**West Heaton Tennis Section – Annual General Meeting 2023**

**Thursday 16th November 8.00pm**

1. Welcome and receipt of apologies
2. Committee Report
3. Nominations for Tennis Committee & Rep on General Committee
4. AOB

**WEST HEATON BOWLING TENNIS AND SQUASH CLUB REPORT FOR TENNIS SECTION AGM 2022**

**Chairs Comments**

We have had an incredibly successful season again this year – special mention goes to our Men’s 1st year who this year were promoted to the Premiership, and to our Women’s 4th team who secured promotion in their first ever season (although the final match was very dramatic coming down to the last set and not good for my stress levels!). We have also been able to establish a 5th Winter League team and set up a day time ‘Vets’ section which we hope will grow over the coming years.

As we have celebrated our 150th year it has been heartening to see many new members of all ages get involved in the club and attend many of our social events including the summer ball and Westfest. Many of our tennis players are also venturing over the other side of the club and honing their bowling skills. The singles box league continues to be popular and give those who prefer singles an organised ‘socially competitive’ way to play and make connections. And the winter doubles tournament is now cemented in our tennis calendar. And our day tournaments – whether formal or social – continue to be fully booked.

Our annual tennis tournament is always a highlight – see further down this report for more detail on this – but it’s great to see how many spectators come along to watch the tennis and now take advantage of our new bench cushions and blankets for those chilly September evenings.

You will all be aware that we ran a club survey earlier in the year and there are now small working groups set up to look at the things you said were a priority:

* The outside seating areas
* The bar, social events and private functions
* A potential Padel court
* Governance

We are in a healthy position of a club which means we can look at how we invest the funds we have available to us whilst also ensuring that the general maintenance upkeep of the club comes first – the pavilion roof continues to need repairing and may need a full replacement in the next year. But with now over 700 members, of which around 50% are adult rackets members, we need to ensure we respond to member feedback and continue to closely monitor membership numbers. An additional membership committee will reconvene this autumn with representatives from tennis, bowling, squash and our coaches. This will be chaired by Andy Taylor, membership secretary and we’d welcome any further feedback on this to the West Heaton email.

Some of you may be aware that we recycle the tennis balls – Helen Barker kindly arranges this during the year. 6 massive bags, 1250 balls saved from landfill and £187 funds to the club.

Of course all of this cannot happen without the time and dedication of a small number of volunteers who sit on your tennis committee. My personal thanks go to each of them for their commitment to making our club the best in the North West!.

The following report details out some of the highlights of our year and I hope you enjoy reading it and that I see lots of you at our AGM meeting. In the meantime if you have any queries about tennis at West Heaton please reach out to the tennis committee – we can be emailed via westheatontennis@outlook.com.

Best wishes to you all

Julie Woosey – Chair of Tennis Committee

**Tennis Commitee**

Nominations for Tennis Committee members 2022/23:

Sofia Milone (also Tennis Rep on General Committee)

Pete Goulding – House and Grounds

Richard Meadowcroft – General Rep

Mike Gough – General Rep

Helen Barker – General Rep

Gurj Singh-Raud – General Rep

Adam Wolstanholme – General Rep

Rachel Sharman – General Repo

Andy Perry – Coaches Rep

Hilary Minnock - Secretary

Julie Woosey - Chair

We also have a number of members who support our junior teams.

**Annual Tournament – Alan Mansfield/Martin Sharman**

Our award-winning tournament ran again during early September. There were the usual fun and games over unavailability’s, scheduling, handicaps and the glorious weather, but nonetheless Finals Weekend was reached without too much lost sleep for the organisers and saw the results below. But some interesting info for you all

Number of players : 81 (50M, 31W) (5% increase on 2022)

Number of new members entered : 13

Number of matches : 116 (10% increase on 2022)

Longest match : Mixed dbls semi, 44 games incl 14-12 final set Hannah & Pete beat Ross & Lee

Number of matches delayed by bad weather : 0 again 😊

Ladies singles final 1st set – lasted 75 mins and had 17 deuces (more than total number of deuces in all the other sets in both singles finals added together)

The Finals featured 3 non-team players (Pete, Joe & Harry), reflecting tweaking of handicap system plus improved standard of “social” players

**Annual tournament awards**:

**Mixed Doubles**:

Winners – Adam Wolstanholme and Marianne

Runners up – Pete Barnard and Hannah Maclean

**Women’s Doubles:**

Winners – Sofia Milone and Lesley Gulliver

Runners up – Jane Philpott and Catherine Norman

**Mens Doubles:**

Winners – Andy Armitage and Harry Woosey

Runners up – Gurj Raud Singh and Joe

**Mens Singles**:

Winner – George Watts

Runner up – Cameron Paris

**Womens Singles:**

Winner – Sofia Milone

Runner up – Hannah Maclean

**Most sets awards:**

Pam Hickman award – Jane Philpott

Peter Jackson award – Chris Philpott

**One Day Tournaments**

All our tournaments this year have been really competitive, seeing many new members getting involved and doing well. Our social tournaments have been run using an advanced handicap system meaning players have always had equal pairings and met oppositions of a similar level. Feedback on this system has been really positive.

**Open Tournaments**

Mens Open Doubles: Winners – Gurj Singh Raud and Adam Wolstanholme, Runners Up – Will Banks and Steve Pownall

Womens Open Doubles: Winners – Hilary Minnock and Sophie Cochlin, Runners Up – Marina Jones and Becki Morris

Mixed Open Doubles: Winners – Hannah McLean and Will Armitage, Runners Up- Ilaria Silvestre and Gurj Singh Raud

Invitation Mixed: Winners – Linzi Knowles and Will Banks, Runners Up – Sophie Cochlin and Will Armitage

 **Social Tournaments**

Opening Day: Winners – Helen Barker and George Riley

President’s Day: Winners – Marianne Gibson and Dan Cochlin

Generation Tournament: Graeme Dagg and Adan Ali

Legends Tournament: Winners – Malcolm Oswald and Dave Mullarkey

Autumn Leaves: Winners – Julie Wakley and Phil Fleming

Winter Mixed Doubles Tournament: Hilary Minnock and Steve Woosey

**Team Tennis**

Winter League

Our team results were as follows:

1st Team - established themselves in Div 1

2nd Team – promoted to Div 5

3rd Team – promoted to Div 9

4th Team – promoted Div 11

Congratulations to all teams! And we have high hopes for more promotions this year.

Summer League

Ladies 1st Team – finished 8th in their first year in Div 1

Ladies 2nd Team – finished 7th in their first year in Div 2

Ladies 3rd Team – finished 6th in their first year in Div 6

Ladiess 4th Team – finished 2nd and were promoted to Div 8

Mens 1st Team – finished 1st and were promoted to the Premiership

Mens 2nd Team – finished 5th in Div 2

Mens 3rd Team – finished 1st in Div 4 and promoted to Div 3

Mens 4th Team – finished 2nd in Div 7 and promoted to Div 6

Mens 5th Team – finished 4th in Div 8

What another amazingly successful year for all our teams!

As always, thanks to all Captains for their hard work this year, and particular thanks to Martin Sharman and Nicola Humphries in their role as match secretary.

**Social Tennis**

Social Tennis continues to be a huge part of the West Heaton community – we have 3 sessions running; Wednesday, Sunday social, and Sunday advanced social. This provides a great environment for our newer players to start to join in and for everyone else to keep their skills in top condition! It’s a chance for players of all standards to come along and know they will have people to play for a couple of hours with. The Social What’s App group continues to grow and provides a great mechanism for people looking for players to join them at a particular time.

**Junior Tennis**

West Heaton has seen an influx of players in the adult teams over the past few years, increasing the success of the club and this has also been the case with the juniors. With teams being introduced as young as under 8, all the way up to U16s for boys and girls, it has been a vibrant time for the junior teams. Last year the teams entered the Cheshire League, and for the first time the Lancashire League. Thanks to the dedication of the coaches, committee members, parents and volunteers (made up of parents), there have been more matches played by the juniors and the momentum is moving in the right direction.

There have been a mixture of highs and lows but thankfully more highs. The kids have had some challenges as part of the journey but for the most part there have been smiles and improvements throughout. Hence the junior teams are flourishing and moving in the right direction.

Furthermore, with the reintroduction of the junior social night run by Andy, it has become increasingly popular and allowed the juniors to hone the skills they picked up during the coaching sessions set up by Sue, Richard, Johnny, and Andy.

Also the reintroduction of the West Heaton Junior tournament for the Under 14s and Under 12s has proved popular, and the turnout has been great to see. The Generation Tournament also had a fantastic turnout with almost 30 parents and kids entering which was a fantastic turnout with laughs a friendly competitive spirit. The standard has been high in all tournaments, and we look forward to it continuing improving over the upcoming seasons.

**Coaching –**

2023 was once again a busy year for the coaching team. We started back in January with some Ladies 4th Team practice sessions (one of them in the snow!) With many of the team having come through our Rusty Rackets or Tennis Xpress courses, it was great to see this new team, under the watchful eye of their captain (Zoe), blossom as the season progressed, and congratulations to them on their promotion in their maiden year!

We also made changes to our long established Rusty Rackets intermediate session. With many of those attending having been part of our weekly class for many months and even years, we had been slowly pushing them to do more social sessions and tournaments, and they had been playing in 4’s for a while. So we decided to use that time to set up a new Tennis Xpress course for beginners (the first one we had done in 2 years). Getting a new group together can be risky, but from week 1 the players not only enjoyed the classes but also supported each other and at the end of the course the majority of them joined and have been with us ever since and have attended social events as well as using off peak times to come down and practice and enjoy their tennis.

**Junior coaching**

Our Junior coaching programme continues to be busy, and is (in the main) delivered now by Richard and myself (with Jonny helping on Wednesday’s). Whilst we have managed to make it work this year, moving forwards we need to find ideally an additional coach to help share the load and provide cover for when we aren’t available, so this is something we will be working with the Tennis committee on.

During 2023, I also ran for the first time some Girl only groups as part of an LTA initiative I had been selected to deliver called ‘Prime Video LTA Youth Girls’. This initiative was set up via Prime Video as part of their sponsorship of the US Open championships that Emma Raducanu won in 2021 and is designed to appeal to girls who want to take up tennis but want to do so within an all girl group. It has been great to see how the girls who attended have enjoyed working together, and how they have all grown in confidence on court with many now continuing to play in mixed groups following their initial course and follow on groups. We will be looking to do some more in 2024!

We also saw a changing of the guard in terms of the Tennis Leaders we use, with many of our older leaders going off to University. Having trained a bunch of new Tennis leaders at the start of 2023, we have (since the end of the summer) started to use these new leaders to assist on our busy groups, and we wish them well on their journey. From a personal perspective, the way we see them grow as people on court, gaining confidence and seeing how to organise groups, problem solve and work as part of a team is hugely rewarding and it is always interesting to see where their lives take them as they grow older.

Our Camps continue to run well, despite the competition around (lots of schools now run camps internally), and this is due in large to the reputation we have built up over the years.

We also ran some Junior Teams, and again a big thanks to the parents who stepped forward to assist and run the different categories. A big thank you to Shazhad, Natasha (x 2), Hannah, Zoe, Sarah, Nancy and Hilary for organising the teams this year. For the first time ever we have also entered some Junior Teams into the Winter league playing some of the more local clubs, so good luck to the Junior players as they embark on their first ever winter league matches!

As for me, in the Summer i left my only other position as Head Coach at Priory (Stalybridge) to focus 100% on West Heaton. Having lost Sue just over a year ago, juggling the 2 positions was becoming more problematic, and there is still much that i want to achieve at West Heaton over the next few years. Continuing to make the Juniors and Adult players better, providing opportunities to bring in new faces that make the club such a great place to be around, and during 2024 providing some Cardio Tennis classes and some Friday social tournaments that are food based afterwards are all part of those plans. Having seen the impact the September Junior Club nights had around the club, and the wish (from all) that those restart after Easter next year (with the bonus of the bar opening earlier) only adds to my excitement of what is to come.

Finally, i would like to thank my coaching team. You are as they say only as good as the team around you, and therefore my thanks go to Richard and Johnny for their continued support, as well as the Leaders and Level 1’s who assist our programme, and the Tennis Committee and tennis members at West Heaton who have always supported our vision and continue to make it a fantastic place to work.

Andy Perry

**House and Grounds – Pete Goulding**

Pete Goulding (ably helped by a small group of volunteers) keeps our courts and the surroundings grounds in amazing condition so that we can all enjoy them. He ensures that our nets are repaired, courts are sanded, light bulbs replacement and many more things. Pete has decided to step down from this role from next spring – and therefore, we would like to take this time to thank him for his many years of supporting the tennis section and ensuring our facilities are so fantastic.

There are several drag nets on the courts and we need all members, especially during the Autumn months, to make use of these to clear the leaves – they do effect the condition of the courts if they get trodden in.