

# THE ROYAL TENNIS COURT



## Rotten Luck, chaps

RTC juniors just pipped to the post by Seacourt  
in a thrilling final - but they came so close...

*See pages 4 and 5*

Tom Freeman takes the Club Championship

*See Page 3*

Revenge is sweet for Chapman

*See Page 3*

**The Summer Newsletter 2018**

Number 121

# CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

As always, there has been a lot happening in and around the club over the last couple of months. First, thanks very much to everyone who attended the AGM in May for your support and thoughtful observations and suggestions. We'll take the items that came up to our forthcoming Board meetings.

The AGM was prefaced the previous evening by a very well-supported Chairman's evening, which featured another epic Owen Saunders quiz. I must say that the level of recall of general knowledge among our members and their guests is incredibly high – well done to everyone who came and raised over £400, which we are sharing between the Professional Development and Junior Funds.

Immediately after the AGM we were privileged to see some very high-quality tennis from two of our leading amateur players. Congratulations to Tom Freeman who beat last year's winner Phil Dunn to claim the honour of Club Champion for this year.

One of the subjects discussed at the AGM was the recent change made by the T&RA in its administration of Realtennisonline – requiring everyone to sign a consent form for GDPR purposes and, in the future, for everyone wishing to use the website, record results and retain a current handicap, to become a T&RA member. As we have communicated to all RTC members, we can only administer our own programme of competitive and normal social tennis, where results are recorded, if everyone has a current handicap and is therefore a T&RA member. Please therefore do attend to this if you have not already done so - see Back Page for more. As a matter of principle and policy, RTC strongly supports the T&RA in all its work to administer and promote the game.

## Board talk...

### Highlights from 19th March.

**Professionals' Report:** Nick Wood noted that December 2017 usage statistics were down on recent years but figures for January & February 2018 suggested no real problems.

Late cancellation of five League home matches had impacted on court usage. The Board would like to see NL managers take a firmer approach over teams committing to agreed dates for league matches.

Champions Trophy 2018 tickets are now on sale via HRP.

NW is considering organising a children's afternoon for HRP Members' children.

**Finance:** Bad debts are still an issue, particularly late payments for drinks. Steps to tackle this are under consideration.

**Premises:** It is hoped that specific defects in the plaster of the court walls will be repaired over the summer. A new shed for equipment was approved.

**Membership:** Helen Crossley will be retiring from her role of Membership Secretary which she has held, with distinction, since 2001. The Board thanked HC for her long period of dedicated service. Helen has agreed to continue to look after safeguarding issues for RTC, for which the Board is very grateful. Nicola Doble is to take over the role of Membership Secretary.

**Tennis & Tournaments:** NW reported that the King's Goblet is well subscribed with entries. The T&T sub-committee has been considering ways to increase the participation of women in tournaments and competitions. They have considered a women-only tournament but decided that it was not the way to go. However they had organised matches against both Oxford and Cambridge University Ladies' teams, and hoped to make these annual events.

### Other matters:

**RTC website** – The club website is looking somewhat less than up-to-date. Consultations will be held about modernising it and make it easier to manage; and indeed what the club wants it to do. Any Club members interested in helping RTC with digital communications are invited to contact the Hon. Secretary.

**Streaming** – Video streaming of the Champions Trophy and the Championship Eliminator continues to improve, thanks to hard work by Oliver Buckley, but quality is still an issue. Streaming could also be useful for coaching sessions or individual member's matches. The Board agreed to invest some money to investigate this further.

**Christmas** -The 2018 Carol Service will be on Tuesday 11th December.

One of the pleasures of Real Tennis is travelling to other clubs and courts around the country and internationally. The annual meeting of Chairs of British Real Tennis Clubs took place at Prested a few weeks ago and I was fortunate to have a game beforehand, thanks to the hospitality of Mike Norgrove, Chair of the Prested Club. The atmosphere around the club was understandably buoyant, given that it was just after (their head professional) Rob Fahey's remarkable world championship win against Camden Riviere. Once again, playing on one of their two courts, I was reminded how different each court is from all others, and at Prested, every bounce sounded strange. It is marvellous that the culture of the game is such that all clubs welcome guest players. So if you are travelling around the country this summer, why not get in touch with a new club and see what it's like to play there.



Finally, please do come along and support the Champions Trophy at the Royal Tennis Court from 17th to 22nd July – buy tickets to see wonderful world-class tennis, help by volunteering to welcome Palace visitors, enjoy dinner in the splendour of the Great Hall. We are very fortunate to have the support of Historic Royal Palaces and their sponsors Mitsubishi Electric for this event and in return, I'd like us to play our part by ensuring that tickets sell out in advance.

Now, off to play in our final Night Pennant league match – with a 6-0 win required to progress. Given the collective efforts of Team 2 in this competition so far, that's unlikely. However, we shall persevere...

Michael Day CVO

# Freeman comes of age

Tom triumphs with masterly display in Club Championship final

Tom Freeman delivered a stunning performance to unseat defending champion Phil Dunn in the Barker Camm Cup Final following the AGM in May.

In front of a full dedans Tom started strongly with plenty of accurate forcing, pushing out to a 2-0 lead in double-quick time. Phil's trademark drag serve was not quite accurate enough, allowing Tom space and options on the return of serve. Phil reacted and started mixing in some high side wall serves, but the pressure started to tell as Phil started making some forehand floor shot errors.

A marathon third game was finished as Tom flashed a fierce dedans force for 3-0. Tom, a lawn tennis professional, showed great agility and athleticism, especially when retrieving off the tambour, each shot accompanied by lawn tennis style grunting. Searching for inspiration, Phil Moved to a bobble serve and got off the mark to go 1-4, with two nice returns to galleries to win chases.

The players traded games as Tom lost form and started dragging service returns into the net as he tried to put pace on Phil's serves, but still led 5-2. The players showed that hours of drilling was paying off, with some classy backhand to backhand rallying.



## The new club Number One

However Tom stayed on top, and despite testing the marker with a couple of borderline hazard forces, deservedly closed out the first set 6-2.

Tom now had his dander up and Phil could sense that his title was slipping away unless he could somehow stop Tom's great play. Unluckily for Phil, it looked like Tom has chosen today to finally fulfil his potential. This showed as Phil hit four winning galleries, seemingly the best option for winning a point at this stage.

Tom continued with his bristling and bustling athleticism and was clearly working hard to keep on his best behaviour with a large crowd in attendance. Several times Tom fought back from love-40 down to take a game. The shot of the match came in the third game as Tom rifled a topspin backhand force unstoppably into the dedans. Phil fought back to 2-3 with some wonderfully accurate cross court lengths to just under winning gallery, but ultimately was reduced to attacking very short chases with a series of moon balls, turning to the crowd with a smile on his face as if to say 'what else can I do when he's playing this well?'

Tom took the second set 6-2, to become Club Singles Champion for the first time. In doing so, he becomes the 8th different winner of the title in the last nine years, following in the footsteps of Simon Barker, David Watson, Peter Wright, Charlie Crossley (2), Nick Hatchett, Ed Kay and Phil. In truth this partly reflects injuries and players' inability to defend their titles in recent years, but is still indicative that elite tennis is thriving at RTC. Certainly on the evidence of this match, both these players will be challenging for some time to come.

**Owen Saunders**

## Sweet revenge for Chappers

RTC's Chris Chapman had a superb run of form in the recent Schochet Cup at Newport, US. He reached the final of the competition and went down fighting to World No 1 Camden Riviere 6-4, 6-1, 6-2. In the opening round Chris comfortably saw off Connor Medlow 6-2, 6-1, 6-4. He then beat Darren Long in the quarter-final 6-0, 6-2, 6-3. Perhaps sweetest of all was his victory against Steve Virgona in the semi-final, Chris beating his RTC nemesis 6-2, 6-1, 6-1, regaining his World No 3 slot in the process. Well done Chris!

*Picture: Jennifer Carter*





# RTC Juniors do us proud

RTC's Juniors came agonisingly close to lifting the Peter Luck-Hille Cup recently, battling from behind against Seacourt only to be pipped at the post on a games recount.

The Peter Luck-Hille Cup is a junior inter-club tournament to encourage young players to extend their match experience by playing against other juniors at different clubs during the season.

It is similar to Night Pennant, with everyone playing one singles match and two doubles matches against each club in their group.

This year, nine clubs took part and RTC reached the final for the first time, having played some great competitive tennis against Petworth, Oratory and Wellington.

The final on Sunday 27th May was against Seacourt and was played at Wellington.



Josh Farrall of the Dedanists' Foundation with the RTC team

RTC's team was made up of Ross Morrison (14), George Parsons (12) and James Parsons (14). We started well with George Parsons beating James Medlow 6/3. The next two singles went in Seacourt's favour, with Jessica Medlow beating Ross Morrison 6/2 and Barnaby Tambling beating James Parsons 6/1, with both RTC boys unfortunately getting stuck down the hazard end.

So we entered the doubles stage 2 sets to 1 down—a real challenge, but our boys did us proud. Their doubles coaching with Josh Smith the previous week paid off and the next two sets went to RTC, with George Parsons and Ross Morrison beating James and Jessica Medlow 6/4 and George and James Parsons beating James Medlow and Barnaby Tambling 6/2, with some really fan-

## The Dedanists' Foundation

The Dedanists' Foundation is a grant-giving Charity (No: 1145526) created with the sole aim of increasing youth involvement in Real Tennis. We are proud to have as our Patron, Rob Fahey, the new World Champion. Our game has too few young players and our objective is to encourage more juniors to play and enjoy the game on an open access basis.

Through our programme of grants, we support Real Tennis clubs to reach out to all young people in their local communities. The clubs then teach these

young people to play Real Tennis, inspiring a love of the game and its traditions of good sportsmanship.

I am delighted that RTC did so well in the Peter Luck-Hille Cup 2018, which is a National Inter-Club Tournament for Juniors, devised and run by The Dedanists' Foundation. My fellow Director, Josh Farrall and myself attended the final at Wellington RTC and we can only sympathise with the RTC team, who lost the final on the very last point.

The Dedanists' Foundation is funded purely on the generosity

of its Founder Patrons and other supporters and we are lucky to have had the personal support of Julian Sheraton-Davis, a former Chairman of RTC.

If any RTC member would like to help us continue this good work they can make a donation or become a Founder Patron by emailing David Mills (Chairman) on [dsmills1949@gmail.com](mailto:dsmills1949@gmail.com), Josh Farrall (Director) on [josh@dedanistsfoundation.org](mailto:josh@dedanistsfoundation.org) or Paul Weaver (Ambassador) on [pweaver@btopenworld.com](mailto:pweaver@btopenworld.com)

David Mills



**The Force is strong in these young ones...**

tastic rallies and gets throughout both matches.

So with RTC 3/2 up, it was all going to come down to the final set with RTC having to win the set to win the match as, if they lost, RTC would lose on game count.

The final match featured Ross Morrison and James Parsons vs Jessica Medlow and Barnaby Tambling. Seacourt started well going 3/0 up but RTC fought back to draw 3-3, then went 4/3 ahead, only to lose the next game to make it 4/4. RTC won the

next match only for Seacourt to fight back again to 5/5.

The tension and cheering in the galleries at this stage was immense. Of course the final game had to go all the way to 40-all, with RTC sadly losing the final point with a shot into the net.

The RTC team was devastated - but what an amazing final to watch and how great for the organisers to see such a close and competitive final. Final set score 3/3 but RTC lost on game count 27/26!

The RTC team is now even more determined to return and win next year...

What is great is that the tournament is going from strength to strength. The Cup started in the 2014/15 season with just five clubs taking part. It is a measure of the popularity of the event that the organisers hope to have 10 clubs playing next season. Particular thanks go to the Dedanists' Foundation and the grants that it makes, supporting this event and junior real tennis in general.

**Sarah Parsons**

## Third time lucky for the Ladies

After two years of disappointment, the RTC Ladies lifted the Battle of the Sexes trophy with a resounding 59 games to 37 victory over the RTC Men, *writes Karen Prottey*.

The handicaps were wide-ranging, from 32 to 86, and the match was played in Davis Cup conditions with Lionel Richie struggling to hear himself sing over at the Palace music festival. Most of the matches were closely contested, but with victories in five of the six matches the Ladies were always ahead. The killer blow was dealt by Lucie Stewart and Anna Dalton with a 17-3 win and from there looked increasingly difficult for the Men. Giles Doy and Richard Lewis fought back to clinch the final match of the evening, but the die was cast.

**Congratulations to the Ladies! And well done to all those who took part and made**



the evening such an enjoyable and sociable occasion.

**Results:** G Dunkley & K Doy def P Brown & B Mohammed 10-5; K Hird & I Candy def D Cowling & T

Church 8-6; L Stewart & A Dalton def M Bronstein & B Mohammed 17-3; K Doy & S Lambie def H Prottey & P Brown 11-7; H-F Pilkington & L Sheraton-Davis def J Sheraton-Davis & P Newton 7-6; S Parsons & V Packham lost to G Doy & R Lewis 6-10



## CHAMPIONS TROPHY 2018

**Grand Final Dinner**  
**Sunday 22nd July**  
**7.30pm-11.00pm**

The Royal Tennis Court invites you to celebrate the Champions Trophy and another fantastic year for the club in Henry VIII's Great Hall,

### **Pre-Dinner Drinks on the Terrace of the Williams III's Privy Garden**

**Starter:** Burrata, basil tapioca crisp, Inca tomatoes, tomato consommé, avocado sorbet (V)

**Main:** Guinea fowl breast, confit leg, sweet potato puree, romanesco cauliflower, game chips, sorrel cream

**Dessert:** Bitter chocolate marquise, poached apricots, brown butter ice cream

**Dietary requirements can be accommodated**



**Limited numbers and tickets are selling quickly!**

**The Grand Final Dinner**

**The Great Hall of Hampton Court Palace**

**22nd July 2018**

**Henry's VIII's Great Hall is the most spectacular dining experience**

**£155 per person**

### **Amateur & Professional Doubles**

**Thursday 19th July 2018**

**At The Royal Tennis Court with the Champions Trophy players**

**£500.00**

**All day Tennis, lunch and refreshments, Champions Trophy Final Dedans ticket**

#### **COURTSIDE TICKETS: - £15.00 - £40.00**

Upper Gallery and Dedans tickets available throughout the week and free access to Hampton Court Palace.

Available via the Hampton Court Palace web site

#### **THE CLUB TICKET: £10.00**

Access to the RTC clubrooms, meet the players and watch matches on large TV screens.

Available from the RTC Office

#### **THE GRAND FINAL DINNER: £155.00**

Don't miss the opportunity to dine in this most magnificent and ancient of banqueting venues! Limited capacity, so get in early! Available from the RTC Office

#### **AMATEUR & PROFESSIONAL DOUBLES COMPETITION: £500.00**

All day Tennis, Lunch and refreshments, plus a Dedans ticket for the CT18 final.

Available from the RTC Office

Once again, Historic Royal Palaces (HRP) bring the Champions Trophy to the Royal Tennis Court, and along with it, the best players in the world.

After such a successful inaugural year HRP will improve on the real tennis experience - providing competition for the best players in the world and real tennis fans to support, and promote the game to palace visitors and the wider community. This year, Courtside tickets are great value, along with the addition of the 'Club Ticket' which provides access to the RTC club rooms and garden to watch live streamed matches on large TV screens. There will be greater social media, improved streaming coverage and players interviews and insights. Garden marquees with historical and educational content and expositions on court provide an ideal opportunity for the novice to learn more about this entertaining and historic sport.

# Just Joshing...

**Josh Smith, probably the finest young professional in the game, introduces a new column on tennis, life and everything...**

A tennis match is a culmination of focused effort and practice: racquet work, foot-work, technique, stamina (the list goes on) all play their role and must be encouraged in order to play well. The body is a complex system and must be prepared in order to perform - would a Formula 1 team go out to race without putting in the practice, optimising vehicle performance, putting the right fuel in the engine, studying the track or warming up? We must learn from the experts in their fields and apply it to our own game.

A functional space which members can use pre- or post-match is something RTC has been missing for too long, but no longer! We hope that in the near future the hazard penthouse might be renamed the healthy penthouse, preparation penthouse or even The Penthouse Suite: yes, the hazard penthouse is going to see a makeover. Part of the court traditionally used for missed grille attempts, the inside of the hazard penthouse will see an upgrade in the near future. Currently used as a storeroom, the Pros will make use of the space behind King Henry's imposing figure as a warm-up and training area.

In the meantime, we must ask how we can better prepare ourselves and what we can add to our training to improve our results. Speed, strength and stamina are often first to mind, but flexibility needs inclusion. I have been practicing yoga for many years now and consider it an invaluable part of my training regime that complements all other areas of my programme. In fact, it is a fantastic practice for both body and mind that influences all areas of my life, not just on the tennis court.

On the court we need to move quickly but without being rushed, and we need to be strong but adaptable.

Among many other things, yoga helps create balance. I have been working with my yoga instructor to create a short routine that works the major muscle groups used in tennis that will help you prepare your body for your tennis - only 15 minutes long, there is no excuse not to give it a try and see if your body thanks you for it!

If you enjoy that, yoga may be a discipline that you invest more time in. So watch this space - changes are coming and new opportunities to improve your tennis and look after your body are just around the corner!

## National League

**Div 1 - Josh Smith and Will Burns (MURTC Pro) finished middle of the table with Josh having notable wins over Craig Greenhalgh and Roman Krznaric during the season. The final was between the two standout teams and Petworth (Tom Durack and Louis Gordon) defeated Cambridge (Ed Kay and Alex Evans) 2-1.**

**Div 2 - Tom Freeman and Phil Dunn were second in the division until the final league match when they were soundly beaten and thereby overtaken by the second Queen's team. The all-Queen's final is yet to be played.**

**Div 3 - The RTC team of David Watson and Simon Barker have beaten MCC (Horatio Cary and Nick Warner) 2-1 in their semi-final - the final is yet to be arranged. Good luck!**

**Div 4 - The RTC team are propping up the table having won no matches this season (no names to spare their blushes!)**

**Div 5 - Fred Satow, David Blizzard, Geoffrey Russell and Simon Boorne finished in the middle of the table. The final will be between Petworth and Oxford.**

**Div 6 - James Hamblin, Nicola Doble, George Sleightholme, Peter Mather and Philip Squire finished second after the league stage thanks to James being undefeated. They went on to win their semi-final at home against Oxford but came unstuck against Leamington losing 1-2 (away).**

**Div 7 - Isabel Candy, Owen Saunders, David Stephens and Dick Cowling finished in the middle of the table - the final between Holyport and MURTC is yet to be played**

**Div 8 - Doug Sheperdigian, Saverio Campione, Anthony Wolfe, Paul Teuten, Patrick Jenkins and John Mather finished third, but lost their semi-final against the second placed team (Leamington). The final between Leamington and Seacourt is yet to be played.**

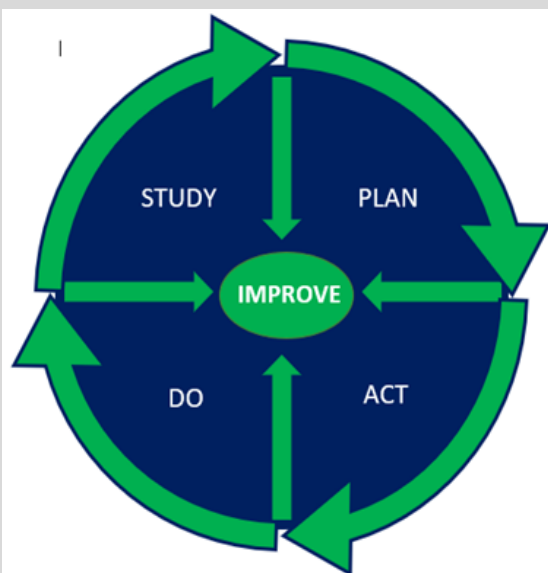
## Wood's Words

Want to improve your tennis?

Wanting is one thing - making it happen is another. But everyone can do it!

You may believe that playing better tennis makes for more fun, but I'd argue that the learning and improving process is where the real sense of satisfaction and fun lies.

An 80 handicap would like to be a 70 handicap; a 50 to be a 40; a 15 to be a 9...When are we ever happy with the level we have achieved? Improvement is the real goal!



Through a regular routine, pattern and process of thinking, planning and action you *can* improve.

The Royal Tennis Court Professionals are highly experienced and motivated coaches. We offer individual lessons, group lessons, drill

sessions, circuit training and will soon be offering video lessons and video game feedback.

With the help of the Professionals, organise a plan of improvement and find your way to better tennis!

**Nick Wood**

## New fees apply

As was laid out at the May 2018 AGM Court fee charges are as follows, all per hour, per person:

Adult Singles	£14.00
Adult Doubles	£8.75
Under 25 Singles	£5.50
Under 25 Doubles	£5.50
Over 80 Singles	£11.00
Over 80 Doubles	£7.25

### Court used during Coaching sessions

Adult Individual	£28.00
Under 25 Individual	£11.00
Over 80 Individual	£22.00

### Coaching Fees (unchanged)

Nick Wood	£25.00
Chris Chapman	£24.00
Lesley Ronaldson	£22.00
Josh Smith	£20.00

### Marking fees

Singles	£7.50
Doubles	£3.75

# Sign up NOW—or lose your handicap

As many of you will know, the Tennis & Rackets Association (T&RA) (in partnership with the other national bodies) funds and runs Realtennisonline (RTO), the online handicap and booking system on which the administration of the whole game and all playing activities at our club are based.

It actually costs the T&RA over £20 per user each year, and this cost will increase due to the added requirements of the new data protection law (General Data Protection Regulation [GDPR]), which comes into force on 25th May 2018.

RTO is open to all players but effectively at the moment, T&RA members are subsidising those non-T&RA members who have used it for many years.

The introduction of GDPR has led the T&RA to require all who use RTO to become members of the T&RA or RTO Data Users. Various categories of membership are offered. If people wish to access Realtennisonline and maintain their handicaps but not join T&RA, they can pay to be a registered data user.

The Board of RTC has discussed the implications of this change carefully. We have concluded that:

1. The administration of all normal tennis activity at RTC requires members to have a current handicap and to be able to access the online court booking system. This will not be possible for anyone who has not signed up to the new

arrangements in Realtennisonline after 1st July.

2. Therefore, effectively, we are requiring all RTC members who want to play in the normal way to be members of the T&RA or to sign in and pay as a registered data user.

3. Non-playing RTC social members or those who just wish to play occasionally without benefitting from their games being recorded or the professionals finding opponents may continue without joining/signing up to Realtennisonline.

4. The Board of RTC supports the work that the T&RA does and encourages all RTC members to support it by joining.

So, please take one of the following steps:

a. If you are already a T&RA member, all you need to do is login after 25th May, change your password and sign the consent form.

b. If you are not currently a T&RA member and wish to maintain your normal playing rights at RTC, please join the T&RA via <https://www.tennisandrackets.com/about/join>. From this link you will see that adults who do not wish to be Full Members can join the T&RA as Associate Members at £28 per annum. The rate for Juniors is £15 pa.

c. If you do not wish to join the T&RA but still maintain playing rights at RTC, you should become a RTO Data User via <https://www.tennisandrackets.com/shop/other>.

d. If you are content to continue just as a RTC social member (as in point 3 above) or as an occasional player without an official handicap, you need take no action.

If you are unsure as to whether you are a T&RA member or have any queries about T&RA membership/RTO Data User status, please contact the T&RA Membership Secretary on 020 7835 6957 or email [membership@tennisandrackets.com](mailto:membership@tennisandrackets.com).

*We regret that after 1st July 2018, any RTC member who is not either a member of the T&RA or an RTO Data User will not have an official handicap or access to the on-line booking system, nor will the Professional team be able to find opponents for them.*

If you would like to discuss anything arising from this change, do not hesitate to contact me - [mday74170@gmail.com](mailto:mday74170@gmail.com) tel. 020 8783 9243 or 07717 581632; or Paul Newton, Honorary Secretary - [paulnewton2@live.com](mailto:paulnewton2@live.com) tel. 07764 471702.

**Michael Day CVO**

## Books on offer

**Writes David Selig:** Jenny Gilmore (widow of my late best pal Mike, whom many members will have known) tells me that she's minded to dispose of Mike's collection of Tennis books. This includes two copies (one signed) of Pierre Etchebaster's book and a leather-bound copy of Lord Aberdare's book. Anyone interested please contact Jenny (who lives in France) at this address:

[jennifer.gilmore1@googlemail.com](mailto:jennifer.gilmore1@googlemail.com)

## A life more colourful Calling budding authors

*Dear reader: did you know you that can receive this Newsletter by e-mail on your electronic device, in full and glorious colour, on the day it is complete, without having to wait for a mono version in the post? Doing so also saves the club money in postage, paper and printing costs.*

*Please inform the Professionals if you wish to take up this option.*

**The Editor of the RTC Newsletter, Andy Anderson, welcomes contributions from readers on any subject relating to RTC and Real Tennis in general - articles on foreign or other UK courts played, West Country tours or similar, sporting triumphs (or disasters) are all welcome. Pictures are particularly useful, for which an iPhone/similar is fine. Please e-mail [Libbyandy@Hotmail.com](mailto:Libbyandy@Hotmail.com), or chat to Andy in person or to the Professionals.**

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**June 28—July 1:** King's Goblet Open Handicap Doubles

**July 16-22:** Champions Trophy 2018

**July 22:** Champions Trophy Grand Final and Champions' Dinner in the Great Hall

**July 25:** RTC Ladies vs Seacourt Ladies

**July 29:** Prudential Ride London (limited access to HCP)

**September 6:** Autumn Night Pennant starts

**September 7:** Chris Chapman Exhibition Match vs Bryn Sayers