

Portsmouth & District LTA **
Annual General Meeting
Date: Thursday 9th March 2017
Venue: Avenue Lawn Tennis Club

Present

Barbara Wilkie (Acting Chairman)
Michael Isaacs (District League Secretary)
Alan Best (Treasurer)
Lois Nash (Committee Secretary)
Karen Downie (Warsash & Committee), Paula Fuge (PTA & Winter Ladies League Secretary), Martyn Cox (Southsea), Sue Price (Southsea), Dawn Dewilde (Southsea), Alison Grant (Lee), Mandy Reid (Lee), Debbie Berry (PTA), Florence Gimonet (JEM Hamble), Luke McEwen (Fishbourne), Mandy Davies (Fishbourne), Andy Gilliatt (Avenue), Rob Mort (Avenue), Sara Robson (Avenue), Robert Goulson (Wickham), Maggie Allan (Wickham), Chris Weatherill (Carlton), Gwen Isaacs (Sarisbury Green), Sam Marston (Bishop's Waltham), Chris Hill (Bishop's Waltham), Michelle Parker (Ventnor), Linda Jones (Ventnor), Bob Barrable (Canoe Lake), Sue Foott (Chichester), Hugh Latham (Seacourt), Maureen Parker (Stubbington), Tim Clark (Canoe Lake), Alex Parent (Priory), David Fothergill (Ryde Lawn)

Meeting commenced at 7.20pm

Acting Chairman's Welcome

Barbara Wilkie welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked all club representatives for attending.

Apologies for Absence

Trish Smart (Alverstoke), Ann Clark (Southsea), Jane Capper (Wellow)

2016 Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the 2016 AGM were agreed as a true and accurate recording of the meeting and there were no matters arising.

Treasurer's Report

Alan handed out copies of the Statement of Income and Expenditure, which showed figures for the last three years and a projection for next year. Income had steadily increased and is set to continue to do so. This is partly due to the increase in team entry fees (an increase from £3 to £4 per team) and partly due to the expanding leagues.

Expenditure had exceeded income for the past three years somewhat due to the increase in leagues and the resultant purchase of new trophies but mainly due to the development of the website and software. Future costs are expected to fall significantly as the software will just require maintenance. The projection shows a return to income generation next year so it was proposed to keep the affiliation and entrance fees at current levels.

Secretary's Report

Current Winter Season 2016-17

Michael reported that there had been the usual difficulties due to weather causing rescheduling with quite a few matches still to be played. Five teams withdrew during the season which was exceptional but there had been only 8 walkovers given. There had been 75 2-2 draws to date which was nice to see.

Michael gave a run down of the highlights of each division and the potential outcomes of the winter season.

The Portsmouth News

Michael thanked Alan Best for his continued hard work in providing the weekly reports and photos for inclusion in the newspaper. The coverage has been excellent which raises the profile of the League.

Committee

Michael thanked the committee for their support, effort and commitment. He reminded everyone that the LTA are citing Portsmouth as one of the big success regions in the country in terms of interest and growth in tennis with the Portsmouth & District League being a large component.

Michael thanked Paula Fuge for steering the ladies leagues and Alan Best for administering the Masters League which continues to grow in strength.

Summer Season 2017

Michael said he was excited to announce that there were 111 teams from 26 clubs entered in the P&D summer leagues. This is another record entry and it means since 2010 we have almost trebled the size of the leagues. Michael welcomed 3 new clubs, Active Academy from Bishop's Waltham and David Lloyd who join the main league and David Lloyd and Glethorn who join the Masters. Glethorn is a joint team from Glebians and Thornden.

Following the success of the mixed Master's League, this summer there will be a Ladies Master's League too and there are already 9 teams signed up.

General Points

Michael asked for scorecards to be returned promptly as there are still some captains not doing this. He also encouraged the captains to communicate in good time to rearrange matches to avoid a backlog at the end of the season. Michael also wanted to encourage the teams and captains to embrace matches on the IOW as the Island teams are an integral part of the leagues and their involvement adds to the uniqueness of the P&D League.

The catering trophies will again be awarded for the summer season, however they are not meant to be taken too seriously.

The Colin Manvell Sportsmanship Trophy will be awarded again this year with the same format as last year. Alan Best hoped that he could get more than the 70% return of the votes that he got last year.

Website

Michael said the website is becoming more adaptable and useful by the week and a new club directory will be coming soon. According to the website statistics, Monday morning 9.00-9.59 is the most popular time for viewing the website which means that many people start their week by checking the weekend's results.

Summer Fixtures

(a) Numbers of Fixtures/Divisions

The League enquired what the clubs considered an appropriate number of fixtures for a season. One club put forward that 6 fixtures was sufficient, however most other clubs felt this was too few and that 7/8 fixtures was more ideal.

It was noted that the “top” players from the larger clubs will always have the potential for a greater number of matches whereas the “club level” players are more limited. Therefore, the lower divisions should be given the greater number of fixtures if numbers of teams per division cannot be equal.

Alan Best said there was a problem with the Ladies and Mixed Masters Leagues as a club that had in both would have 16 fixtures and this might be too much of a burden. However, it was agreed that up to 8 fixtures per division would be acceptable. The good thing about the Masters Leagues are that it is relatively easy to rearrange as there are no clashes due to it being run during the week.

(b) Implementation of Dates

Michael Isaacs asked for feedback on The Leagues decision to trial replacing the “fixtures scrum” with club’s fixtures and dates being allocated after taking into account each clubs constraints. A vote was taken to determine if the practice should continue. Result – YES 15, NO 2 (Florence Gimonet (JEM), Karen Downie (Warsash)).

It was decided that next time the constraints from the clubs with the most teams would be considered first in an attempt to improve the process.

Alan Best confirmed that the Masters League fixtures would be out on the 10th March.

Non-Weather Related Postponements Guidelines

The ongoing issue of matches being postponed and rearranged due to other reasons other than bad weather was discussed. The league wants to avoid too many walkovers and see as many matches being played as possible.

It was agreed that we needed some guidelines. It was noted that The Southampton League allows for no walkovers and indeed implements relegation for those teams not fulfilling their commitment of fixtures. It was agreed the P&D League did not want to introduce relegation penalties but did wish to avoid so many rearrangements.

The current rule states if a match is postponed due to bad weather the home team has 7 days to contact the away team to rearrange the fixture. If the match is postponed for other reasons then the non-defaulting team can claim the match. In reality this didn’t happen as the non-defaulting team feel they don’t want to look like the bad guys and therefore feel obliged to rearrange unless they are unable to do so due to court availability or team constraints.

There was very strong feeling that the flexibility of rearranging fixtures should be taken out of the club’s hands and as such the dates of fixtures should be fixed. It was agreed by the meeting to only allow matches to be rearranged up to the end of May (summer) and the end of October (winter) after which dates fixtures will remain fixed and no rescheduling will be allowed excepting in the case of weather affected matches

Other Rule Changes

Michael Isaacs handed out copies of the competition rules with many minor changes to the wording highlighted in red. It was agreed that these changes can be implemented. However, there were some other more significant rule changes proposed:–

Summer League – 3rd full set or Championship Tiebreak?

Is it the club's desire to move to a 3rd set championship tie-break for the summer seasons as played in the winter or retain a full 3rd set as currently practiced?

With issues such as childcare considerations and the teams from the IOW and ferry times to think about as to whether there was time to play a 3rd set.

The summer usually has better weather so have time for longer matches.

The Masters League has a tiebreak in both the winter and summer.

It could be decided before the match if both teams agree but this raised the issue of what happens if the teams could not agree.

Vote for 3 full sets 12 (10 in the room, 2 proxy)

Vote for a tiebreak 9

Start Time of Matches

It was agreed that as the fixtures are agreed at the start of the season we do not need this rule so is to be removed.

Rule 7. League Divisions

It was agreed that no more than two teams from the same club would be allowed to play in any one division.

Promotion and Relegation

Currently it is stated that the top 2 teams in any division are promoted and the bottom 2 teams are relegated. It is proposed in a division of 6 teams or more this continues to be the case but in a division with 5 or less teams this becomes 1 team promoted and relegated. However, in the interests of keeping the divisions with roughly the same number and other possible considerations, this could be varied at the discretion of the league. This was agreed by the meeting.

Rule 8(e) Fixtures (Rearranging Fixture Dates)

Already agreed that there was to be no rearranging of fixtures after the agreed dates other than for bad weather.

Rule 8(b) Start Times

The home team determines the start time for their matches due to their court availability which is agreed at the beginning of the season. Agreed to keep the rule in.

Rule 9(b) Failure to Rearrange a Match

If a team gives a walkover then they have 1 point deducted.

If a match is postponed due to bad weather and the home team do not try to rearrange the match within one week then the away team can claim the match. There was a discussion about whether the home team should then get a point deducted too. It was agreed that they should not have a point deducted in this instance.

Rule 9(c)

When a match has commenced, but is interrupted by bad weather, in the circumstances that the captains cannot agree between them, it was recognised that some guidelines were needed to adjudicate at what point a match should be abandoned. It was suggested that a sitting out period of 30 minutes in total be introduced after which the match would be abandoned unless play can continue or BOTH teams agree to wait further time. The teams who have travelled to or from the IOW may prefer a longer sit out time due to the effort made to travel to the fixture. The clock is to start ticking from the start time of the match.

A vote was taken to add a 30 minute sit out time to the rules:

30 minutes – 14 votes, Longer than 30 minutes – 4 votes

Rule 9(d) Deduction of Points for Walkovers

Currently the rule is if a match is postponed due to other reasons than bad weather and a walkover is given, 1 point is deducted for the 1st walkover, 2 points for the 2nd walkover and so on. It was agreed to change the rule to 1 point for each walkover given.

There was a discussion about how walkovers and withdrawal from the league can skew the results. Southsea lost their points when Wickham withdrew one of their teams from the league and felt aggrieved. It was acknowledged that the situation wasn't ideal but does occasionally happen and accepted in other sports when a team withdraws from a competition their results are voided. Michael to investigate if voided matches can still be recorded.

Rule 11(c) Player Age Restrictions

There is no age limit (young or old) to players but if a club has players under 18 then they must adhere to the LTA Child Protection Guidelines.

Rule (13) League positions

It was agreed that if two teams have the same amount of points, rubbers, sets and games then their order in the table shall be decided on the result between the two teams in that season.

Rule 16 Spirit of the Competition

It was agreed that if the committee felt that a match was not played within the spirit and ethos of the league competition then the committee can intervene to void or reverse that match or rubbers affected.

Solent Cup/Awards Presentation Evening

The 5th Solent Cup will take place at Totton & Eling Tennis Club on Saturday 8th April starting at 1pm. The event will be open to everyone to come along and support our P&D teams.

2016 Solent cup winners:

Ladies: Ventnor beat Winchester

Men's: Warsash Portsmouth beat Warsash Southampton

Both matches were won by P&D teams and both matches came down to victory by a narrow margin of games.

Both cups were displayed to the meeting by the winning teams to tumultuous applause! Michael Isaacs formally thanked Warsash Tennis Club for hosting the event again and for stepping in at the last minute due to Winchester Tennis Club letting the event down with less than 24 hours notice.

The Annual Awards Presentation Evening will be on Thursday 19th October at Lee-on-the-Solent Tennis Club with Michael Isaacs offering the League's gratitude for their continue hosting and co-sponsoring the event.

Election of Officers

Barbara Wilkie (Lee) – Chairman

Proposed by Gwen Isaacs

Seconded by Maureen Parker – Elected

Andy Gilliatt (Avenue) – Committee member

Proposed by Chris Wetherall

Seconded by Rob Mort – Elected

AOB

Michael Isaacs asked why people weren't using the Wightlink discount as much as he thought they would. The discussions mentioned that there are restrictions on bank holidays and some days in the summer. Some people go from Southampton and take their car, as it is more cost effective. Most people found using the discount and booking via the internet was quite complicated. If you have a Network Railcard you can get 30% off rail travel from Portsmouth Harbour to Ryde Esplanade without even getting a train as it includes the hovercraft.

Alan Best requested that the scorecards be filled in neatly with full names included to enable him to compile comprehensive reports in The Portsmouth News. He also asked for teams to send him more pictures on match days.

Meeting ended at 9.15pm

** Minutes subject to approval at the 2018 AGM