



## PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER – DECEMBER 2021

I am sorry to start the festive letter with news of the passing of one of our members but Malcolm Snelling was a very popular figure at the club with a fantastic sense of humour, sharp wit and kind nature. Malcolm joined our club in 1985 and played in the men's squash and 'the hackers' friendly teams for many years. Later he also played tennis, winning several handicap tournaments. He was involved in many aspects of the club's social activities, notably working on the club's centenary celebrations, and the introduction of the "Rock & Roll Circus" concerts. He was also involved with various bar committees and more latterly with the introduction of "Team Bar" and seeking sponsorship links with outside companies. He will be greatly missed by all.

**FIRST AID TRAINING:** Central Fast Response is a charity relying on the community to provide space to run their first aid courses. These focus on training as many people as possible in the use of defibrillators, assisting people in cardiac arrest, also simple life saving skills to aid recovery or even save a life. We have indicated that our club is willing to let them use the function room early in the New Year to run a course for up to 25 people at a time. All the facilitators are fully trained and insured in first aid and equipment – many are or have been volunteers with the ambulance service and work alongside them. There will be no charge for the classes and we would be donating the use of the function room. Watch this space for further details if you would like to participate.

**COURT REFURBISHMENT:** Members will be pleased to know that a letter of intent to enter into the contract to supply new surfaces for courts 3 and 4 has been posted and that the new carpets have been ordered for delivery in February with a proposed start date of 28 February. The application to retrofit the new lights has been submitted to Solihull MBC and has been validated by them. The determination deadline is 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022. To date there have been no objections to the plans from neighbours, the landlord or council departments.

**TENNIS BALLS:** It is with some regret that the Main Committee has now decided that tennis balls for general play will no longer be provided - with effect from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. I believe that KDRC has been the last club in the area to make this generous provision but, unfortunately, the actions of some members have made this too expensive. From January 1<sup>st</sup>, therefore, members will have to provide their own balls for general play, although balls will still be provided for social tennis (club afternoons) and social tennis matches. Members will be able to purchase balls at advantageous prices from the bar.

**SOCIAL TENNIS:** Roy Clarke has been arranging a number of social tournaments for the club, giving many midweek social tennis players the opportunity to experience the joys of playing people from other clubs both at home and away. At these tournaments members play with one another, when normally they would never even know one another, and some have now started to form other fours and socially interact readily. I am very grateful to Roy for contacting all new tennis members and bedding them into fours or coaching programmes or teams to suit their playing standard. The tournaments require organising teams, liaising with other tennis clubs and arranging food and prizes – a time-consuming process. Recent tournaments have been against Blossomfield (16<sup>th</sup> November), West Warwicks (18<sup>th</sup> November) and Solihull Arden (23<sup>rd</sup> November) with KDRC winning two out of three tournaments and coming a very close second in the other (full details have been sent to members already). The pictures below show some of the social tennis players, including Steve and Carole Shephard, who were the highest scorers in the defeat of West Warwicks.



**VISITORS:** There appears to be some confusion over the playing rights of social members. To recap, social members are non-playing members but, it has already been agreed that, if they do wish to play from time to time, they can play up to 6 times per year. However, as such, they need to be introduced as a visitor with a guest fee payable by the introducing member.

**TENNIS COURT LIGHTS:** We recently had a situation where a member bought lights for an evening booking only to find that someone in the four had already paid for the lights. We are looking to fix this going forward but until then we would encourage players to complete their transaction as soon as they get to the “buy lights” screen as it is possible that the lights are paid for twice.

**SQUASH:** Squash court timings have been aligned so that both courts start at 0730 in the morning. This is to allow court timings to dovetail better with the start of matches. This will

impact bookings commencing 6 December and has already started. I would also remind members that the squash and racketball evening is this Friday (December 3<sup>rd</sup>) from 1800 to 2000. It is open to all tennis members as well if you would like to try squash or racketball.

**SPONSORSHIP:** DM & Co, the estate agency in Dorridge, has now become the latest in the list of sponsors of the club. In addition to putting up a banner, they are proposing to make a little video on the club. They find that their videos on local businesses and the local area are getting good levels of engagement and will be looking to suggest for people moving into the area that joining the local tennis club is a great way for the whole family to meet new people, mentioning the Kids Tennis programme, the adult club afternoons and participation in competitive leagues.

**HOUSE MATTERS:** I have now been in touch with Solihull MBC's sustainable travel team supporting businesses in the borough. Their Business Support Officer has been to the club to have a chat about cycle facilities. We have been advised that there may be some funding available for secure and safer bike parking facilities at the club to encourage greater use of bikes by members.

**SOCIAL EVENTS:** With the President's Quiz Night now in the past, I would like to thank all the participants for helping to make it a great evening and I hope everyone enjoyed themselves. Well done to Gail Seymour and her team for winning the quiz by a very narrow margin from Scotty's Hotties, whose team t-shirts were very impressive!

**Saturday, December 18 – Christmas Party** (welcome drink, hot food and an amazing professional and unique entertainer, NuTone DJ, who will entertain us all for the entire evening). The event is now sold out, but please contact Della if you would like to go on the waiting list for any cancellations. Please keep an eye out for further updates in advance of events.

**FINALLY:** Christmas is approaching fast. That means that it is a good time to reflect on the past year – a year of highs and lows. For me, some of the highlights have been the return to a certain normality (but watch this space!), President's Day and Finals Day which were held in glorious weather. These highs have been tempered by the untimely loss of a number of our members. This is a friendly local club and the passing of some good friends has been tough for many people. As we enjoy the season of goodwill, spare a thought for absent friends. But let's also look forwards to a coming year of fun, friendship and sport.

I wish a Merry Christmas to all our members and a Happy New Year!

**Steve Williams**  
**December 2021**