



The Veterans Squash Rackets Club of Great Britain

MINI NEWSLETTER – NOVEMBER 2020

NEW CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Welcome to our latest Newsletter which is longer than usual and has articles from different members. This has taken some of the load off our hard worked secretary Nigel, although he has still put it all together!

A new Chair usually starts his term of office highlighting all the thrilling victories of members in tournaments across the globe, well contested friendlies against clubs from all over the country and the annual golf and doubles events. This year, however, we are all being careful to stay safe, with some venturing onto court whilst others find alternative activities to occupy their time and more of that later.

It is clear the competitive aspect of squash will take a back seat until the virus is under control and clubs feel confident of inviting visitors from other clubs into their environs. I hope our Newsletters will keep members posted on the activities of fellow members.

We will introduce some new articles in future issues. In this edition you will read the first of Aubrey Waddy's interviews with

club members in which he weaves interesting questions into a snapshot of their careers. Our President, Philip Ayton, is Aubrey's first interviewee and it is a fascinating read.



Ian Graham

Another article notes our colleagues' different activities during lockdown. Please can I have further contributions from you to ipg49@btinternet.com. Serious, amusing and strange activities are all welcome.

Nigel Belle has written an interesting feature on our O80 World Champion, Lance Kinder, after his appearance on Breakfast TV and yes he really was doing court shuttles if you watch the clip on YouTube.

I am indebted to Andy Murray at IPro Sports for offering a 15% discount across the entire range of the web site and just in time for Christmas shopping. Please look at this generous offer and note his lockdown training!

Finally, I am sure all members will offer Mark Cowley their best wishes as he continues to recover from Covid 19. Mark will document his experiences of the virus in a future issue.

I hope you all continue to find your best way forward in these eventful times.

With all good wishes.

Ian Graham

15% OFF ALL KIT

Everyone needs a little bit of good news in these dark days, so we've teamed up with our official clothing provider, IPROSPORTS, to offer a 15% discount on all GB Vets kit until 16th December 2020. If you need to refresh your own kit or purchase a few early Christmas gifts, head over to:

www.iprosports.co.uk/club-zone/the-veterans-squash-rackets-club/

Browse the range and when ready to buy, simply add the code **gbvets15** at checkout and your discount will be automatically applied. *Happy shopping!*

NEW MEMBERS

We warmly welcome the following new members who have joined since our last Newsletter:

Jo Robinson
Ebbisham

Jonathan Bomford
Evesham

WEBSITE DETAILS

Don't forget ALL members details and Club information can be found on our website:

www.gbvs.co.uk

Log in:
GBVETSSQUASH

Password: **RACKET7288**

**STAY FIT,
SAFE,
HEALTHY
AND
HAPPY!**

NEW HANDBOOK

Changed any of your details recently?

If you have please advise the Hon.Sec. NOW to ensure you are included in the new Handbook to be produced early 2021.



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PHILIP AYTON - One Player, Five Questions Interviewed by Aubrey Waddy

Sometimes watching a new player, you hesitate. First impression: wow, that man/woman looks good. But, too much style, not enough substance? A hint slow? Temperament a bit dodgy? With Philip Ayton none of these applied. There's never been a doubt that with Phil, you're watching one of the Rolls Royces of squash. It's probably been that way since he started playing as a teenager in the 1960s at Hurstpierpoint College.

At the other end of his career, Philip has for some years been President of GB Vets. Ian Graham has just been voted Chairman. A great attraction of being a member of GB Vets, thanks to Nigel Belle, is the Club's Newsletter. Ian has suggested a regular addition to the publication, an informal interview with one of our notable members, based on five questions loosely connected to squash. The questions will not

necessarily remain the same each time. Not all of us could give a convincing response to 'Your Most Disappointing International Result', or 'How Did You Blend Gym Work Into Your



Phil Ayton

Training Routines'. However, there shouldn't be any squash inquiries off limits for the first subject, Philip Ayton, but he is spared the gym question.

After Hurstpierpoint, Philip went up to Cambridge. He made a good choice of college, Queens', since there was another scrupulously academic undergraduate there at the time, Tom Hendry, who has just retired as Chairman of our Club. Tom was the university's number one, and quickly brought Phil into the blues team. After Cambridge Phil put his numerical literacy, developed in a Mechanical Sciences degree, to work in his career as an analyst in the City of London. With the sympathetic attitude of his firm's tennis-playing senior partner, this allowed him to play international squash in three separate decades, from 1969 to 1980, "right through the peak of the amateur era".

1. *What was your hardest match, win or lose?*

Philip is unsure here. He remembers a brutal encounter with an Aussie, "a bruising sort of player" in a World Amateur Team Championship in the early 1970s. The web site Squash Info gives a couple of possibilities, a loss to Ken Hiscoe in 1971 in New Zealand, 9-1, 9-5, 3-9, 2-9, 3-9, and a win against Dave Wright in Johannesburg a couple of years later, 9-6, 9-6, 9-7. (Just look at that scoring, hand in hand out! Results from international squash back then even throw up matches with games ending, abruptly and amateurishly, at 9-8.) Another of the Aussies of the time was Mike Donnelly, "not unlike Ken Hiscoe... sort of smashed for the nick. If he got it, it was a nick. If he missed it, it was a let." This probably, "set the scope for the changes (at the time) in rules on penalty points and lets." Philip is philosophical now, and Mike Donnelly is probably forgiven. "They were the conditions of the time."

In the end, in recalling maximum pain, Philip, opts for a five game loss in the British Amateur Championships in the mid seventies to Mohibullah Khan, whose floated, torturous lobs and drops could never be described as brutal. In the end they were probably worse. He remembers, "playing out of my skin," to lead 2-1, being absolutely knackered at the end of the fourth game and succumbing in the fifth. This is the Mohibullah who lost the 1976 Open final, a year or so later, and also in five games, to Geoff Hunt. That match lasted 130 minutes.

It was, "a tough school at that time," Philip says. "I was an amateur, and a fairly strict amateur. A lot of these guys, certainly the Pakistanis, were full time players... at the end of a match, it showed."

Squash Info's info from back then is patchy, but it does give a notable result in a match for which Philip was actually rested, a 3-0 win for Great Britain over Kuwait in the 1976 World Amateur Team Championships at Edgbaston Priory:

Stuart Courtney beat Abdulkareem Atiya	9-0, 9-0, 9-0
Johnny Leslie beat Saber Suweidan	9-0, 9-0, 9-0
Ian Robinson beat Nasser Abdulla	9-0, 9-0, 9-0

I just wonder if this is what inspired Saddam Hussein to invade Kuwait twenty years later.

2. *Who was your best opponent?*

Philip's answer to this is unequivocal, "Geoff Hunt." He played Hunt in a quarter final in the British Open in 1974 or 1975, "when he was pretty much all-conquering. It was a funny match. I played really well. We were set all and I

think I was 4-1 up. He suddenly went into another gear. My initial reaction when he did it was, he's panicked. Actually, I didn't get another point! We were having a good match. In some respects I was matching him, and then suddenly he's gone." Discouraging? "Well it was a bit!"

3. *What would have been an alternative to squash for you?*

Philip was good enough at tennis to get a blue at Cambridge, playing doubles, more demanding at the net of hand eye coordination than the bludgeoning physicality needed from the baseline. He was in the cricket first eleven at school, "but not a star." In recent years he has spent a lot of time crewing Wayfarer dinghies, which his home in Brighton makes an obvious choice.

4. *When did you focus on squash, and who inspired you?*

Philip doesn't have a Willstrop-like mentor in his early squash background. He remembers playing a lot against the Hurstpierpoint coach, also the cricket coach, Ron Reynolds (hats off to Ron Reynolds!). "Squash was a minor sport at school, with very few matches, but I was no good at Rugby so was allowed alternatives. I remember coming out of that quite good..."

There weren't many tournaments back then for juniors. "I entered the Drysdale, in my first year at Queens' in 1965 but lost to Chris Orris or Stuart Courtney in the semis. It was during my time at Cambridge, when there was a massive fixture list versus all the top clubs, that I saw squash as a way of life, if not a profession."

The fifth question is chosen by the interviewee. Philip asks:

5. *How have I been in the last six months?*

"I haven't missed it (squash) that much. I'm happy playing a lot of golf, which I can do. That has given me the social and athletic gatherings that I used to really enjoy at squash."

Ominously for those of us in Phil's Masters age group, when lockdown finishes, "I will try to get back." More ominously still, a couple of months ago he had a second cataract operation. One of the characteristics you would most hope was missing from Philip on the court, as an opponent, would be 20/20 vision!

Another characteristic that was abundantly present while we were chatting, and which is always a feature of Phil Ayton on court, is his good nature. A Rolls Royce doesn't need to behave like a stock car to be the best.



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LANCE KINDER – ON BREAKFAST TV HOW FATE PLAYS A PART IN ONE’S LIFE

Mike Bushell, BBC1’s Sports Reporter, recently moved house to reside in Overton. The village is near to the area where Richard Adams, the author, wrote his book Watership Down. This beautiful area of Hampshire, has produced a number of artists, actors and is the home to the famous gin factory, Bombay Sapphire. Overton has been Jacqui’s and my home for the past 38 years. The village has many amenities and is world renowned for producing the paper for Worldwide bank notes. The barber’s shop is a great meeting place and it was there where I first met Mike. One day Mike paid a visit to the Barber’s shop and during the cut, the barber, Paul, mentioned that one of his customers was a World Over 80 Squash Champion – a great squash player.

The following day, I had a ‘phone call from Mike, requesting we meet. A day later Mike, together with a photographer, arrived at the house and interviewed me. We then went to the squash club, Beechdown, where I am a member. This took a full 5 hours. How time flies.



Lance Kinder

Once Mike was on court, I could sense that we had an audience. I needed to get a pen to sign their books!! !!!! However, I believe it was Mike they were more interested in. They have hundreds of my signatures, signing in, after belonging to the club for over 40 years. Two days later, On BBC’s Breakfast programme, I was amazed to see the outcome of our meeting. There, in colour, in digitalised format was, Lance Kinder and Mike Bushell playing squash. How wonderful!!

The BBC Breakfast show clip was aired on September 5th and can be viewed on UTube – just click ‘Lance Kinder’. He was introduced as ‘being the oldest competitive player on the planet’.

GB VETS GOLF DAY REPORT

On a glorious late Summer day early September, 20 GB Vets members assembled at Surbiton Golf Club for our now annual Golf Day. This is the 5th outing and it was good to see our numbers increasing. In fact we had a reserve list, as due to Surbiton’s Covid protocols, we were only allowed 20 players. The course was in excellent condition, with fast and true greens. A little hard on the fairways after the dry summer and lack of rain allowing the ball to travel far. Often into the rough! The best score of the day came from Allen Barwise with a strong 40 points. He was also in



Ray Illingworth, Paul Roberts, Peter Child, David Johnson

the winning team with Nick Sheppard, Peter Young and Richard Mosley. We had 2 ladies play and the better score came from Sue Wastie.

After the golf we were allowed into the clubhouse in our socially distanced groups for a meal and drinks, followed by a non presentation of the prizes. Everyone was a winner in one form or another. The longest drive was awarded to Polly Woodward for the greatest distance travelled. Hopefully next year restrictions will be lifted and we can have as many playing that wish to enter. I shall be booking a similar date in September and will advise this when it's confirmed. **Geoff Howes** Allen Barwise thanked Geoff for organising a brilliant day.



John Galt, Larry Grover, Garry Williams, Phil Ayton



Polly Woodward, Graham Nichols, John Wild, Dillwyn Rosser



Allen Barwise, Richard Mosley, Peter Young, Nick Sheppard



Sue Wastie, Nigel Belle, Steve Jackson, Geoff Howes



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MEMBERS LOCKDOWN ACTIVITIES

Barry Featherstone: Barry has spent all his time (when not doing crosswords) in his house and garden which may now be renamed Featherstone's Palace and Gardens.

Paul Reader: Paul has taken up Badminton again and looks after his young granddaughter.

Philip Ayton: Philip spent a lot of time dog walking at the start but has been delighted to get on the golf course more recently.

Peter Smith: Peter has done a lot of gardening. He has a bike affixed to a turbo charger for his aerobic exercise.

Aubrey Waddy: Aubrey has been kept busy writing his children's

books and interviewing members for the newsletters.

Andy Murray: Andy started lockdown walking up his stairs and now does 45 mins with a 20kg pack on his back. He says squash games with his undergraduate son have become more competitive.

Nigel Belle: Nigel has started a small squash bubble and is playing full court games.

Please send what you are doing to ipg49@btinternet.com

Many thanks

Ian Graham

57th AGM REPORT

The 'virtual' AGM took place on 28th September 2020. All resolutions were unanimously approved by the 37 members who were deemed to have attended the meeting by virtue of them returning their proxy vote. Minutes of the meeting can be found

on our website and will be formally approved at the 58th AGM planned for the finals weekend in March or April 2021.

Officers of the Club for 2020/21 were duly elected and are listed below:

President	–	Philip Ayton
Vice President	–	Tom Hendry, Tony McStravick*, Tony Gathercole* Lance Kinder*, John Woodliffe*
Honorary Life Member	–	Mike Clemson, Jonah Barrington*
Chairman	–	Ian Graham
Honorary Secretary	–	Nigel Belle
Honorary Treasurer	–	Robert Smith
Tournament Director	–	Geoff Howes
Honorary Match Secretary	–	Nick Sheppard
Publicity	–	Ian McKenzie
Ordinary Member	–	Karen Hume
Ex Officio (ESM Chairman)	–	Stuart Hardy
Area Representatives	–	Mike Clemson (North) Ian Ross (Scotland) Lynne Davies (Wales) Rachel Woolford (Midlands)

* Previously elected

POSSIBLE (!) FORTHCOMING EVENTS - 2021

National Championships	TBA possibly February
GB Vets Finals Weekend	TBA March or April - Colets
Home Internationals	TBA possibly April/May
Allam British Open	TBA possibly May – Hull
European Masters	16-19 June – Edinburgh
World Masters	15-21 August – Wroclaw, Poland

ENGLISH CONTRADICTIONS

Here is an interesting reminder of our English contradictions which unless specifically pointed out as below simply get used unnoticed in every day life. Here are some funny ones:

Found Missing	Open Secret
Act Naturally	Clearly Misunderstood
Pretty Ugly	Seriously Funny
Only Choice	Original Copies
Exact Estimate	Tragic Comedy
	and finally
Small Crowd	Social Distancing!