



Behind the scenes at The All England Club

For the past three years we have been trying very hard to improve our grass courts. Jane Poynder kindly contacted her other Club on our behalf. As ‘Custodians of the grass’ we were keen to see how the finest grass courts in the world are renovated and maintained both during Wimbledon fortnight and throughout the year.

We were met by John Entwistle the Deputy Head groundsman for a tour of the complex. The total area is 42 acres which can cater for 42,000 spectators, with 15 full time ground staff, as well as gardeners to maintain the gardens, banks, flower beds, ponds and plants.

With no crowds to slow us down we were able to see all the excellent facilities. The aim of the ground staff is to make the courts play as near to identical as possible. The bounce and speed of the court is determined by the soil rather than the grass. For the championships, the grass is cut at 8 mm which is also our target. We were allowed to stand on the courts which are impeccable.

We were in our element being shown around the workshops and the machine facility. We were most envious of the very high quality cylinder mowers, now powered by Li-Ion batteries which are quieter, less polluting and more energy efficient. They cost upwards of £15,000 each. We were pleased to see that the line marking machines are similar to ours, made by Fleet Line Markers based in Malvern.

There are five commemorative bronze busts of former Ladies Wimbledon champions on display. One of them is of Worcestershire’s very own Dorothy Round. She won county titles at Manor Park in her early career and her name appears on a number of trophies at the club.

Bill Fleming & David Forester-Smith August 2023

CLUB SUMMER CALENDAR

'Battle of the Sexes'	Saturday 11 May
10U County Cup	18-19 May
County Mixed	Saturday 8 June
Social American Evening	Tuesday 11 June
11U County Cup	15-16 June
Robfest	Saturday 22 June
Charity Doubles	Thursday 27 June
Social Tournament	Saturday 29 June
Malvern Open	14-20 July
Benjamin Cup	Saturday 27 July
Rest of World Event	Saturday 17 August
H&W County Closed	25-30 August
Club Finals Day	Saturday 7 Sept
STC Charity Tournament	Wednesday 11 Sept
Ripple Cup	Saturday 21 Sept
Social Mixed Doubles	Saturday 28 Sept
ITF Senior Tournament	3-6 October
Racketlon Event	Saturday 12 October

Sam Mackenzie Members will be aware of the sad death of Sam Mackenzie – a club legend. Manor Park would not have the facilities, indoor and out, without Sam’s drive and determination to get things done against all the odds. As a fitting legacy to all his efforts the entrance to the Indoor Courts will have a new sign inscribed with the name ‘The Mackenzie Tennis Hall’.

Grass Courts Despite all the work that has been done on the grass courts which will hopefully ensure that they are of top quality for this coming summer it has been a long term aim to convert the grass to an all-weather surface. Plans are now underway to achieve this goal. Planning permission is being sought for a change of surface with floodlights. An application has been submitted to the LTA for an interest free loan, with a hope for a favourable response.

Subscriptions Members will be aware that last year’s rise in subscriptions was below inflation. It is felt that this year, in view of rising costs, an inflation rise of 5% is reasonable as we continue to enjoy the excellent facilities the club provides.

Tennis Secretary After 19 years as our very efficient Tennis Secretary, Elaine Fleming has given up this role and we are delighted that Caroline Forester Smith has agreed to take over - although she has said she is not sure she wants to do that long a stint!

The end of January **Tennis Dinner** was a sell out with 72 members attending and enjoying an excellent meal provided by Anna Paisley and held in a Vaughan Hall transformed thanks to Vicki Advani, Ali Earp and Elaine Fleming.



Disability Tennis and Riverside School

Thanks to Smartbox's support and a generous community grant from their parent company, Caretech, Riverside School will continue to benefit from disability tennis throughout 2024. For three terms, students will have the opportunity to experience the joy of tennis, enhancing both their social skills and their physical well-being, as shown above.

Smartbox create assistive technology that gives a voice to people with a wide range of speech and language needs. From their humble beginnings over 15 years ago in Malvern, Smartbox has expanded its reach globally. Their impact knows no borders, and their dedication to improve the lives of people who use their technology is unwavering. Find out more at their website: Smartbox - Assistive technology for everyone (thinksmartbox.com)

Court booking

Booking of outdoor tennis courts as well as of indoor courts is now on the LTA ClubSpark system. This change has been forced on the club due to the demise of the previous commercial system. To access the court booking system members need an LTA login username and password. Any member who finds difficulty in booking a court is invited to contact the Club Manager.

Tennis coaching

Tennis coaching is offered for adults and children in individual and group sessions by Malvern Tennis Academy. Adult groups include sessions on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings and also 'Rusty Rackets' courses on four Saturday mornings. Junior age-range groups include Easter and Summer Camps and a summer term programme starting on 15th April. For further details please contact Jane Poynder or Chris Skinner on 01684 574435 or tennis@malverntennisacademy.com

Group tennis opportunities

Members are encouraged to join one or more of the tennis groups at the club, for example:

Mixed Morning: Mondays, with courts booked from 9 am, running throughout the year, suited to those who do not aspire to team tennis.

Club Tennis Night: A mixed roll-up at 5.30 pm on Tuesdays starting on April 2 and running until September 24.

Men's Morning: Wednesdays with courts booked from 10.30 am, running throughout the year. Men's groups play on Mondays at 2.00 pm, Fridays at 11.00 am and Saturdays at 10.30 am.

Ladies' Afternoon: Wednesdays with courts booked from 2 pm, running throughout the year, mainly suited to those who do not aspire to team tennis.

Ladies' Doubles Morning: Fridays on a rota basis from 9.30 am to 11 am starting in April. Play moves to the indoor courts in September.

Advanced level mixed play: Monday evenings at 6 pm and Friday afternoons at 4.30 pm.

Saturday Social Afternoon 2.00 to 4.00: A roll-up with an Organiser who oversees the running of usually 6 courts, followed by refreshments.

Men's Match Practice Night: Wednesdays from 6.00 pm starting on April 3.

Ladies' Match Practice Night: Thursdays from 6.30 pm starting on April 4.

Competitive opportunities

Club Teams: To play in a club team, please contact a team captain, as listed in the Fixtures Card on the club website. To play in the events listed below, please contact the Club Manager.

Club Tournament: Entries submitted via the website in April; singles and doubles events, matches played as convenient; Finals Day on Saturday September 7 is a spectator occasion.

Singles Ladder: Ask at the Club Office if you wish to be included on the club singles ladder.

Robfest: Saturday June 22, a mixed doubles event organised by Rob Redman.

Charity Tournament and Lunch: Thursday June 27 at 9 am followed by an excellent lunch.

Benjamin Cup: Saturday July 27, a mixed team event organised by Chris Barr-Hamilton.

England v Rest of the World: Saturday August 17, a doubles event organised by Rob Redman.

Save the Children Ladies Tournament: A mixed doubles event on Wednesday September 11 at 9.30 am with lunch included.

Ripple Cup: Saturday September 21, a men's doubles event organised by Chris Skinner.

Social mixed doubles: Events on Saturdays June 29 and September 28 at 1.30 pm

ITF Masters Tournament supported by Shipman's Wealth Management. October 3 - 6 Club members who would like to enter should go to the ITF website and click on Masters Tour. <https://www.itftennis.com/en/tournament/mt100-great-malvern/gbr/2024/s-s100-gbr-02a-2024>