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**AGM date 24th January 2022 8pm**

HVLTC

**CHAIRMAN’S Report 2021**

It has been a pleasure to serve as your club chairman for another year albeit it has been somewhat challenging for us all as we still battle through the pandemic. I do hope the club has been a place of refuge, relaxation and refuelling as we cope with the current challenges and has simply been a great place to be. Maintaining the strong ‘club feel’ will always be our priority and I’d like to thank you for your fantastic support in being a member and helping each other.

Particularly, I would like to thank all our volunteers who make an invaluable commitment to the running of the club, such as our team captains, club session organisers and our Members Tennis Committee. The club would simply not run without you all and on behalf of all the members we are very grateful for the time and energy you give to the club.

The past year has also been very challenging for our staff who work so hard to help Halton be the great place it is, and we thank them all, especially the younger ones starting out on their careers in the middle of a pandemic - your support and patience is very much appreciated.

As part of Halton Tennis Centre, we continue as HVLTC (Halton Village Lawn Tennis Club) to benefit from being part of an organisation in robust financial health and which has continued to make investments in both the facilities and services during 2021 despite a very much reduced income from all our activities such as membership subscriptions, coaching, the gym and catering. Having said that, caution is our watchword as the external economy and the Covid situation will continue to significantly impact us through 2022.

Many thanks to Pete & Olly Taylor for maintaining the club in such superb condition and fixing things when they go wrong - a regular inevitability with some 1000+ people accessing the facilities. Our ambition is to always enjoy the best facilities in Buckinghamshire and surrounding area, and continually benchmark us against the best in the UK.

**Club Tennis**

It has obviously been another strange year with respect to our tennis activities but nevertheless it has been great to see so many of you on court. Within the limitations imposed on us we will continue to reinvent and add new ideas to our weekly schedule under the guidance of Roy Knight in his role as Club Coach who I hope you’ll agree has done a fantastic job in leading our tennis activities.

Once again, your continued support and loyalty to the club during these difficult times is very much appreciated. There are I believe just some 300 indoor courts in the UK and very few clubs with more than 2/3 courts due to the cost of building and then running them. The Halton model of “sharing” facilities with the creation of a significant junior coaching programme is a key factor in enabling us to obtain grants and all to enjoy indoor tennis.

A full team tennis report is included at the end of this newsletter.

Club membership & Subscriptions

Our current membership is still slightly below pre covid level although activity levels on court remain strong with lots of tennis being played.

We are especially pleased with the success of the new GTAG (give tennis a go) initiative which has attracted over 30 new adults back to playing tennis

We currently have approx. 270 members

Our Juniors remain a busy cohort with the popular club sessions on Mondays and Saturdays – in total there are over 300 young people on the register.

As you will know, the cost of electricity and gas has increased considerably in the past year and for us this means an increase of some £15k per year, over 50% of which is associated with our indoor tennis courts. At the recent Members Tennis Committee, it was agreed that an increase in our membership subscriptions was appropriate to help offset this new cost.

From the 1st of February 2022 all subs will increase by £3pm (for new members joining this will start with immediate effect). Your renewal notice will contain the rates for annual payments; if you pay by SO, please diarise to increase your payment.

Clubhouse & Catering

We were delighted to welcome our new catering team, who despite the pandemic have still been able to deliver a superb service to the club whilst learning the ropes and demands of all the different groups of people using the clubhouse. We all know from the news that the UK hospitality industry has suffered terribly with many venues not surviving, staff shortages and pubs closing for good. We are very grateful to the team.

Finding staff has also been a major challenge for the catering sector. As such you will have seen some inexperienced youngsters now being employed. As such please be patient and supportive as everyone is trying their very best and for many it is their first job. Thank you.

Coaching/EBT team

After 20 years of service to the club, James Morgan has decided to take a career break. We would like to thank him for all his super work during this time and he will be very much missed. Steve James has moved back down to Dorset with his family and whilst he continues to work with us remotely and a visit every few weeks to help with our IT functions, we would like to thank him for all his care and attention in acting as live-in caretaker for the centre. This said, we are delighted to welcome Hutch and the new club cat Oreo into the flat!

On the EBT front we have welcomed Lee Nixon into the team this year and he is proving to be a super asset to us and many of you will have already been on court with him!

As always, we will continue to look at ways to add further value to our membership with new activities and coaches’ involvement. Please contact Roy if you have any ideas or wishes such as “pop up “style events.

Wingfield system – As you know we have equipped our number 1 clay court by the clubhouse with the Wingfield system - a state of the art 'SMART' court with innovative tracking technology.  This is another value add to being a member at Halton and entirely free for you to use. The camera-based system tracks all activities on the court and provides comprehensive analyses and video sequences in the associated app. It was great to welcome Richard Henman to the club on the 15th of December to be on hand to show members how to use the system and run some fun drills.

Coming soon, we are delighted through Everyball Tennis to launch a monthly themed clinic on Monday mornings between 9.30-11.30 am

**HVLTC FESTIVAL OF TENNIS**

Many congratulations to all who were able to enter and enjoy the summer tennis event and best wishes to those still to complete the events.

**HVLTC FESTIVAL OF TENNIS 2021**

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| **Event** | **Winner(s)** | **Runner(s)-Up** |
| Men’s Singles A | Joel Good | Roy Knight |
| Ladies Singles A | Sandra Butcher | Alison Leonard-Morgan |
| Mens Singles B | Josh Bright | JJ Clark |
| Men’s Vets Singles A | Tim Gill | Rob Pain |
| Ladies Vets Singles A | Kate Bradley | Suzie Mathew |
| Men’s Vets Singles B | Paul Hayes | Paul Lander |
| Men’s Super-Vets Singles | Dave Evans | John Rennison |
| Men’s Doubles | Calum Fairey/William Mottram | James Weller/Joel Good |
| Ladies Doubles | Dharshi Maheswaran/Alison Leonard-Morgan | Kate Bradley/Ellen Moret |
| Men’s Doubles B | Scott Allaway/Anna Popescu | Ethan Taank/Ashton Taank |
| Men’s Vets Doubles A | Alan Hounsell/Scott Allaway | Rob Pain/David Baker |
| Ladies Vets Doubles A | Sarah Bright/Jo Ayres | Sandra Butcher/Maria Wood |
| Ladies Vets Doubles B | Charlotte Wallwork/Sarah Painter | Ellen Moret/Isla Stewart |
| Men’s Super-Vets Doubles | John Farrell/Clive Brazier | Ralph Holliday/Dave Evans |
| Ladies Super Vets Doubles | Mary O’Sullivan/Mariko Francombe | Wendy Shute/Janis O’Connor |
| Mixed Doubles A | Mike James/Amelie Brooks | Roy Knight/Emma Hurst |
| Mixed Doubles B | Ewan Maclean/Jo Ayres | David Baker/Isla Stewart |
| Vets Mixed Doubles A | Iain Stacey/Maria Wood | Graeme Mackie/Ellen Moret |
| Vets Mixed Doubles B | John Steel/Sam Wilson | David Barnett/Rachel Barnett |
| Mixed Super Vets Doubles | Dave Evans/Alison Stevenson | Ralph Holliday/Pam Knight |

Box leagues

We are very pleased to have re-launched our adult singles box leagues this autumn and will be adding a doubles league in January. Look out for registration details from the office shortly.

Junior Honours

Our young players continue to excel as you can see on the clubhouse honours boards and on the national and international stage, congratulations on a super job to all our coaches in this success. Notable achievers this year have been Amelie Brooks (Top 10 U16 National ranking, G2 National Tour winner, ITF 18&U world ranking 1163) and Oliver Westbrook (G2 National Tour winner). Once again, we had multiple County Champions across the various age-groups.

Carbon neutral project

We are delighted with the progress made to reduce our carbon footprint as set out recently and will continue the journey to gradually improve where we can. We will regularly send out updates on this important area of the club’s future. In 2022 we hope to update our floodlights to LED lights on courts 4/5/6 to match the successful change on courts 1-3 and thus making all our 16 courts floodlights LED.

Disability facilities improvement/access to clubhouse

We have received a £5k grant towards the cost of improving our access and toilet facilities in the clubhouse. We plan to implement these changes in the 1st half of 2022.

Finally, on behalf of us all I would like to thank Gill Roe for all her hard work and dedication to the club - without her work and wise counsel we would not be where we are today.

Thank you for your continued support of your club and I wish you all the very best both on and off-court in 2022!

**Mike James**

**Chairman**

Appendix

**Team Tennis Report – by David Barnett (Joint Men’s Captain)**

I trust you will agree with me that it has been so good to be playing regular competitive tennis once again following the various breaks for the pandemic.

The Aylesbury and District League stopped the 2020/2021 winter season, with many matches left to play. They took the sensible decision of wiping out all last winter's results, keeping each team in the same division and rescheduling the fixtures to start again at the beginning of October 2021.

The Bucks Shield League took a slightly different view on matters. They too had to halt the season with several matches still left to play for many clubs. They have kept the divisions as they were from 2020/2021, but last winter's results still stand, with clubs just having to fulfil the remaining fixtures from last winter.

All this has meant even more work than usual for our superb Fixtures Secretary, Ellen Moret. In the winter season she has had to arrange fixtures for our 10 teams in the A&D Leagues, and 16 teams in the Bucks Shield Leagues, a total of 175 matches!

In the Summer 2021 season Halton had 13 A&D teams and 12 Bucks Shield teams, giving Ellen 134 matches to arrange for the club. This makes the total for the year of 309 matches. If you consider postponements due to inclement weather, that is one enormous headache! Ellen, we salute you, and we hope the club provides you with a free supply of Paracetamol. Other headache pills are available!

So how have our teams fared? Overall, in the summer season that ended in October, it has been a good season. In the A&D League our Men's 2nd team led by Rob Pain, won all 5 of their matches to take the division 3 title. Halton's Men's 1st team, led by Luke James, won 4 and drew 1 of their 6 matches to finish 2nd by one point, to Thame, in division 1. Our Ladies 1st team under the leadership of Anna Loder finished 3rd in division1, playing against some very tough opposition. Our Mixed 1 team also finished 3rd in their division 1, losing only 1 of their 7 matches. Another fine achievement. Katie Haines and Mike Patteson led Halton's Mixed 3 team to a creditable 3rd place in division 5, winning 3 and drawing 2 of their seven matches.

Halton's Ladies 2nd team, led by Mary O'Sullivan, the lady’s 3rd team captained by that well-loved duo, Jenny Knott and Kaye Lillycrop, all had solid seasons, as did Ellen Moret's Mixed 2 team, in division 3 and Diana Buston's Mixed 4 team, in division 7.

Halton's Mixed Vets teams found their respective 3 matches very tough. The 1st team led by Sam Wilson and John Steel, won one, whilst the Mixed Vets 2 team battled very hard and enjoyed their matches!

In the Intermediate and Senior knock out cup competitions Halton won the Senior Cup beating Chesham Bois and competed well in the Intermediate competition.

In the Summer Bucks Shield League our results overall have been solid but not spectacular. However, the exceptions to this are firstly the Halton Ladies 1st 3 pair team, led by Jo Ayres. They won all of their matches in the Premier Group 1 Division to be crowned champions! Our huge congratulations go to the entire squad. Finishing top of division 5 were the Mixed 3 team led by Karen Fisher and Peter Strong. They won all 6 of their hard-fought matches in what was a very difficult league. Many congratulations go to this squad as well.

As for our two other Ladies 3 pair teams, in division 1 and division 2, led by Ellen Moret and Finn Hutchinson respectively, it was a season of consolidation with some highly competitive matches played.

Halton's Ladies 2 pair teams under the leadership of Pam Knight in division 3, and Jenny Finnegan, in division 9 also performed really well to maintain their status in these divisions.

It was a similar story for three of our four men's teams, with Luke James and his superb crew in division 1, myself and my great team of “lads” (well Josh Bright is young!) in division 4 and Dave Evans and his team in division 6 all having mid table finishes. Our 4th team led by David Slade, performed heroically in division 9, and celebrated in true Halton style when they picked up their only point of the summer! Better luck next year!

Halton's Mixed 1 team in division 1, led by Dave Baker and Isla Stewart, and the mixed 2 team in division 2 both performed well to finish mid-table in their respective divisions.

The winter 2021/22 season is now well under way and all our 26 teams in both the A&D and Bucks Shield Leagues are out on court, on their allotted match days either at weekends or mid-week, battling away, enjoying their tennis (mostly) all striving to be as successful as they can for our club. This includes our two men's singles teams led by Scott Allaway and Tim Gill. To date, from last summer and this winter, more than 100 different players have represented Halton. Results for all teams so far are looking promising, but there is a long way to go, not to mention, snow, ice, wind, and rain. Well, it is winter after all!

In the National Premier winter league Roy Knight reports that Halton men won our division and qualified for national finals for the 4th year running. The team lost 1st round to host team St George’s Hill who had Davis Cup player Dom Inglot playing for them!

In the Summer League we came 2nd in the National Southwest division and lost to an extremely strong Newlands team 4-2 in the national play-offs. A strong effort to finish amongst the top 12 clubs in the country, with 9 of our juniors making their 1st team debuts in 2021.

Terry Oakes managed the Ladies NPL winter team that went to St Georges Hill, Weybridge to compete in the finals against the country's top 8 teams. Halton fielded a strong team. Soumeya Anane, Alicia Barnett, Lucy Brown, Laura Deigman, Olivia Nicholls and Slovakian Katarina Stresnakova who playing for us as a wild card.

For the second consecutive year they made it through to the finals to play old foes Sutton. At the halfway point in the final, it was all square before injury struck the Halton team when Olivia could not continue, so she and Alicia had to concede their match. So, it was all down to Lucy Brown and Laura Deigman. The match was decided by a ten-point tie break which Halton had to win to take the match into a final shoot out. No pressure! Unfortunately, they narrowly lost the thrilling tie breaker 13-11, thus Sutton retained their title.

HVLTC Women are national champions!

Huge congratulations to our Ladies who won the National Club League this year – the first time after many trips to the finals in Bournemouth that we have won the event!

They beat Lady Bay 6-0, Roehampton 5-1 and David Lloyd Sunderland by 4-1 in the finals. Many congratulations to Amelie Brooks, Lucy Brown, Danielle Daley, Emma Hurst, Eliz Maloney, Izzy Marshall and Anna Popescu who all played superbly. Also, thanks to Laura Deigman and Louise Holtum who played in most of the divisional matches but were not able to play at Bournemouth this year.

Roy Knight, Jemima King, Rob Pain and I would all like to thank all of our wonderful team captains for all their hard work throughout what has been another unusual year. Managing to get a team out week on week is never an easy task, yet you all succeed in doing this somehow, even if occasionally, it is at the last minute!

We would also like to thank Halton's fantastic team of coaches who continue to help improve our level of play. We try and follow your advice. Honestly!! Thank you all for your patience.

If this report has whetted your appetite to play a bit of team tennis for Halton, then

please speak to Jemima, Roy, Rob Pain or me. You will be welcomed warmly into an appropriate team for your level of tennis.