearly dinner in the New York Racquet and Tennis Club.

Have you ever heard of imposter syndrome? I was suffering from it as I read a formal invitation to be inducted into this elite group from James Zug, President of the USCTA. The letter was written on the 20th of February 2020. Due to Covid there was no dinner that year and as we couldn't travel in 2021 the invitation from the American brothers, Ralph and Sam Howe, was brought forward. Eventually I was delighted to accept, because dear Sam died the following year, having received the honour... and what an honour!

That day in covid February I was so thrilled, and after the initial disbelief my boys and friends convinced me it was indeed I, the USCTA had truly meant to ask.

On Friday 9th of December 2022 I was given a table at the dinner for my guests and family, so Luke, my son, took his last working day off school. My other son Ivan drove him up from Washington airport, my sister and her daughter Toby flew to New York. Christie, Ivan's wife, came up by train. Camden Riviere (I am his English Mom!) Matty Ronaldson, Doug Shear (an old friend) and a friend of Ivan's, Dai, made up my fabulous table. They were so supportive. My third son Ben was sadly unable to attend.

The splendid black-tie evening with 216 guests started with an hour's cocktails in the lounge, which has a balcony looking down into Park Avenue. So many old



Lesley with all the Pros at dinner plus Jane Lippencot who writes Chase The First

friends, Pros and other tennis players from all over the US and six English clubs were gathered. It was odd when Luke and Ivan appeared in their DJs (so proud!) because thanks to FaceTime I had seen Ivan only the day before and so often over the past few years, but it had been more than three years since I had had one of his bearhugs!

It was amazing to not only be allowed for the first time into the magnificent clubrooms (rather than use the service lift to get to the Pro room), but also to be the guest of honour. Unfortunately I had not slept for days with my speech going round and round in my head every night!

Dinner was set up in the south lounge with overflow in the famous library, which was elegantly decked with flowers, best crystal and various historic trophies on the tables. Ted Goneos was the organiser of a faultless evening. Mary Livingston, present President of the USCTA, welcomed everyone, and there were many awards throughout the evening, which included a posthumous Professional Of The Year award, given to ex-RTC Pro.Mike Gooding.

Embarrassingly there was also a big screen showing photographs of me at one end of the room. I was nervous, so although I enjoyed the huge chunk of lamb and was amazed at the enormous amount paid for the auction prizes, I was always aware that my acceptance speech was still to come.

Finally, after some kind words by Mary, I was invited up to the lectern and Mary

handed me my award. Gulp - here goes!

The start was easy because it was Mary's birthday, so I thanked her for inviting us all to her party! It was not only a grateful thank you for the huge honour of being inducted, but a thank you to the world family of tennis and how lucky I had been over the years to be welcomed into so many homes. How could my job not be fantastic when every hour, on the hour, you're looking after two, even four, very good friends!

I also thanked Bernard Weatherill and Chris Ronaldson for introducing me to the historic and skilful game with which we had fallen in love. Towards the end I also said how proud I was of Ivan and Ben and what they had done for the game...Luke too, although he had taken a wrong turning in life by becoming a mathematician!

I finished by saying that until that evening, the biggest regret of my life had been losing the world singles championship so closely, but having been invited into the Hall of Fame that would no longer prey on my mind. Apparently I received two standing ovations, but I was so relieved that it had gone OK I was not aware of the kind response. Next day we all returned for lunch and to watch the Whitney Cup, an inter-club tournament which Washington, Ivan's club, won for the first time.

A truly amazing, unforgettable weekend!

Juniors take centre stage

The force is strong in these young ones at the RTC Under-25 Tournament

What a fabulous weekend of tennis we had in early February at the RTC Under-25 Tournament. Handicaps were slashed all round and we saw some truly wonderful new talent emerging. The standard of tennis was incredible. Everyone was clearly enjoying themselves and it was lovely to see the support from the other players and parents. We also had a great mix of players from those playing regularly to those who had not picked up a racket in months - but all played in great spirit.

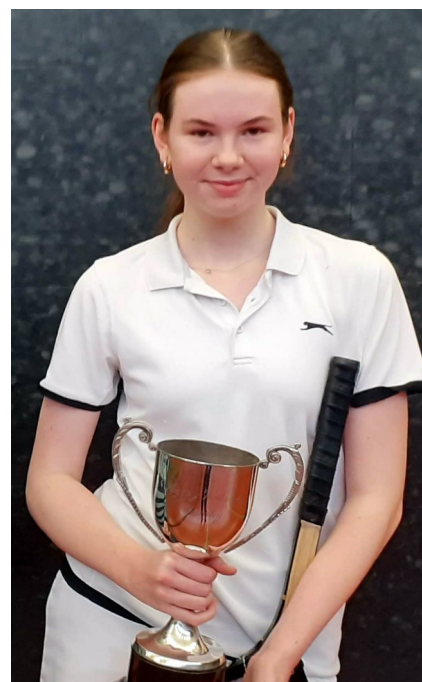
It all started with the early rounds of the Chairman's Cup Level Singles on Friday night. Six players competed in the early stages to gain a place in Sunday's quarter final. We had some very close games with fantastic restes. Darcie Blaber went through as the winner of the first group. The 2nd group was a lot tighter - James Derrick won on games but conceded as he could not play on Sunday, so Robert Blizzard went through from the 2nd group.

Saturday was the Wollaston Cup Handicap Singles. With a huge array of handicaps this was a fantastic event where we saw some of our newer players competing against those who had been playing for a number of years.

Some of the highlights included an amazing match with Robert Blizzard against Martha Rait. Robert showed maturity beyond his years, having to owe 40 every game and Martha receiving 30 every game - with Robert taking the match 7/6.

The semi finals saw Kelan Humphries, who had only taken up the game very recently, play Martha Rait. Up until this point Martha had been receiving lots of points so for the first time she had to give points - it was a very close game with Martha growing in confidence as each game passed and taking the match 8/5.

In the other semi final Darcie Blaber took on Robert Blizzard, a match very even handicap-wise. Darcie was on fantastic form and did not make a



mistake, winning 8/2. So Darcie and Martha went through to the final on Sunday. You would have thought they would have all been exhausted after playing all day but I left as they were all heading back on court for more practice...

Sunday started with the Vaughan Trophy Level Doubles. The semi final saw Michael Galley and Robert Blizzard play a very tactical game defeating brothers James and George Parsons 6/3. They then took on the number one seeds, brother and sister Charlie and Emily Elmitt. This turned into a tremendous three setter with Michael Galley and Robert Blizzard taking the title for the first time 6/3, 2/6, 6/3.

Next was the Wollaston Cup Handicap Singles Final - an all-girl final for the first time! The handicap difference was very large so it was too much of an uphill battle for Darcie Blaber. Martha Rait went from strength to strength,

growing in confidence as each game was won and took the title 8/1.

Then we went onto the Chairman's Cup Level Singles Quarter Finals with Robert Blizzard taking on Darcie Blaber - effectively a rematch of Saturday's game - however, this time it was Robert's turn to win the match 6/3, playing a faultless game.

The standard was amazing - they are



both going from strength to strength so contestants to look out for in the future!

Michael Galley then took on Charlie Elmitt in the first of the semi finals - again some truly fantastic restes but Charlie proved too strong in the end, taking the match 6/1. In the other semi final, Robert Blizzard against George Parsons, again Robert played a blinder and made some amazing gets and some great winners - but ultimately lost 6/1.

The final was therefore Charlie Elmitt

against George Parsons, both on very similar handicaps. Charlie proved far too strong on the day, making no mistakes and George was unable to find a weak shot in Charlie's game. There were nevertheless some fantastic restes but Charlie won the title 6/0, 6/1.

Thank you to all the players for giving us such an enjoyable weekend, to Scott and Les for marking all the matches, to the parents for all their support and to Jane Vaughan and Doug Sheperdian for

presenting the trophies. As Junior Development Officer, I am absolutely delighted to see such a buoyant group of juniors with so much talent.

Final winners:

Wollaston Cup Handicap Singles: Martha Rait

Vaughan Trophy Level Doubles: Michael Galley and Robert Blizzard

Chairman's Cup: Charlie Elmitt

Sarah Parsons



LRTA Under 15's National Singles and Doubles at Wellington on Sunday 5 March: Darcie Blaber and Martha Raitt from RTC entered this tournament. Darcie had a fantastic competition winning the singles over Malati Rice (Bristol) 8-1 and then winning the doubles with Martha against Isabella Wylie (Queens) and Malati Rice (Bristol) 8-4. Very well done to Darcie and Martha!



Darcie Blaber and Robert Blizzard entered the National Schools U14 Doubles Tournament at the Oratory School on 26 February. As they did not have anyone from the same school that they could partner, they were allowed to enter the event, playing as "Hampton Court". We are delighted to announce that they won the event so are now the National U14 Schools Champions.

There are two ways to looking at hosting the Pol Roger Trophy final here at the Royal Tennis Court at Hampton Court Palace.

One: It is a great honour to host such a prestigious event. An event that brings some of the best amateur tennis to RTC, and a wonderful opportunity to drink fabulous Champagne! Two: It means RTC didn't make it to the final. The rules of the event prohibit the finalists having a home court advantage. I suppose, one way or the other, RTC wins...

This wasn't the season for RTC's own team, so as the venue for the final we eagerly awaited the two teams that did make the final: M.C.C. and Queen's Club. The Pol Roger Trophy Final is always a wonderful event and RTC pride themselves in welcoming and entertaining the visiting teams and their entourages. With our amazing facility, location and Professional team (and not forgetting the Champagne provision for Pol Roger) it can't fail to be a brilliant event.

On the tennis front it was the Queen's Club team that came out on top 3-1, however, both teams produced highly skilful and entertaining tennis. Great thanks go to Nick, Jack for marking and Lesley for catering. And most important, a huge thanks to James Simpson MW, Managing Director of Pol Roger Portfolio and our sponsors Pol Roger Champagne. **Nick Wood**

We would like to wish James a swift recovery from his recent knee operation.

Two of the UK's finest courts put forward their teams in the Pol Roger Trophy. However, this match was not about becoming champion, but who would be relegated to the 'Second Division'. Both teams faced potential relegation due to losing their respective first-round match of the competition - RTC to



Picture: Doug Sheperdigian

M.C.C., whilst Petworth to the Leamington Tennis Court Club. What may be crucial to the outcome of the match is the home draw for RTC, giving our players the advantage of familiar surroundings.

Right now the RTC v PHTC fixture stands at one match all - David Watson & Geoffrey Russell beating Steve Calder-Smith & Bill Chambers 6/0 6/5 with a quick start and consistent tennis. Next came the 1st string Singles, a tasty match between Peter Wright and Freddie Bristowe. Peter, one of the most dedicated competitors in the game and Freddie, a talented Rackets player and the younger by 30 years, battled it out for over two hours in a thrilling encounter, Freddie just nipping in front to win both sets 6/5 6/5.

Next came the 'Captain's' match - Phil Dunn v Adam Dolman. or RTC to take a two match to one lead at this point would pile pressure on Petworth - however, the last two matches were favoured by Petworth with their players with the lower handicaps.

Step forward Phil Dunn! Phil had been playing well recently and was on his home

court, however Adam always fights hard and although Phil found himself 6/3 5/2 up, Adam rallied back to win the second set and took the match to 5-all in the third set before Phil clinched it. RTC take the lead 2 matches to 1!

Next on court, the up-and-coming James Hamblin who was on FIRE! Taking his game to his opponent, Angus Williams, James pressured Angus throughout and won the match in the second set at 5 games all.

RTC had avoided relegation! Nevertheless, the final doubles match was still to be played - James Watson and David Blizzard against Charlie Braham and Ollie Taylor. There was some hugely entertaining doubles play as Petworth won 6-2, 6-4. So RTC survive the drop and look forward to hopefully a more favourable draw next season.

As is my way, my thoughts always turn to on-court conduct, pride and honour. This match, as expected, was full of quality tennis, great sportsmanship, and camaraderie among both teams. Well done to all the players for some great tennis, to the spectators and the Markers, Scott and Lesley. **Nick Wood**

Obituaries

Nicholas Easton Carew Hunt, 1951-2023, a long-term member and supporter of the Royal Tennis Court and the game of Real Tennis, died peacefully on 15th January 2023 and will be missed by all at RTC. Our condolences go to Victoria, Catharine, Thomas and grandchildren Frederick and Eliza.

Nick was introduced to Real Tennis by his wife, Victoria, who arranged a lesson for them both at RTC with Lesley Ronaldson in 1993 after she read about the sport in Rose Tremain's *Restoration*. As is true for so many of us, Nick and Victoria were immediately hooked.

Nick's regular Saturday morning doubles was routinely followed by a trip to Kingston Market where, still clothed in sweaty whites, he became known to the traders as 'Bjorn'. At home or out and about, Nick's choice of clothing for much of the past three decades was an RTC polo shirt and/or fleece.

Nick was briefly the non-playing manager of the RTC v Jesters match. In 2008, he became

a 'sweater holder' for the Hamsters, and later managed the fixture v The Dedanists at RTC. Nick will be fondly remembered for his abundant provision of Cook pies and never-ending supply of claret.

Nick played well over 100 matches representing RTC, Hamsters or Marauders (RTC's 'unofficial' West Country Tours, which he organised several times).

He went to four Boomerangs in Melbourne, three with the Hampton Court Royals, under the captaincy of Richard East, who became a regular tour partner. Nick also played in three Brodie Cup campaigns, first again for Richard, and latterly under Owen Saunders' captaincy. Nick's greatest competition success, however, was at Home: a record five de Laszlo Bowl wins, a King's Goblet, and the 'Divorce Doubles' husband-and-wife tournament, partnering with Victoria. Many weekends were spent as a family at RTC, often with the family black Labrador, Oscar, in tow.

With the exception only of Surrey CCC, which

he joined in 1964 (aged 12), the Royal Tennis Court is the place away from home where Nick spent the most time in his life. Time well spent forming many friendships and enjoying sport and post-match chatter in the dedans and club rooms.

I sense the part of his legacy that he will be most proud of are those he brought to the game through sharing his passion. Nick's mantra was 'play to win, lose with a grin'. He will be missed by many. **Tom Carew Hunt**

ooOoo

The Club is sad to inform our members of the death of Dr Adam Lawrence (1933-2022). Adam was a long-standing member of the Royal Tennis Court and enthusiast of Real Tennis. A true gentleman and a real wit, Adam extolled the importance of the enjoyment, the traditions and classic nature of the game. Our condolences go to all his family and friends.

Champions Trophy is back

We are very excited to announce that the 2023 Champions Trophy will take place at RTC from 17-23 July, so add the date to your diary now!

Mitsubishi Electric has very generously agreed to again sponsor this flagship event. Rapidly becoming a permanent fixture and a players' favourite in the calendar of international Real Tennis, the Champions Trophy attracts the best competitors in the world to play at the best venue and location in the game.

Preparations are already under way so watch out as regular news and updates will follow.

With the generous support and encouragement of Mitsubishi Electric, our main objective is to promote our sport to a wider audience, to expand the

knowledge of and enlighten the public to the history, traditions and wonder of this amazing game, and to inspire future generations!

We will need your help to achieve this very important goal. There are many ways to get involved and more information will follow. Throughout the week there will be World class tennis to inspire you, a doubles competition which you can enter, junior activities, social events, talks about the game and its history and more.

As members, you can play a most important part by not only buying tickets to watch some spectacular tennis but also by spreading the word among friends and colleagues to come and enjoy a feast of tennis action that takes place at your club. For more information about tennis and corporate tickets sales contact Nick Wood.



David Peregrine-Jones, David Cunningham and Mark Sherwin lost to Bashir Mohammed, Nick Hyams and Nick Cox-Lumley in the final of the Winter Night Pennant. Prizes were presented by general supporter Anthony Lambie.

FLM IRTPA National League Update. There are five RTC teams in the FLM National League this year. With many matches still to be played before the finals in April, our teams might well surge through!

In Division 3/4, Handicaps 10-20 James Hamblin has done a great job at rallying his troops considering that James Watson tore his Achilles tendon at Wellington last Spring. The competition has been a great opportunity for those in the late teens to gain experience.

Division 5, Handicap 20-25. There are two teams representing RTC in this division. Jack Joseph and Josh King (from Holyport) have 36 points and are competing with RTC 2

(Simon Barker, Captain) for the right to play in the semi-finals. We do hope an RTC audience will show their support if they do.

Division 6, Handicap 25-30. Thanks to Nick Jeffery for organising his team so well. In this division there have been some fast-improving players at other clubs, which makes getting to the finals a little difficult.

Division 7, Handicaps 30-35 still have two matches to play which could easily take them to the semi-final. Paul Wright and John Leach have been managing this team. George Parsons currently lies second in the Most Valuable Player league.

This season's IRTPA National League sponsor is once again FLM Wealth Management (an

Get your Ball tickets now!



It's time to PARTY! Tickets are selling fast for RTC's Spring Ball at Hampton Court Palace Golf Club, so act quickly and snap up your tickets by calling or e-mailing the Pro's office. From 7pm on Saturday 13th May there will be dinner, wine, dancing, games and more as we celebrate our Club and its members.



Peter Wright and David Watson (both RTC) beat Matt Potter and Colin Sprott (both Prested) 6/4 6/3 at Prested Hall on 25th February to win the Over-40s Doubles trophy.

appointed representative of St James Place Wealth Management, advising on the Group's products and services). The tennis community is fortunate to have found a committed sponsor in FLM and is most grateful for its support. To find out more about their products and services, click on this link to their website: <https://www.flmltd.com/>.



Oh, we do like to be beside the seaside

News in Brief

Lockers for hire - for the storage of personal tennis-related items only.

After many years of gathering dust, the fabulous wall of locker drawers in the gentlemen's changing room has been recommissioned. Although located in the gentlemen's changing room, these lockers are available for women also - we just ask that consideration is taken when requiring access! Of the 36 lockers, nine are still available for hire at £100 per year. To express your interest in a locker please contact the Pro team.

Only a few places remain on the new RTC Handicap Double Competition, so sign up today! This new competition, organised by the RTC Tennis and Tournaments Committee, headed by Dick Cowling, promises to attract players from all ranges of handicap, providing at least three, and maybe up to seven, matches!

The event is restricted to 16 pairs. A selection of pairs and handicaps will be drawn to achieve a broad spectrum of players and handicaps. Matches will take place on Friday 21st, Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd April 2023, and the better your availability, the more likely your entry will be successful. Each match is one set to seven games off handicap.

The RTC communications group has been busy reviewing plans for the future.

These will include: Additional social media outlets such as LinkedIn and relaunching Facebook; Social media engagement by visitors, spectators and members; a monthly email round-up of future events, results and member news; a members-only area of the website for members to easily access communications and other member-specific information; and Press releases to encourage more local media interest in Real Tennis, the Club, tournaments and membership.

If you are interested in joining the comms group and/or are a budding photographer please contact Ali Cryer via the Pros. If you have any news or special offers you would like to communicate to the membership please inform the Pros.

Please follow us on your favourite social media outlet if you are not doing so already: @Royaltenniscourt on Instagram, the Royal Tennis Court page on Facebook or follow the @RoyalTennisCt account on Twitter.

In the final of the Seal Salver Cup, David Watson beat Nick Jeffery 9-2.

At the tail end of 2022 RTC's team visited Seacourt in the preliminary round of the Brodie Cup.

The Brodie Cup is the foremost national inter-club team tournament for over 30 handicaps. Often a long away trip can weaken the pool of available players, but RTC were able to field what on paper looked like a strong team, with a good mix of wily experience and youthful exuberance.

Seacourt is commonly considered a tricky away court, particularly due to the low bounce off the back wall, and a majority of RTC's team had not played there before.

First up were Araminta Oldham and Tom McNeilis. Having played many matches together, with Tom improving fast and Araminta coming off the back of a very good year, RTC started as slight favourites. In an intriguing match against The Two Matts (Walker and Boulton), the game ebbed and flowed. Ultimately The Two Matts' retrieving proved decisive. It ended 5-6 5-6 to Seacourt, but Araminta and Tom certainly gave it everything, just

tightening up on a few key points.

Next up was Chris Bartley against Seacourt's experienced Nick Jones, surprisingly over 30 handicap for the first time in many years. Chris' athleticism and wall like defence gave him the edge as he took the first set 6-4, manoeuvring Nick around court very well. Nick hung in and used all his tricks and experience to probe Chris' weaknesses. In another contest that could have gone either way, Jones came through 4-6 6-5 6-3. 2-0 to Seacourt.

Third rubber on was Fred Satow (against Kevin Nelson). Fred switched to the 30 singles from the 35 doubles after a late realisation by team management that Fred was not actually eligible for the 35 doubles, oops! Fred started off somewhat slowly, taking a first set bagel. Waking up, he came back strongly, but ultimately his opponent's strong lefty railroad and pacey returning led him to a 6-0 6-5 win. Game set and match to Seacourt.

Richard Lewis stepped up in the 50 singles, playing

in his first ever match outside of RTC - what commitment! Defying a large handicap difference, Richard showed no fear and had his opponent in trouble regularly in the first set. It was to be in vain though, as Seacourt's Graham Law settled down and managed a 6-4 6-2 win.

In the final rubber, the experienced doubles pairing of Owen Saunders and Tim Church communicated well, and executed some simple strategies (target the weaker player, get it over the net!) to beat Chris Moor and John Pickup. Luckily this wasn't a decisive final match, as Saunders and Church would surely have found a way to choke if it had been! 6-4 6-3 to RTC.

Thanks to the team for committing to the day, supporting the other players, and for giving their all. Some days it's just not meant to be. For anyone that hasn't visited Seacourt, it's a great club with bar and dining facilities, right by the beach. They are always welcoming and it's a great place to go - get yourself down there!

Owen Saunders

How green are your fingers?

We require a bunch of green-fingered people to get together to improve, maintain and generally love our gorgeous RTC garden. Volunteers are required to come together a couple of times a year, as a workgroup and then sporadically during the summer. The plan is for a major workgroup in the spring and again in the autumn plus intermittent meetings, in particular before major events such as the Champions Trophy, to get our lovely garden ready for

presentation. We will have a BBQ to celebrate the garden on the most suitable of these occasions. Those who would like to be involved, from horticultural experts to advise to workers to dig and replant, please contact premises@royaltenniscourt.com

if you are willing to help.

The first proposed date would be Sunday 2nd April.

Paul Wright