



Huntingdon & Peterborough Tennis Association



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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held at Wyton on the Hill Primary School on Thursday 7th December 2023

MINUTES

Present:

Dennis Vincent – Chairperson
Jason Tuxworth – Treasurer & Fixtures Secretary
Sabrina Ashley – St Neots
Matthew Sizer – Chatteris
George Green – City of P’Boro
Nick Clifford – Huntingdon
Niall Wallington – Ketton
Jim Hunter – Needingworth
Alan Swann – Longthorpe
Chris Young – Hemingford
Gary FitzJohn – Wisbech
David Reed – Oundle
Mark Balaam – Needingworth

Sally Pell – Association & League Secretary
Geoff Smith – Vice Chairperson
Nicky Keir – City of P’Boro
Simon Grainger – Chatteris
Eesa Najib – City of P’Boro
Caroline Clifford – Huntingdon
Jim Wheeler – Ketton
Ruth Swann – Longthorpe
Hadleigh Osborne – Wisbech/ City of P’Boro
Vernon Reuter – Hemingford
Jacqui West – Wisbech
Karen Tattershall – Stamford

Apologies for Absence:

Esmond Edwards (H&P Committee); Clare Fraser (Buckden); Carol Halliwell (Oundle); Wendy Cropp (Wisbech); Michael Speakman (Bourne); Rachel Selwyn (Ramsey, H&P Committee); Duncan Malcomson (Deeping); John Rudd (David Lloyd); Carl Newell (Spalding)

Clubs represented: - St Neots, City of Peterborough, Chatteris, Huntingdon, Ketton, Needingworth, Longthorpe, Hemingford, Wisbech, Oundle, Stamford, Ramsey 12 Clubs in total

Clubs Not represented: - **Spalding, David Lloyd, Buckden, Bourne, Castor & Ailsworth**, Deeping. 6 clubs in total. 5 in bold were also not represented at the AGM in 2022.

- 1. Chairperson – Welcome.** Dennis Vincent welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for coming.
- 2. Minutes of the last AGM held on Thursday 1st December 2022** – All received and approved.
- 3. Matters arising** – all dealt with elsewhere in the agenda
- 4. Association & League Secretary’s Report**

Sally presented the following report which had been circulated to all clubs ahead of the meeting:

“Thank you to everyone, and particularly Jason and Geoff, for their support during my first year as League secretary on what has been a fairly steep learning curve!

Sadly this year saw the death of Brian Brown following a relatively short illness. Brian received the Life time achievement award at the AGM in 2021 in recognition of his exceptional dedication and long service to the Association and League. 2023 also saw the recent, unexpected death of Graham Bedford who many of you will know from his role as Ketton Club Secretary. I am sure you will wish to join myself and the committee in sending our condolences to both their families.

That a side, I think this season has progressed relatively smoothly. There were a couple of team withdrawals pre-season and one withdrawal during the season which affected the number of matches that some teams played which Jason will highlight further in his report. My congratulations to all the divisional winners and to all the teams taking part in fulfilling the majority of the fixtures leading to some great matches. Let us hope that 2024 will be even more successful.

Thanks again to Jason for continuing to arrange the venue for our meetings and for his superb fixture scheduling and management of the website, no mean feat in itself and to Dennis who has managed the Don Brace Cup for us again this year despite additional issues at home. It was lovely to see Don and Val Brace at the Don Brace Final this year”.

5. Fixtures Secretary – Annual Report

Jason presented his report. He highlighted concerns over the numbers of teams entered by some clubs in relation to the number of nights they have availability for home matches. This made scheduling very challenging. Clubs need to consider this when entering teams.

There has been a reduction in the number of mixed team entries this year from 40 to 35. This was mainly due to a shortage of ladies and hopefully is not a sign of a continuing trend. There was also an increased number of walkovers in the mixed matches.

The following report had also been circulated to all clubs prior to the meeting:

“2023 has been a fairly straight forward year with the leagues, helped partly with favourable weather conditions for large periods of the summer resulting in fewer postponements of matches than is often experienced.

The start date of the Mixed season was brought forward by a week so the first matches were starting on the 24th April. This made scheduling easier and also enabled most teams to have a little extra time before the Men’s/Ladies’ matches started which hopefully assisted captains where rearrangements were required.

Clubs are asked to consider the number of teams they’re entering in the leagues and the number of home nights they can offer. If the ratio is more than 2:1, ie. 2 teams for each home night offered, this can make scheduling very difficult and for one club this year, there weren’t enough dates to accommodate all of their home matches. It resulted in a Ladies’ match having to be scheduled during Hunstanton week which was against their wishes.

We are hearing that some clubs are struggling to field as many female players as they’ve managed in the past and this is resulting in fewer mixed teams being entered into the league. Five years ago, there were 40 mixed teams and this year 35 were entered. Hopefully, this trend will start to reverse at some point.

Unfortunately, St. Neots A team was withdrawn early on in the season which affected the first division. There were also four walk overs across the five mixed divisions which is a high number. There were fewer in the other leagues: 2 in the Men's and 1 in the Ladies' which is an improvement on last season.

There were a couple of instances where fixtures hadn't been checked carefully when they were first published and only later was there found to be a clash with matches in another leagues. This resulted in some issues between the teams involved and it could have been avoided if the dates had been more closely examined at the beginning of the year. Next season, I'll add the day of the week to the fixtures as well as the date to help identify days when maybe matches have been scheduled when it could cause clashes."

There was much discussion about a proposed potential rule change that would allow teams to request a date change for a match as long a one month's notice is given by either the home or away team. 3 alternative dates would need to be provided avoiding dates where either team already have a match. If no agreement over an alternative date is reached then whomever requested the rearrangement would be defaulted or the match played on the original date. There would be a deadline of October (as currently) to get the match played by. This was proposed in response to an issue raised by a club asking for a review of a points deduction given to them for an un-played match.

The general consensus was that this rule change could open the floodgate for lots of rearrangements being requested by teams, to allow them to get their best players out ,even if reasons for change were limited and covered by the rule change. Another proposal was put forward " Any other changes requested should be resolved with clubs at their discretion and good will". Any other changes relate to any changes not identified and resolved by the league before the season commences. The other proposal is to do nothing and leave the rules as they are.

The clubs present, all voted.

Option 1 was "Do nothing and leave as is" – 0 votes

Option 2 was " Any other changes requested be resolved by the clubs themselves" – 10 votes

Option 3 – allowing a date change with a month's notice – 2 votes

Option 2 was voted in.

This amendment will be added to Rule 13

Jason reminded clubs that matches on club nights and clashes with other fixtures should be identified when the provisional fixtures are issued and fed back to the league. Clubs need to ensure that the league have the correct contact details so that these fixtures are sent out to the appropriate email addresses. The dates of the fixtures need to be analysed for clashes and ensure dates are ok for home and away fixtures including start times bearing in mind travelling times. Hopefully if this is done at the beginning of the season it might resolve some fixture issues although there will always be last minute issues that can't be predicted.

There was agreement that Rule 11 needs a minor change as well. The last sentence still states "waive the fine" and this should be amended to "points deduction" as agreed at the 2022 AGM.

One of the members raised the issue of a low number of clubs in Mixed Division 5. It was explained that this was as a consequence of two clubs withdrawing their teams after the divisions had been agreed. The League reserves the right to amend slightly the number of teams being promoted and relegated in an attempt to even out the number of teams in each league but the final entries are not known until the team entries (sent out early in January) are returned by 26th January.

6. Don Brace Report

Dennis presented his report previously sent to the clubs. See below:

Don Brace Cup 2023

In the main the tournament ran smoothly apart from a midsummer storm which wiped out the semi-final weekend and a rude interruption on Finals day when the air ambulance landed outside the court (I subsequently heard that the hockey player hit in the face with the ball had recovered).

We were fortunate that Don and Viv Brace were able to attend the final and witness the high standard of play between the finalists Stamford and Deeping which Stamford won 7-1.

Once again it was unfortunate that there were a number of walkovers during the event. We set weekend dates, with the option of playing earlier by mutual agreement, as league matches are scheduled for midweek and therefore the cup matches should not clash with league matches. Since there are seemingly walkovers every year should the committee consider alternative arrangements for scheduling.



Don Brace and The Finalists

Dennis commented on the number of walkovers given again this year. It was agreed that rule 8 of the Don Brace Rules would be removed and that the first round matches are scheduled like the league fixtures. Rule 2 to also be amended to state players can only play for “one team” not club as the competition allows multiple entries from clubs. The results to be sent in via the website which will then give the list of players’ names.

7. Treasurer Report

Jason presented the audited accounts for 2022/23. These had been sent out in advance to the clubs.

There was a deficit of £14 in the year but we still have a healthy league balance of £4499. Jason proposed no raising of fees for 2024 and that we should drop the charge for the Don Brace Cup for the immediate future.

It was proposed by Geoff and seconded by Rachel at the last committee meeting that honorariums, currently £250 annually paid to the secretary and Fixture secretary, be increased to £300 annually and that a £50 one is introduced to the Don Brace Cup organizer. This was proposed to the meeting and carried unanimously.

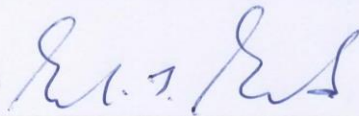
HUNTINGDON & PETERBOROUGH TENNIS LEAGUE
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT YEAR TO 31ST OCTOBER 2023

	2022/23		2021/22	
	£	£	£	£
INCOME				
League and Cup Fees		1,190		865
EXPENDITURE				
Don Brace Expenses - Courts, Refreshments & Balls	194		150	
Trophies & Engraving	215		112	
League Officers - Expenses	-		-	
- Honorarium	500		1,000	
Travelling	86		79	
AGM & Committee Expenses	54		200	
Accounts Examiner	-		-	
Printing, Postage and Telephone	59		40	
Website	96		84	
	<u>1,204</u>		<u>1,665</u>	
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	-	<u>14</u>	-	<u>800</u>

ACCUMULATED FUND
YEAR ENDED 31ST OCTOBER 2023

	2,021	2021/22
	£	£
Balance at year end (31st October)	4,513	5,313
Add Surplus for the year <i>less Deficit</i>	- 14	- 800
	<u>4,499</u>	<u>4,513</u>
Represent by:		
Cash at bank (31/10/2023)	4,499	4,513
Cash in hand	-	-
	<u>4,499</u>	<u>4,513</u>

I CERTIFY that the attached Income and Expenditure Account has been prepared from the books, records, information and explanations supplied, and it is in agreement therewith.



E.J. Edwards - Examiner
06/11/2023

8. League Rules

Changes to Rule 11 have already been discussed and agreed.

The issue of some clubs having 19.00 match starts was raised. The reason for the later starts is court availability due to coaching commitments. Concerns were expressed that no courts were available until 19.00 to warm up which meant the matches were starting at 19.15 at the earliest. The same issue occurs with 18.30 starts being delayed until later due to court unavailability for a warm up. Currently Rule 15 states “matches should commence at 6.30pm , as programmed, unless otherwise agreed with the league Secretary. No match must start later than 7pm.” There was a lengthy discussion re the length of the warm up but it was eventually agreed that the rules should be amended to state that a court should be available for a minimum of 15 minutes prior to the match start time for the teams to warm up and that matches should start on time. A reminder of Rule 16 - The choice of surface is at the Home team’s discretion.

Clubs to notify the league if they have cut off times for their flood lights so that teams are aware in advance of matches.

The final discussion was about the situation with St Neots Mixed A team where two matches were conceded and under Rule 11 their results were voided and they are automatically relegated to the bottom division. Last year Huntingdon A were relegated in the same scenario and their second team also prevented from being promoted to Division 1 despite being Division 2 champions. It was felt in the interests of fairness that St Neots B mixed team should also not be promoted from Division 4 despite finishing second in the division. An addition to be made to the rules that when a club team is defaulted then the team below can not be promoted that season.

9. Election of Officers & Committee for 2024 Season

The current committee were re-elected.

A plea was put out for more people to join the committee. George Green, from City of Peterborough club, was proposed and seconded. George was welcomed onto the committee.

10. Presentation of Divisional Certificates and Trophies

These were presented to representatives from the winning clubs by Dennis in his role as Chairperson.

Many thanks to Geoff for printing the certificates and arranging the engraving of the trophies as well as the photography on the day.

11. Any other Business

Sally asked whether winning clubs would like to continue with framed certificates and replicas or whether they think there is an alternative “prize”. The consensus was to continue as we are currently.

The meeting closed at 22.00.

