

Message from the Editor

Derek McShane

Welcome to the February issue of FLTC's half-yearly tennis bulletin. (Is it really half-yearly though, I hear you ask? The more vigilant of you will have already noticed that the last scintillating episode was in November, which is more like a third of a year, in which case I'm actually welcoming you to FLTC's third-yearly tennis bulletin, which has confusing connotations in that this could be misconstrued as the third annual bulletin in this fine publication's history, which it isn't).

But I digress. Things that have happened since we spoke last in chronological order: it snowed, Christmas, King Kenny returned, Murray choked (again), the grass courts are still there.

A Comment from the Chair

Jayne Mulliner

2011 is now upon us and it's time for us to all dust off our tennis shoes and rackets.

Some of you have braved the winter snow/frost and played as often as conditions would permit. When I say some, I mean "The Sharpe's and Dodd's" !!! really.

This is the season for change I feel. We have a very enthusiastic Committee, who are coming up with great new and fresh ideas, however with many of these involving an outlay of cash, it's really a case this year of getting some plans in motion as to how we can raise funds. Maybe we could introduce "Pay as you Play" for the above mentioned, or special "package rates" allowing for 50 serves and 100 hits for a fiver like the call and text mobile deals, or parking charges by the hour (valet parking extra) or "Bet in Play", guess the score etc etc – anything that's legal and remunerative will be considered! We also really do need to firm up our plans for new courts. The rejuvenation has given us some leeway but in the next few years they are obviously going to deteriorate and we need to be prepared. Times are difficult at the moment for everyone I know, but things do cost, so the times of a 50p tea with a free refill are long gone I'm afraid and whenever Afternoon Tea is served, it would be appreciated that we all support Gill and Margaret's efforts and pay the going rate. You'll still get the cheery smiles and conversation for free.

Gerry has great plans this year for the social calendar and everyone's support would be appreciated at these events. Please sign up when the notices appear but note that if costs are incurred and you don't turn up you will still be asked to pay up. I'm afraid we have been too lax in this area in the past – at last years BBQ one member signed up for eight tickets and arrived on his own. 8 steaks bought, one ticket paid for – you do the maths! We can no longer afford to be that generous.

On a lighter note there are many member's who feel they do not meet the standard's of one of our 6 League teams. For those such people we have a Friendly team who regularly play other clubs with a supper thrown in too. If this is more your thing then please contact Graeme Sharpe for further details. The nights are great fun and usually held on a Friday to allow for sufficient recovery time the next day - aching muscles of course – what did you think I meant?

For those who maybe were overlooked or think League tennis is for them, then please contact Alan McGibbon who is always happy to welcome new faces and will endeavour to fit you in for one of his many practices (please note he won't be charging for these despite my best endeavours).

Although it is the Committee's decision on how the club runs and works, do remember this is **your** club, and we always welcome any ideas or thoughts you may have with regard to the smooth running of the club, so do speak to one of us if you feel the need.

Remember we are on the Web, and all events, news etc is there for you to enjoy. Again if there is anything you would like to be put on the website then contact Anna Buckley regarding this.

During March/ April it is my wish to get a couple of working parties up and running. One inside and one outside.

There are plenty of jobs that need doing around the grounds of the Club and our kitchen really needs a good clean/ scrub etc, so if you would like to volunteer for one or both of these then please contact me and I will add your name to the list. Afternoon Tea will be provided and hopefully Gerry will have the bar open. I promise to try and pick a day when the sun shines!!!

Think that is about it from me for now. All that is left for me to say is enjoy the season ahead. Good luck to all the teams and pray for a decent Summer!!



Hello everyone!!

Firstly I would like to thank Katy for her great captainship of the club over the previous two years. It is a great honour for me to be captain of the club this year and I am looking forward to a successful season both on and off the courts.

Behind the scenes, the committee continue to work tirelessly to ensure that our club continue to remain well run, viable and financially sound and I'm sure you'll also join me in thanking them for their endeavours.

Already I'm looking forward to the usual annual curtain raiser of Captain's invitation day on 10 April and let's hope it is as successful as last year's! It would be great to see many of the familiar war-torn faces down there after a cold winter of hibernation and hopefully we can welcome a bit of fresh blood to the club. There will be a three-line whip to round up troops for this event, so no excuses when some of you team players and club veterans get "the call". Besides, it will be my penultimate weekend as a free man (see FLTC Hello section below), so please join me for a knock and a pint as I while away my carefree days.

Please can I encourage everyone to come along to Gerry's socials throughout the year. They are great value for money and are always great fun. What better way to help support your club!?

Quiz question!! - Apart from a player being defaulted by the umpire, what is the minimum number of times you need to hit a ball to win a set of tennis? First person to tell me the right answer in person down at the club gets a pint.

Coach's Chronicle

Alan McGibbon

MAKE A NOTE IN YOUR DIARY!!

We **ARE** going to have a dry hot Summer (ever the optimist!!) and therefore put the following selection of Season 'highlights' (where appropriate!) in your diaries NOW so you don't miss out

Sunday April 17: Timed' doubles event...involves me running around looking important armed with a clipboard and whistle!...could be Mens and Ladies doubles or Mixed...I haven't decided yet!

Sunday May 8: LADIES ONLY Fun Tournament....daft rules and play with loads of different ladies..then tea and cake!

Sunday May 22: Men Singles Tie Break Tournament...a round robin event open to all standards...take on the Club singles 'stars' in 'short and sharp' tie break shoot out matches.

Sunday June 12: MIXED DOUBLES Fun Tournament...as May 8 above but with men as well!

Saturday June 18: Annual 'Silver Goblets' Mens Doubles Tournament...always highly competitive and followed in the evening by the annual BBQ where you can eat and drink to your hearts content and tell stories of what might have been..."if only we had....." (insert excuse as appropriate!)

All the 'sign up' entry forms will be on the Notice Boards in due course together with details of start times etc so do PLEASE keep a look out!

MATCH PRACTICES are likely to start w/c Monday 28 March but may be even earlier depending on when the start of League Season is finally set by the League . As Easter Monday this year falls on the 'usual' start date (Mon April 25) FIVE 'alternatives' are being proposed at the Southport AGM in a few weeks some of which are daft but who knows...! As ever I will be ringing around in due course with 'invites' but if you don't get a call and you want to participate PLEASE RING ME and I will fit you into an appropriate practice at some stage.

Now where did I put my sun cream?



5 minute interview

John Bishop, suave old(-ish) guy and king of the accurate net measurement (not the scouse comedian), is this issue's man in the spotlight.

Q. How long have you been a member of FLTC?

JB. I joined in the 50's, when the subscription fee was 5 guineas and new members were required to be 'played in' to ensure they were up to scratch. (If not they were offered sessions with the coach).

Q. Name the top 5 men and women players since you've been a member.

JB. Alan Glover, Dave Blundell, Alan McGibbon, The Birkett Brothers, Robbie McDonald, Jayne Mulliner and Gill McGibbon (I was the token FLTC fan at the National Silk Cut Doubles Final at Queens Club in 1996, when Jayne and Gill, ably assisted by the Birkett boys, lifted the trophy!)

Q. Explain why every woman at the club finds you 'adorable'.

JB. Not sure about that, they might be confusing me with Ann Bishop (no relation), but maybe I'm considered the best net measurer, sand spreader and ball washer.

Q. In the film of your life, who would play you?

JB. As most of the actors who look like me are dead, I'll go for a follicly challenged tennis player, such as Andre Agassi, although he would have to improve his forehand!

Q. If you could take one item to a desert island, what would it be?

JB. Maria Sharapova would be my 1st choice, but as she's slightly taller than me (and Roger Federer), I'll go for the Sugarbabes.

Upcoming Social— Not to be missed!!

Gerry Niepel

Coming soon

New members more than welcome

For more details, please see notices in the club house or contact Gerry Niepel, Beccy Beardsell or Sue Collinson for tickets.

Friday 25th March

Fun night & supper
(similar to picture on right,
but with beer).



Forthcoming:
Friday 29th April

Celebrate the Royal Wedding
'Gerry Style'.

See notice board for details.

FLTC Hello!

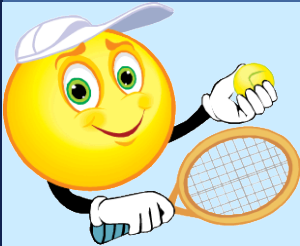
Julian and Helen Marsh nee Cooper tied the knot last year and are currently pursuing a life of wedded bliss (yeah right). Helen has stated that 'Julian completes me' and Julian is looking forward to clean socks and well ironed shirts. (Andy Gray eat your heart out).

Katy Gie was spotted at a recent Thursday night event looking radiant ahead of her imminent arrival. Good luck Katy, although your problems are just beginning. Believe me. Parenting tip: make sure you include a request for a miniature Liverpool strip in the baby shower to avoid a life of Evertonian angst in the future.

After a long and often brilliant innings, **Clive Lewis** is finally making an honest woman of his lovely Rebecca in April (on the same day as Prince William spookily). The details of the wedding itself remain a closely guarded secret as Clive is currently in negotiations with the Formby Times regarding a sole rights access deal to the church and reception.

Juniors

Anna-Louise Hodkinson



Well as we all know time flies when you're enjoying yourself- but it's soon going to start flying even faster once the summer tennis season gets underway! It may still seem a long way off but before we know it we'll be starting Junior Clubnights once again- Saturday 16th April to be precise! They will continue each Saturday finishing on 9th July (junior finals day).

As is always the tradition we will kick off the first clubnight at 5.30pm with the Junior AGM followed by junior clubnight on the courts. An AGM may seem a frightfully grown up and boring thing to attend but it is held for young chaps and chapesses in the junior section, so that you have an opportunity to voice your opinions and ideas for the coming season. We will also announce our new Junior captains

and vice captains.

Clubnights will run each Saturday from 5.30 to 8pm (weather permitting and with one or two exceptions due to socials). They are open to all our junior members and also members in school Year 5 that have opted to upgrade to junior membership rather than under 10 membership for the coming season. During clubnight, juniors get priority on all courts. There are activities to suit all standards and tastes, you can simply have a friendly knock with some buddies or involve yourself in some of the supervised fun activities and mini tournaments. There's plenty to do including table tennis and of course hanging out at Anna Patterson's infamous tuck shop!

The clubnights are discretely supervised by parent helpers, and we are always looking for volunteers! Parents please contact me if you are able to put your name forward for helping supervise on one or two clubnights. I will put up a form in the clubhouse with dates so that parents can put their name down to help when they find themselves at a loose end with nothing to do on a Saturday evening!

Well that all for the time being folks – but put it in your diaries- 16th APRIL - FIRST JUNIOR CLUBNIGHT!

In's and Out's

In's	Out's
Andy Carroll	Fernando Torres
John Bishop (of FLTC)	John Bishop (ubiquitous Scouse comedian)
Friday night at The Gallery	Sunday night at The Gallery
Orange shoe tags (juniors and intermediaries only)	Sickly lime green shoe tags
New lock on the gate to the cricket club	Electric fencing incorporating 24 hour manned sentry service, as proposed by certain committee members
Snow tennis (on all weather courts – bounce is similar to grass courts in mid-summer)	Grass courts
Third-yearly bulletins	Playing singles with a mate on club night. Please attempt to mix in, especially when courts are crowded.

Notices

Club Accounts

A copy is now available in the clubhouse for anyone interested (get a life).

Please ask Debbie Johnston (nicely) for more details.

Change of Address

If you have changed your address, phone number, or any other details then please let Gerry Niepel know so that we can update the club records .

Reminder

Associate Members are not allowed to use the Club playing facilities unless signed in by a Member and a Visitor's Fee will be payable. If you wish to use the playing facilities regularly you must be a Full Member.

FLTC—the 1st hundred years

Peter Collinson has compiled a photographic history album of FLTC, which Peter makes available at most club functions and is available for viewing on request.