

KNOWLE & DORRIDGE RACQUETS CLUB

PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER 2021

Dear Member

Welcome to the club year 2021/22. I look forward to taking the club forward over the next three years. It has been a difficult last year for everyone but the main committee has not been idle with, among other things achieved, a new booking system installed, a new constitution agreed and facilities upgraded.

While the previous committee made provision for charging members for balls and social sporting events, I shall do whatever I can to ensure that such charges will never be levied, aiming to cover the costs by sponsorship. I believe that the provision of balls is a feature of our club for which we are well-known and to end it would be a retrograde step. I do not expect there to be any charges in the immediate future.

Subscriptions. These have been kept at 2020 levels and are due by 1st May 2021. The invoices must be paid by this date to avoid any surcharges and loss of booking rights in due course. We would appreciate receiving these directly into the club's bank account, details of which can be found on the subscription invoice.

Help. The club is always looking for volunteers and those with key skills who can assist the club with special initiatives and tasks. In particular, we would love to hear from those with PR or sponsorship experience which they would be willing to share to assist our activities. Please contact me if you can help.

200 Club. Our 200 Club is a very useful fund-raiser for the club and is always looking for new members. The cost is only £12 per year and there are monthly cash prizes, an Autumn prize of £250 and a Spring prize of £400. If you are interested in joining please contact the organiser for details at knowledorridge200club@gmail.com

Sponsorship. The committee is actively looking for sponsorship to significantly support the expansion of a thriving key sporting facility in the Solihull area, developing its facilities for future generations. There are a number of ways to get involved with the club including court-side sponsorship boards and banners, match ball sponsorship, team kits, newsletter sponsorship, website advertising space, tournament sponsorship and both senior and junior team sponsorship opportunities. Please contact me with any ideas or introductions to potential sponsors.

Hiring the clubhouse. The club is available for hire by senior members. Strict rules of hire must be followed and 18th or 21st parties are not permitted. Please contact Sally-Ann Shaw for details on admin@kdrc.info.

New members. If you have any friends, work colleagues or neighbours who may be interested in joining our club to play tennis, squash or racketball, please encourage them to come along and visit us any time or contact the Membership Secretary, Suzanne Weatherhead. Application forms can be downloaded from the club's website.

The President's Tennis Tournament. This event, a mixed doubles handicap round-robin tournament, will be held on the afternoon of Sunday 27th June and is open to all senior members. Afternoon tea will be provided to players and invited guests by courtesy of the President and I hope that as many players as possible will join in on what is usually a very social occasion.

Social tennis. We offer two social tennis sessions a week (Saturday 2-5pm and Tuesday 6-10pm) as well as a range of internal leagues and tournaments. In addition, Roque Santana-Vaz and Roy Clark organise a number of social matches against other local clubs.

Team tennis. During the summer the club runs 5 ladies' and 5 men's teams in the Birmingham, Coventry and Metropolitan leagues.

Senior Coaching. Head tennis coach Mike Erskine is available for senior group and individual lessons from Monday to Saturday inclusive. Squash/racketball coaching is provided by Ali Jafari.

Team Squash and Racketball. Squash is due to restart on April 12 albeit within the current government guidelines. In the winter the club runs two men's teams and one ladies' squash team and a racket ball team and, in the summer, at least one squash team. All teams play in the Warwickshire Leagues.

Racketball and Squash club nights. Our new Squash and Racketball Chairman, Bruce Hopkin, is hoping to arrange club nights at the club this year. He is keen to hear from members on any matters they have with these two sports.

Any member who would like to be considered for team tennis, squash or racketball should contact the appropriate captains – Kayne Mann (Men's Tennis Captain), Jackie Creed (Ladies' Tennis Captain), Allan Hitchcock (Men's Squash Captain), Ellie Blenkinsop (Ladies' Squash Captain) and Neil Blake (Racketball).

Juniors and Minis. The club has a vibrant children's section and operates coaching programmes at the club and also takes its tennis coaching into some local area schools. The programme is designed to attract more youngsters into playing and enhance the club's links with the community. Mini tennis is run by Kayne Mann on most weekdays and Sundays for children between 4 and 10 years of age. For Juniors (11 to 17 years), Head Coach Mike Erskine runs development squads on weekdays and popular general coaching sessions on Friday evenings. More Junior coaching is provided by Kayne on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Junior squash coaching with Ali Jafari will resume after the lockdown.

Bar and Social Events. The clubhouse is the hub of the club and is planned to reopen on 17th May under the current pandemic roadmap. In addition to making it somewhere that members want to go for a relaxing chat and a drink with friends, we are looking to introduce a range of events this year – from pie-and-pint events during the coming Euros to wine tastings to folk music nights to draw evenings to quizzes to Christmas and New Year parties. The monthly newsletter aims to keep members fully informed about all the events.

Online Booking. Our bookings system can be found on the ASP Booking Centre (<https://knowled.aspsystems.co.uk/sdbookit/bookitasp.dll/new>). This can be used to book all your day and night-time tennis and squash courts and confirmation will be sent to you via email. Bookings are automatically updated and squash court lights will be ready to activate when you arrive. The system also allows us to monitor court usage and maximise the efficiency of use. If you require any assistance in logging in to the website or the booking pages, please contact Sally-Ann Shaw.

I would be grateful if you would ensure that your email address and other personal details are correct on the system in “My Account”. You can amend your details yourself or notify Sally-Ann (the administrator) of any such changes.

Security. Please use your key fob on arrival at the club if you are participating in any activity there, including club afternoons and social events. In addition to opening the main clubhouse door or squash court door it ensures that we maintain records for the Government’s tracing systems. Only let in genuine visitors. Replacement key fobs can be purchased from Sally-Ann although new members will receive theirs via initial membership.

Meet the team. We are aware that members would like to meet the members of the main committee from time to time to discuss any matters of help or concern. We shall be organising a number of these open house meetings during the year and we hope that you will come along to talk informally with us about any club matters.

Finally, this is your club. Now that the lockdown conditions are easing, I hope you will enjoy your sport and the club’s events and social activities in the year ahead. Details of these events will be sent in a monthly newsletter by email and advertised on noticeboards at the club and on our website <http://www.kdrc.info>. Your support will be essential in keeping your neighbourhood club one of which we should continue to be very proud.

Best regards

Steve Williams

President