

Portsmouth & District LTA
AGM
Thursday 14th March 2019
7.30pm at Avenue Tennis Club

Attendees:

Committee: Michael Isaacs - Warsash (League Secretary), Alan Best – Rowland’s Castle (Treasurer & Masters Match Secretary), Lois Nash – JEM Tennis (Committee Secretary), Karen Downie – Warsash, Carrie Bateman – Ryde Lawn, Andy Gilliat – Avenue.

Club Representatives: Bob Murray – Fishbourne, Gordon Gottridge – Alverstoke, Trish Smart – Alverstoke, Maureen Parker – Stubbington, Dawn Dewilde – Southsea, Chris Hill – Southsea, Chris Weatherill – Carlton, Cheryl Goater – Sarisbury Green, Penny Redwood – Sarisbury Green, Maggie Allan – Wickham, Nick Challis – Lee-on-Solent, Lynn Candlish – Canoe Lake, Ian Marks – Avenue, Richard Hutchins – Ryde Lawn, Florence Gimonet – JEM Tennis, Leah Clifton – PTA.

1. Acting Chairman’s Welcome

Michael Isaacs (MI) is standing in tonight for Barbara Wilkie as League Chairman and thanked everyone in the room for coming and for their continued support of the League. He said that the AGM is the most important and official meeting during the year where any issues clubs have can be raised which is why he expressed his disappointment in the low turn out with many clubs not being represented.

MI wanted to mention and spare a thought for the families of Phil Jones – Alverstoke and Phil Collins – Ryde Lawn who both passed away during the year.

2. Apologies

Barbara Wilkie – Lee (League Chairman), Paula Fuge, Linda Jones - Ventnor, Tim Clark – Canoe Lake, Jane Capper – Wellow.

3. 2018 Minutes and Matters Arising

MI checked the website for the 2018 AGM minutes earlier in the day and found that he had forgotten to upload them. As such no one had seen them in order to raise any issues. They are now on the website. The Minutes of 2018 were passed.

4. Treasurer’s Report

Alan Best (AB) reported that it had been a good year. The website development is now all completed so there is no more expenditure apart from ongoing maintenance. AB said the new website and system had made life for himself and MI much easier and quicker to run the leagues. Income had increased slightly due to the entry fees being increased from £4 to

£5. The expenditure is roughly the same as last year, ignoring the website costs, and the profit of £300 is roughly the same. There were 2 items on AB's handout that totalled £35 which were outstanding entry fees from David Lloyd Southampton after they had withdrawn their teams. Since the accounts had been finalised MI had chased David Lloyd and they have now paid. AB reported there was £600 in the bank and that the fees will remain the same.

5. Secretaries Report

MI (Main Leagues) reported that this winter had been challenging with the weather and the fixtures although there were not that many matches left to play. He thanked everyone for getting the matches played and reiterated that it was important to rearrange matches straight away to avoid them being forgotten and played at the end of the season in a rush or not played at all. MI said that David Lloyd Southampton withdrew all their teams from the league which had a significant effect on the divisions. This was very disappointing for the league and also for the captains and players at David Lloyd. There were 2 or 3 other withdrawals during the season and in total it all left a bit of a gap.

AB (Master's League) said the Master's League was running like clockwork with only 2 or 3 matches to be played.

6. Winter Leagues – Ladies six team divisions, 10 matches?

MI said that in general people liked 6-8 fixtures especially in Divisions 2,3,4 and 5. The players in Division 1 tend to get more matches due to entries in other leagues to cater for the higher standard. The ladies league has 6 teams in each division with 5 home and 5 away matches. MI asked for the next winter season were the ladies happy to stay with this format or have less matches. Dawn Dewilde (Southsea) said 8 was the perfect number. Carrie Bateman (Ryde Lawn) said that a lot of ladies only played these matches as they didn't play mixed so 10 matches is good for them. Lynn Candlish (Canoe Lake) thought 10 was too much. Maureen Parker (Stubbington) and Maggie Allan (Wickham) both preferred 10 matches. There was no vote as MI said he would check with the clubs that were not there but an indicative vote was: Leave as 10 matches – 10, Less matches – 3.

7. Summer Leagues

There are 119 teams in the summer league which includes 8 teams in a new men's masters league which came about after a series of friendly matches over the winter. Not including these 8 new teams, the summer league was down by 9 or 10 on last year. David Lloyd Southampton's withdrawal of all of their teams had a big impact which is disappointing. There did seem to be a general lack of commitment with the teams and captains and clubs were losing members. MI said it was still a thriving league and the problems seem to affect the division 1 players particularly from the bigger clubs who are looking for a higher standard. This has a knock on effect on division 2 as some of those teams do not want to be promoted as the standard will be too high. Mixed division 1 this year consists of 3 teams with 4 fixtures, 2 home and 2 away. Hopefully there will also be a day of round robin matches as well.

MI asked for the captains contact details as soon as possible to go on the website.

8. Fixture Allocation – problems explained. Keep or revert back to scrum?

Many people in the room expressed their thanks and gratitude to MI and AB for all their hard work organising the fixtures at the start of the season. MI explained how the system works with each season starting with an even balanced fixture list with home and away matches spread out evenly throughout the season. Then the constraints are added and it all goes out of the window. AB does his best to accommodate every club and it's constraints but there will be a few dates that need rearranging by clubs. Many clubs also play the Hants & IOW League, Team Tennis and Apsley League which impact on court availability. AB advised the meeting next year we will seek entries in by the end of January.

9. Clarification of Pairings – 1st pair should be best pair

MI said this should be straight forward, the best pair play at 1. Carrie Bateman (Ryde Lawn) pointed out that this is most important in the mixed masters league where there is only one round of mixed and also said that in general this is only a problem if the difference in standard is significant. MI confirmed this wasn't explicitly covered in the rules. See point 10 below.

10. High ranking players playing down at start of season – High standard players playing in lower leagues

Dawn Dewilde (Southsea) asked what everyone thought about coaches playing in matches, she played a match against a very good opponent which she found pointless. There was a general discussion with comments: It's ok for them to play in division 1 but a problem if a club's first team isn't in division 1. Some coaches aren't actually that high a standard so can't have a rule. There's a problem when a new team has to start at the bottom of the league and coaches are only allowed in division 1. This problem only occurs when a commonly agreed high standard coach plays down for one or two matches which causes a disadvantage to the opponents compared to the other teams in the division. Richard Hutchins (Ryde Lawn) thought it was good for the coaches to play in matches in order to give something back to their clubs. MI said that he hoped good sense prevailed but if anyone had an issue, they should contact him or AB to have a look at the situation. AB said he keeps a record of everyone playing in each match and in 6 seasons he has only spotted 2 occasions where this may have been a problem. One had the relevant rubbers voided and the other was a last minute making up of the numbers. Everyone agreed it was good to know it was being policed.

11. Change of Rules – One point deduction for walkover. Is it enough?

Is a 1 point deduction for a walkover a big enough deterrent? 2 or 3 clubs have asked this. AB gave some statistics on the walkovers given over the last year. There were 9 walkovers given in 311 matches and all but one had no impact on the outcome of their division. AB said it appeared not to be a problem and should be left as it is. MI said there were a 1 or 2 clubs that were more comfortable to give a walkover than travel and AB said there were

more in the summer than the winter. Carrie Bateman (Ryde Lawn) said they really appreciate it when they turn up with one pair. Maureen Parker (Subbington) said that the walkover points can distort the table places at the end of the season which AB agreed happened on some occasions and was unfair when that happened. MI said that if you are genuinely struggling to get a team then a 10 point deduction would not even be a deterrent. Due to everyone agreeing with AB that the statistics speak for themselves. The vote was unanimous to keep the walkover deduction as 1 point. Richard Hutchins (Ryde Lawn) said that we should look at the statistics again after the summer.

12. Wightlink

MI reported that he has to reapply for the discount every January and this year Wightlink were not happy as it only brought them £2000 worth of income. Only 30% of teams use Wightlink with others using rail and other ferries/hovercraft. MI told Wightlink the discount encouraged people to travel to play tennis and helped keep the island teams involved in the leagues. Wightlink agreed to keep it going this year but he can foresee it not being renewed next year. MI asked why people did not use Wightlink. Replies were that to use the discount wasn't easy on the Wightlink website, Red Funnel was cheaper, actual discount received ended up being 10% rather than the 20% expected due to saver prices. Some clubs subsidise the travel to away matches. Richard Hutchins (Ryde Lawn) said he would like to thank everyone for supporting the teams on the IOW and MI confirmed that the IOW teams were integral to the league.

13. Solent Cup

This year the Solent Cup will be played on Saturday 13th April 11.15am at Warsash. The ladies match will be Lee v Winchester. The men's match will be Lee v Warsash.

14. Catering Awards?

The catering awards were dispensed with last year after a vote at the AGM with Barbara Wilkie giving the deciding vote and stopping them. MI asked if they should be reinstated. MI said that the camaraderie and match tea was all a part of the overall match experience and the catering awards were great fun.

There was a discussion about problems with dietary needs, allergies and people leaving early and not staying to eat the food provided.

Carrie Bateman (Ryde Lawn) said she loved it and it's not always just about the tennis. She suggested that there should be one catering cup for the whole league instead of separate ones for ladies, mixed and men's. There was a general agreement to have one catering trophy going forward.

15. Awards Presentation Evening – Help in retrieving trophies

Thursday 3rd October 7pm at Lee-on-Solent tennis Club

We will start collecting the trophies at the beginning of September due to the presentation evening being slightly earlier this year. It was requested that people drop them at 2 or 3 designated clubs to save time and mileage driving around collecting them.

16. Singles Leagues?

MI asked if there was any interest in starting a singles league. The younger players tended to play Team Tennis and there was no interest in the room.

17. New committee members – Succession planning

MI wanted to impart the importance of the continuation of the league by discussing the need for new members and recruiting someone to learn the league software and administration. MI and AB are both around 60 and AB has had a recent health issue which has highlighted the seriousness of succession planning. He asked everyone in the room to go back to their clubs and think seriously about who may be willing and able to help. AB reiterated how simple the new software system is to use. Any volunteer would just need to input names and results on a spreadsheet. There may sometimes be a need to resolve disputes and negotiation of the outcome.

18. Election of Officers

All current committee members were happy to continue. There were no objections in the room. MI asked that if anyone wanted to join the committee, they could email him later.

19. AOB

MI confirmed that JEM Tennis is moving venue in April and will not be able to play any home matches for the forthcoming summer and winter leagues. All JEM's allocated home matches will be played away and when this happens JEM will provide the match balls and match tea. To indicate this on the website fixture list these matches will have a "vice/versa" icon. Leah Clifton (PTA) said they had to pay to hire the courts. Lois Nash (JEM Tennis) confirmed that JEM would pay for the court hire.

Dawn Dewilde (Southsea) thanked the committee for all their hard work and MI thanked the committee too saying they wouldn't do it if they didn't enjoy it.

MI said Richard Hutchins (Ryde Lawn) needed a round of applause as his team played two matches in the pouring rain in one day as they were running out of time to get the matches played. AB said that this was a headline in the Portsmouth News sports pages. AB also informed everyone that you can view the Portsmouth News online with his reports being available for some weeks.

20. Close Meeting

MI thanked Avenue Tennis Club for hosting and to Sue Sparsholt for the lovely buffet.

The Meeting was closed at 9pm.