



THE ROYAL TENNIS COURT



Revenge is mine! John Lumley celebrates his victory

Photo: Tim Edwards

Just champion!

John Lumley lifts RTC's premier trophy

See page 4

The King's Goblet runneth over

See page 6

More success for RTC's juniors

See Page 5

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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

It was a tale of two flagships. Like London buses, two of our fabulous flagship events came along within three weeks of each other: the King's Goblet in early July and the 5th Champions Trophy in mid-July. Taken together, they comprise much of what our club and our game is all about. With Cordyceps in the rear view mirror - that's an oblique reference to Covid - we've returned to the best of times.

The King's Goblet is an opportunity for all handicap levels, cleverly constructed so that much play takes place within close handicap bands - for example allowing Jed Dalton and Geoffrey Russel to compete



Ali Cryer and Nick Hyams in the King's Goblet. Photo by Doug Sheperdigian

with the likes of Nigel Pendrigh (who has played at +2) and John Burnett, while an early match saw Ali Cryer and Nick Hyams versus Katy Doy and Sarah Lambie.

In the latter stages, all levels come together for a quarters through to a final. Competitive though it was, at the heart it was a social event, bringing together members, guests from other clubs, all levels of handicap and featuring a boat ride on the Thames for competitors who came from a variety of clubs and most of our tennis countries.

A hearty congratulations to Owen Saunders and a large team of volunteers that organised and ran the event. (For full details, turn to Page 6.)

The Champions Trophy represents our professional game where the best in the world compete. In this case, it was fore-ordained that a new name would be placed next to Rob Fahey and Camden Riviere, both with two wins apiece. (See Page 4 for full report.)

I'm very pleased that we sold out all 45 of our seats for the semi-finals and finals. Having spoken to several of the current and former professionals on this topic it is clear that they thrive on a full dedans and galleries. Having spent countless hours perfecting railroads, cut volleys, mobility and retrieving, there is little better

feeling than applause after a long reste that has demonstrated consummate skill.

Having said that, I and our playing professionals would love to see even more take-up of viewing opportunities. The British Open will be on at Queens in November this year. Last year, I was able to purchase gallery tickets for the singles final on the day.

Although we filled the viewing at the Champions Trophy semis and finals, there were plenty of spaces at all other times even with tickets priced to sell. I believe we can provide an even greater audience for our professionals. With several thousand players in the UK, most within range of Queens and RTC, I would hope competition for tickets to be extreme.

So, please ask yourself if you would enjoy watching Real Tennis played at the top level. If that is so, I encourage you to get a ticket, particularly with a view to supporting the Qualifying rounds and early tournament matches.

The opportunities are truly rare. Watching Ben Taylor-Matthews compete with John Lumley for prize money happens only a handful of times in a given year and only twice on our shores - at the British Open and Champions Trophy.

Think of attending these tournaments as supporting the club, supporting our professionals and supporting the world of Real Tennis/Court Tennis/Jeu de Paume.

While I'm on the topic, consider coming down to support a friend in their Lathom-Brown match, or to watch some of our better players.

Within a three-week period, on one court, we fostered competition at every level of handicap from +10 (John Lumley) to 101 - and thus the entire breadth of the game.



Matthew Sarlangue in the Champions Trophy. Photo by Doug Sheperdigian

Doug Sheperdigian

It's blooming lovely out there

The RTC garden has had a makeover thanks to Board member Paul Wright, who looks after Club premises, and a bunch of green-fingered/strong-armed volunteers.

Over two mornings of scything, chopping, weeding, strimming and trimming Paul and his volunteer team of Owen Saunders, Tim Church, Nick Hyams, Peter Brown, Julian Sheraton-Davis, Linda 'Green Goddess' Sheraton-Davis and Andy 'Titchmarsh' Anderson dug over and replanted a border of straggling grasses, hand-weeded the paths, cut back dead and overhanging shrubs and branches and breathed new light and air into previously overgrown corners.

A mix of cheerful and colourful plants, some bought in and many more provided from the gardens of Andy and Linda, have been planted, including geraniums, nasturtiums, clematis, dianthus, foxgloves, night-scented stock and lavender. Packets of wildflower seeds and annuals such as cosmos and cornflower were scattered and have been quick to sprout. The Palace greenhouses generously donated two boxes of salvias and other plants, and young Jasper Wood now has his own personal strawberry trough and two Jack O'Lantern pumpkin plants for Halloween.

"The Club garden is a real asset, but was a bit neglected and overgrown in parts," said Andy. "The aim is not to create a plantsman's paradise that needs constant attention, but rather an attractive space where mostly native plants can softly self-sow and largely run themselves."

"That said, if any Club member fancies a spot of weeding, or watering the plants on a hot day that would be warmly welcomed – as would any donations of plants or cuttings to bulk up the garden."



Paul added: "Huge thanks to all the volunteers who took part in the garden work parties, the results look great! We will probably be having another work party later in the year, so do volunteer for the next one and we may even fire up the barbecue to tempt you!"

It is hoped that the invigorated garden will now increasingly be used by members over the rest of the summer, whether for their own enjoyment after a game, or for a special occasion such as a birthday or anniversary. The garden will also be used for club

social events such as barbecues and presentations. It is open to members, friends, families and guests at all times.

In the summer of 2022, the club invested in a state of the art outdoor table tennis table for club members to enjoy. The table is located next to the garden shed and takes less than 30 seconds to set up. We intend on leaving it out during social events, but also strongly encourage to members to challenge each other and set up friendly games.

We also have a football goal, golf net, cricket stumps and various other activities for some summer fun. If you would like to know more, just ask the Pros. Let's make the most of it whilst we can!

Andy Anderson



At the presentation are Nick Wood, John Lumley, Martin Daly, Ben Taylor-Matthews, Hans-Joerg Hinkel, and Doug Sheperdigian

Photo by Tim Edwards

The best of the best

The Real Tennis Champions Trophy provided five days of world-class Real Tennis with no.1 seed John Lumley of the Racquet Club of Philadelphia winning the tournament. Number 2 seed Ben Taylor-Matthews, of the Bristol Real Tennis Club, was the runner-up.

No.5 seed Steve Virgona of Chicago Racquet Club and no. 6 seed Bryn Sayer of Queens reached the semi-finals of the event which took place in Hampton Court Palace from 18 – 23 July 2023 and was presented by Mitsubishi Electric and supported by Cadcorp.

The final was a replay of the 2022 Champions Trophy semi-final in which Ben Taylor-Matthews triumphed against John Lumley. This year, John turned the tables, winning in three sets. A full house watched this exciting match from the dedans and gallery as both players fought for every point with long restes and many winning gallery and grille shots.

John won the first set. The second set was a long battle lasting nearly an hour which Ben narrowly lost at set point. John finished the match by winning the third set. The final score was 6/2 6/5 6/1.

Following the final the Champions Trophy Prize Giving and Garden Party took place in the club gardens at the Royal Tennis Court (RTC) where both players were warmly congratulated by the club, Pros, match spectators and the tournament sponsors, Mitsubishi Electric and Cadcorp. Both John and Ben received their trophies from the sponsors together with a bottle of Pol Roger champagne.

Nick Wood, RTC Head Professional and instigator of the championship said: "Congratulations to John and Ben. It was a thrilling and tense match which kept the spectators on the edge of their seats. We wish



The event would not have been possible without a small army of volunteers. Huge thanks go to Ali Cryer and Nick Hyams, Gitte Dunkley, Jane Vaughan, Peta Louise Jeffery, Nicola Doble, Rhona and Geoffrey Russell, Peter Brown, Jen Newitt, Linda and Julian Sheraton-Davis, Doug Sheperdigian and Chris Bartley; to match commentators Jack Josephs, Giles Doy, Josh King, Ben Geytenbeek, Ben Taylor-Matthews, Lewis Williams and Robert Shenkman; AV and streaming expert Oliver Buckley; photographer Tim Edwards; Minty Oldham for social media; Martin Daley for website work - and not forgetting the lovely ball girl Darcy Blaber!

them both every success in their next tournaments, John in the finals of the World Championships and Ben in the French Open".

Nick continued: "We would like to thank all the players for making this an extraordinary event and showcasing what a fantastic game Real Tennis is. We look forward to next year's championship and welcoming players and spectators back to the oldest tennis court in England in July 2024."

Doug Sheperdigian, RTC Chairman added: "Our top professionals are world-class athletes, putting in countless hours to reach the pinnacle of this game. A key purpose of the event is providing them a stage and an audience to demonstrate their tremendous skill while competing for world ranking points and prize money."

Mitsubishi Electric Europe, part of the Mitsubishi Electric Group, have generously and altruistically supported the Champions Trophy

tournament at Hampton Court Palace's Royal Tennis Court for the last five years. Hans-Joerg Hinkel, EMEA Head of Communication, said: "We see a strong fit between the values of the Real Tennis game and those of our company. We are pleased to not only help maintain the game's 800-year heritage, but also to grow the recognition of the game through this world-class tournament."

"Cadcorp is once again delighted to have been able to offer support for this fantastic event bringing, as it does, the best players in the world to one of, if not the, most prestigious courts. The standard of play this year was exceptional, as was the organisation of the event itself. We look forward to more of the same next year!" commented Cadcorp's Technical Director Martin Daly.

Our sport traces its history back to 1530 when Cardinal Wolsey built the first Real Tennis court at Hampton Court Palace. Almost 500 years later, the service wall of the court is still in use today. Lawn tennis came from Real Tennis and the scoring system of the latter was used when the rules of lawn tennis were written in 1875.

The number of Real Tennis courts has risen in the last 30 years to reflect the growing popularity of the sport. There are now 27 in Britain, 10 in the USA, three in France and five in Australia. Despite there being no more than a few thousand Real Tennis players in the world, they make up in keenness for any lack in numbers!

For more information, recordings of matches and full list of scores Control and Click on this link. [Champions Trophy 2023 — The Royal Tennis Court](#)

Ali Cryer

Juniors on fire again

Our juniors continue to go from strength to strength. It is great to see so many of them on court. Of particular note:

Girls' World Championships: Darcie Blaber took part in the inaugural Girls' World Championships at The Oratory School on 13-16 April. This was an amazing achievement to be one of 16 players invited to play in this prestigious event. Hopefully many of you saw the match which was live streamed. Darcie played an amazing first round match against Olivia Boulton taking her to three sets but sadly losing in the final set - final score 3/6, 6/4, 3/6. Watch out for Darcie in this event in two years' time.

British Junior Handicap Doubles: Catherine and William James won the inaugural British Junior Handicap Doubles, held at Bristol Real Tennis Club at the end of April. This was a great achievement as they only recently started playing real tennis. [see photos]

Peter Luck Hille Cup Finalists: Our junior team got through to the Peter Luck Hille final which was played on 11 June at Wellington. Our opposition was Seacourt who have won the tournament every year since the tournament began (with the exception of one year when RTC took the title!). Representing RTC were Catherine James, William James and Martha Rait.

First up was William James who convincingly won his singles against Alex Boulton 6/2. His sister, Catherine, played next and had a very close match against William New, narrowly losing 6/4. Martha's opponent, Tom Wallace was on terrific form and didn't make any mistakes and beat Martha 6/1. So we went into the doubles 2/1 down. All the doubles matches were incredibly close with some wonderful chases. The first doubles was tremendous (William and Catherine v Alex B and William N and we narrowly lost 6/5 on 40 all game ball - a real shame as a win



William and Catherine James, winners of the British Junior Handicap Doubles

could have changed the direction of the final. The next doubles went our way, again a very closely fought game with William and Martha winning 6/5 against Alex B and Tom W.

So all to play for still in the final doubles. Catherine and Martha played some great tennis but sadly lost the final doubles 6/4 against William N and Tom W. Final score Seacourt 4, RTC 2. A fabulous afternoon of tennis.

Thank you to the following RTC juniors who have participated in this competition this season: Darcie Blaber, Robert Blizzard, Catherine James, William James, Felix Lawry and Martha Rait. As always it was a great competition and an excellent opportunity to play other juniors from other clubs.

Sarah Parsons

News in Brief

Congratulations to Peter Brown, David Blizzard, Doug Sheperdigian, Katy Doy & Robert Blizzard, Jen Newitt, John Watkins, Daniel Whitehead, and Alec Raeside who have all been crowned champions of their respective divisions to this point in the RTC Summer Grade Tournament 2023. To celebrate this we will be hosting a BBQ and medal presentation followed by an A Grade Tennis Finale involving Jack Josephs (19), Phil Dunn (16), James Watson (17), and Holyport professional Josh King (19) who will once again battle it out to be take the A grade title. The BBQ and medal ceremony will start at 4pm on Saturday 2nd September and the tennis will follow at 17:30pm. The matches will be a one set shoot out round robin, so expect some fast and furious matches! Please save the date and do RSVP the Pros office as soon as possible if you would like to attend the evening.

The 'Piques' Team of Seth Caldwell, James Durie, Peta-Louise Jeffery and Lucie Stewart

won the most recent running of the RTC Bisque Tournament in mid-April. This one-evening team handicap doubles event brought 12 players with handicaps of 55-95 together, where bisques are used instead of the full handicap differences. (See Law 23.3 of The Rules of Tennis to know what a bisque is!) This was a very sociable evening on and off court, with plenty of strategising in the dedans and a light supper in the club dining room mid-way through the matches. We will be running two Bisque tournaments a year for next season, so look out for the dates and get them in your calendar!

Giles Doy

In the final of the Barker Camm Cup, RTC's premier singles competition, James Watson beat Phil Dunne 6/2, 6/5.

Peta Louise Jeffery & John Watkins from Hampton Court got to the semi-final of the LRTA Mixed Handicap Doubles 2023 held at Seacourt, losing a very close 5 all 40 all match to Seacourt's Fiona & Tony Harrison.

A change of clothing

This year, the All England Club has updated its clothing rules to relax slightly from all-white for the Wimbledon Tennis Tournament. RTC used this as an opportunity to review our own clothing rules and the Board is pleased to announce that it has approved a rule amendment for a trial period of six months. In summary, while we anticipate that the majority of members will continue to wear all-white, members are also permitted to wear a solid navy skirt or shorts, should they choose to do so.

All players must wear recognised tennis clothing on court. All-white kit is preferred at all times. All tops must be predominantly white (90%). Solid navy skirts or shorts may be worn. Coloured tracksuits may be worn during the warm-up.

All queries on dress code will be referred to the Tennis & Tournaments Committee, whose decision will be final. Players visiting other clubs must respect the dress code enforced at that club, and if in doubt, they should contact the pro at that club before travelling.

Should you have feedback during the trial, e-mail nicola.doble@gmail.com; comments will be collated for a review at the end of the six-month period.

Shout-out to social media

We have expanded our social media reach, previously primarily on Instagram and Twitter, to include LinkedIn and we are now posting again on Facebook. Minty Oldham has been doing an amazing job on Instagram and Twitter, raising the club's profile which has inspired us to expand our social media reach.

There are links to all social media including YouTube via the website www.royaltenniscourt.com Please join the conversation and help spread the word about RTC events and competition results, as well as Real Tennis as a sport. Follow us on your social media of choice and share the fun. You will find QR codes to these social media outlets around the tennis club. The Palace wifi is easy to access so please comment and share while you are watching matches or even competing!

Ali Cryer

Dan-tastic duo's Goblet triumph

Over four days at the end of June, 48 players from 15 clubs and three countries gathered at Hampton Court to battle for the King's Goblet.

The King's Goblet is RTC's only open tournament and is one of the UK's premier open handicap doubles tournaments together with Newmarket's Rosebowl, Prested's Hall of Fame and Leamington's Open Doubles.

The tournament pits 24 pairs in a group stage of five 35-minute timed matches, with eight pairs proceeding to timed knockouts. As well as the tennis there are evening events and plenty of food and garden-based games to keep players busy.

Defending champions Paul Davis and Richard Lewis were seeking to become only the second pair to defend the trophy, but were up against a strong field including eight sub-30 handicappers as well as previous winners Katy Doy, Giles Doy, Sarah Lambie, Owen Saunders and Jesmond's Nigel Penna.

Davis and Lewis made serene progress through the group, winning 4 of their 5 matches. The pick of the early play came from the Dutch pair of Saskia and Paul Bollerman as well as the Prested/Holyport pair of Dan Worboys and Daniel-Konrad Cooper.

Group stage highlights included the potentially explosive match between Giles Doy/Rhona Russell v Geoffrey Russell/Jed Dalton. Rhona's dance of joy upon a narrow victory almost broke the law concerning 'excessive display of emotion upon victory', but I think we can let her have her moment.

Other pairs that had people rushing to place a bet with Tournament Bookmaker Giles Doy included the mercurial Oxford pair of Sophie Dannreuther and Clare Bucknell who, despite occasional brilliance, were surprisingly undone by a loss to Simon Cripps and Kim Kilgore.

In a triumph of scheduling (thanks to Simon Edmond!) no team won all of their matches, no team lost all of their matches, and only one match ended in a team failing to win a game.



A reminder that the game is all about effective communication...



The winners! Dan (left) and Dan (right)

Friday night saw the return of the Chalice Challenge, where the eight best players play in a side tournament for the right to challenge the RTC Pros in a handicap match. Cheered on by a crowd fuelled by wood fired pizza and Pol Roger, Paul Bollerman and Seacourt's Nick Jones won through, and managed to overcome Jack and Scott in the final.

At the sunny and raucous Saturday night boat cruise with fish and chip dinner, players took the opportunity to explain why they were so unlucky not to have made it through the group stage, or why

they were destined to win.

The knockouts saw strong pairs falling in a series of close matches - Rachel Hollington and George Hudson went down by one game to Davis and Lewis; the tournament's lowest handicapper, Petworth's Nigel Pendrigh, playing with Cambridge's John Burnett, overcame crowd favourites Lucie Stewart and John Watkins by the same margin; and the Bollerman express was derailed by the wily Doy and Lambie, although neither side was helped by the American marching bands that were competing in the gardens at the same time.

In the final, Dan and Dan played as they had done throughout, with Dan taking most of the play and running around energetically, while Dan played up and smacked anything that came near him. The final see sawed and Davis and Lewis had chance to win, but ultimately Dan and Dan held on for a well-deserved first Goblet win.

Thanks to all the organizing team who made this great tournament happen (Owen Saunders, Simon Edmond, Minty Oldham, Nick Wood and the P.I.G.L.E.T.S.). There's a rumour that it's hard for RTC members to get into the tournament – half the field is intentionally non-RTC players, which is why it is such a fun tournament, but we are always looking to bring new players in and we love players from anywhere from 10 to 110 handicap!

Owen Saunders

Saunders shares the spoils

In this year's LRTA invitational Billy Ross Skinner Trophy RTC's Owen Saunders was one half of the winning pair, retaining 50% of the trophy, of which 50% was won by RTC's Araminta Oldham the previous year.

World Number 3 Tara Lumley, paired with World Number 631 Saunders, overcame World Number 6 Saskia Bollerman and her partner, Marek Stefanowicz (993), in the deciding set of a see-saw final.

The Billy Ross Skinner assembles the highest calibre female players available, finds men with a similar handicap spread, and then pairs the lowest woman with the highest man, the second lowest woman with the second highest man and so on. Each pair must win two of their first three games to progress to the knockout stages.

RTC have historically been well represented in the tournament in its 40-year history, which used to be held at RTC before moving to Hatfield House. Previous winners include Jane Vaughan, Sue Haswell, Bernard Weatherill, Lesley Ronaldson, Karen Hird and Helen-Frances Pilkington.

As well as Owen and Araminta, this year's RTC contingent included Geoffrey Russell, Izzy Candy and Fred Satow. Whilst Izzy and Hatfield's canny partner Steve Brewerton lost their way after a promising start, Fred and Prested's Kate Evers struggled to gel and lost to Geoffrey Russell and Oxford's Sophia Lewis. Geoffrey and Sophia dished out Owen and Tara's only group stage loss, winning on a 'golden final point', but eventually ran out of puff against Bollerman and Stefanowicz in the quarter final.

The final saw the first time in the tournament's living memory that each pair had the lady running the back and calling all the shots, with the men recognising their limitations and doing their best to get out of the way. After going 1-5 down, Owen and Tara showed some grit and fought back to lose 4-6, Saunders losing the set with a trademark netted volley return and with his ranking of 631 flattering him at this stage. In the second set, Tara took control and Owen took fewer shots, and they ran out 6-1. Keeping up the momentum in the deciding set, starting from 3-all, Owen and Tara came home 6-3.

Owen Saunders



Wood's Words

It is great to see so many RTC members working hard at improving their play. Many of the membership take regular lessons, enjoy the drill sessions, and dedicate themselves to solo practice! Regular court time - it is the only way to improve.

Drills / Group coaching sessions - Take advantage of the Drill Sessions - they don't count towards your court booking allocation. We offer a variety of times - Mondays 06:30, Wednesdays 08:30 and 09:30, Thursdays 09:30, Fridays 07:30. (If you would prefer an alternative time, get in touch with the Pros).

This newsletter edition's tip - So much of the game is about not making errors, which is why the Pros have a strong focus on keeping technique and shot selection very simple. It is why the top players, on show at the recent Champions Trophy, make the game look easy and achieve amazing feats of skill: they read the game and their opponents, seemingly knowing what is happening before the ball has been struck.

Having the confidence, knowledge, or even a general inclination of where the ball is going is an important area for members to focus on.

Spend some time watching others play, not just the players and the results of their shots, but more specifically the path of the ball - how it travels through the air, bounces on the floor, the angles the ball takes off the various surfaces, corners, and edges that are so prevalent around the court.

Positioning and technique go hand in hand! By improving your awareness, instincts, and knowledge of how the ball behaves, positioning yourself to play shots will benefit the simple aspects of technique. Technique can only be practiced and delivered if you are in a good position, and being in a good position permits repeatable technique. This is an incredibly important aspect to improving your play. We look forward to seeing you on court soon. Good luck!

Nick Wood

Party people

A great night was enjoyed by members and their guests at the Hampton Court Palace Golf Club on Saturday May 13th. Starting with a drinks reception, there were many opportunities to catch up with friends old and new - and to wish our dear Newsletter Editor a happy birthday! The excellent dinner was enjoyed by all and prizewinners from the 2021-2022 season were recognised and celebrated. After dinner, the Danny Lee Band entertained guests with music from across the decades, with a 'guest appearance' that took everyone by surprise! With dancing and great conviviality this was a wonderful opportunity to come back together as a club, celebrate the successes of the previous season and look forward with optimism to the future.

Huge thanks are due to Ali Cryer, who masterminded the whole evening and ensured everything ran smoothly. The Hampton Court Palace Golf Club did a fantastic job of hosting us and their catering was well received by all.

Many thanks also to all the members and guests who joined us - it was great to see so many of you! We would love feedback about what you enjoyed and anything you would like to see in future - do look out for a survey link coming from the Professionals soon.

Katy Doy

News in Brief

The Board has carefully considered the required increase to court fees for playing Tennis at RTC. The below increases are based around a 3 per cent rise; working to achieve an appropriate revenue whilst striving to keep the game affordable. This is the first court fee increase in more than a year. All priced per hour, per person.

Court fees:	
30+ Singles	£16.00
30+ Doubles	£9.75
25-29 Singles	£12.50
25-29 Doubles	£9.75
18-24 Singles & Doubles	£9.00
18-24 (Full-Time Education)	£7.50
Under 18	£6.50
Off-peak	£8.00

Court used during Coaching sessions	
Adult Individual	£32.00
Aged 25-29	£25.00
18-24	£18.00
18-24 (Full Time Education)	£15.00
Under 18	£13.00
Off-peak	£16.00

Coaching Fees (first increase in five years)	
Nick Wood	£27.50
Scott Blaber	£27.50
Lesley Ronaldson	£27.50
Jack Josephs	£16.00

Marking fees	
Singles	£8.50
Doubles	£4.25

The FLM National League is back for another exciting season! These events are a fantastic way to meet players from all over the country and experience playing on different courts. The match evenings are very sociable, and the games themselves are always played in a competitive and friendly nature. For more information, get in touch with one of the Professionals at the club. As many of you will already know, Lesley Ronaldson will no longer be running the FLM National league, and Alex Machin, of Radley College Real Tennis Club will be taking over. On behalf of all of us at the club, I would like to thank Lesley for all her immense work and effort that she has put into making the national league the success that it is. She is also heavily involved with FLM and has done a wonderful job in encouraging them to sponsor the league once again this year!

Jack Josephs

The British Over 70's Real Tennis Singles and Doubles Competition took place over March 31st – April 2nd. **Results:** Singles - **John East** lost in the final to Philip Shaw-Hamilton. Singles Plate - **Julian Sheraton-Davis** beat Luke Readman in the final. Doubles Plate - **John Paish and Rob Dickson** beat Michael Seymour and Dick Tanfield in the final.



A-grades all round

A fantastic night of Real Tennis was served up to kick off the RTC Summer Grade Tournament 2023 on the A-Grade Division 1 launch night. A massive thank you to everyone who came to support the event. It was incredible to see so many members and guests coming together to enjoy the evening, with a delicious barbeque in the club garden followed by a fantastic evening of tennis.

I had initially planned on sending a personal message to each person who had attended, but there was just so many people!

With a crowd of 40+ the pressure was on for the players, who certainly did not disappoint. The matches were extremely tight, the atmosphere was buzzing and it was impossible to predict how events would unfold.

The youngsters got off to a flying start with Oli Taylor and Jack Josephs getting the better of James Watson and Phil Dunn respectively. From

here on, it was all to play for... Phil recovered well from his opening defeat with consecutive victories over James and Oli, Oli overcame Jack in another nail-biting 6/5 encounter, and Jack ended with an emphatic victory over James.

The competition could not have been any closer and thankfully Giles Doy stayed until the end of the night to work out who actually won!

Two wins each for Jack, Phil and Oli meant we would need a countback to work it all out. Head to head was not a factor as the three of them had all beaten each other.

The next factor was games won and unfortunately for Oli, Jack and Phil both won 17 games to his 16. The final factor was games lost, in which Jack had lost one fewer match than Phil! So after four hour of tennis, Jack Josephs was crowned champion of the Summer A Grade Division 1 tournament...

A special mention must go to Nick Hyams, Ali Cryer and Giles Doy who stayed right until the very end (11:45pm!!!).

Results: James Watson (3) vs (6) **Oliver Taylor**

Phil Dunn (5) vs (6) **Jack Josephs**

James Watson (4) vs (6) **Phil Dunn**

Oliver Taylor (6) vs (5) Jack Josephs

James Watson (2) vs (6) **Jack Josephs**

Phil Dunn (6) vs (4) Oliver Taylor

A big thank you to Nick Wood who marked superbly as always from start to finish without taking a break. Giles Doy for running the betting book, Paul Wright and Peter Brown for organising the barbeque, the four players who put on a great display, and lastly, thank you once again to our wonderful members - the success of this event was down to all of you so we can't thank you enough.

Jack Josephs

Drills on offer to all

Jack Josephs is running weekly one-hour drill sessions from 9.30am to 10.30am each week. The drills are open to players of all abilities. 'What is a drill?' I hear you ask... well, a drill differs from a 1-on-1 technical lesson and focuses more on understanding differing rally scenarios and play patterns within the game. A drill involves hitting lots

of balls, having fun and encouraging good technique. Taking part in these drill sessions does not count as part of your three-court bookings. Three people are required per session otherwise the format reverts to a singles game.

Get in touch with the Pros for more details.