



Chairman's report 2020

I'm not usually one stuck for words, however it has now happened twice this year - the first at receiving a delightfully decorated cake on my birthday from some of our members, and the second sitting down and trying to put a review of this year together.

I would like to start by wishing our members and their families well and hope that everyone is keeping safe.

I am going through a full range of emotions whilst writing this report - enthusiasm, pride and disappointment are just a few that I can put my finger on.

The enthusiasm comes from the fantastic year we have had within the section with our membership reaching nearly 310 members. This has been an incredible increase and we have seen the courts reaching capacity during this time.

I would like to welcome all our new members; we have seen players come over from other HSC sections, from other tennis clubs and people joining after trying the sport for the first time. The buzz that this has created on court has been fantastic and the club has been an absolute pleasure to be part of.

The pride has been from seeing members of our section, and more importantly as members of Horsham Sports Club, pulling together and working hard around the ground to create a better place for the members to be part of.

I would like to thank Tony Macaulay for patching the holes up around the tennis court fencing (and fixing my basket!!).

Peter Sibley for taking the time to create templates and spray the court numbers on court, a necessity since the utilization of the courts has increased.

Our main club chairman Chris Wassell for taking time out of his week to cut down and remove all the thorny branches on court 1, not an enjoyable job! And for supporting us as a section.

Also, Elaine Cloy who has been fantastic at organising and keeping player registers during the Ladies Mornings which have exploded with members this year. It can be a challenge keeping a large number of players active and enjoying attending but Elaine has managed to do this.

There have been many more members who have embraced new challenges and supported the club on and off court, thank you.

My disappointment (and sadness) comes from the government's decision to close outdoor tennis courts in England during the period of the new national restrictions.

I am hugely disappointed at this news, and feel that tennis has been able to provide a safe

environment for adults and children to keep fit and healthy during these testing times. Tennis has been fantastic for physical and mental health and hopefully this decision will be reviewed sooner rather than later. The courts will reopen as soon as the green light is given.

Future plans - update

Last year we spoke about upgrading facilities such as flood lighting and looking at the possibility of a clay court surface, but I'm sure as you can all appreciate things have been put on hold as the priority is to ensure Horsham Sports Club get through this difficult period.

I would like to add that we have developed some good links with the Horsham District Council grants team. We are currently awaiting the outcome of a grant that we have recently applied for to support the continuing development of the grass courts. We have just been presented with some new opportunities to apply for grants to support the club and develop facilities which I will be looking at during this latest lockdown.

Grass Courts

I would like to thank Richard Marshall, Ben Harwood, Richard Allingham and the rest of the ground staff for the time and energy they put in to preparing the grass courts this year.

Having had very little time to prepare, they did an amazing job on the courts in what turned out to be a necessity this year, and played a huge role in attracting new members.

Work has been started on preparing the courts for next season. As I mentioned above, this comes at a cost and we will continue to apply for grants and are more than happy to receive donations/sponsorship to help support this and other areas to take a little pressure off the club's resources.

Floodlights

As many of you know there has been an ongoing issue with the floodlights.

It has been identified that there is a complication with the programming of the floodlights. Unfortunately, the programme that is used to drive the lights is now obsolete.

We are continuing to look for a solution, however the prices quoted would go a long way to installing LED lighting system. We will continue to look for a permanent fix whilst looking towards the LED upgrade.

Coaching

With my coach's hat on it's a real shame that the decision has been made that the courts must close. The team have felt extremely safe and have put in all the correct protocols, including risk assessments and regular cleaning of equipment, to ensure the safety and well-being of ourselves and our clients.

The first few months of the year I underwent a hernia repair and would like to thank Tessa Walder, Alex Welton and Martin Shuttlewood for stepping in to ensure the coaching programme would continue to run.

It has been difficult for the coaches working in sports halls as many have remained closed and we have tried to move these sessions to the club to ensure the players don't miss out on their sessions.

Our junior players who were called up to the Sussex county squad have had a disappointing stop start season with county training and lack of match play opportunities.

I would like to congratulate one of our junior players though, He has trained really well and won this year's men's plate final - well done Freddie Marchant.

Club League matches

It is around here that I normally talk about the successes (and the odd failures) that the club have had in our league play.

Unfortunately, our Summer league play was cancelled this year and our winter league was stopped early, this unfortunately worked against the men's 1st team as they were relegated from division 6w with a 1 match left to play - a win would have seen a respectable 3rd place! The 2nd team however fared better, winning the division 8w, gaining promotion and will face the 1st team when the leagues resume.

Similarly, the Men's 4th team were relegated as they had 3 matches remaining, whilst the Men's 3rd team held a respectable 6th position in division 10w.

Our ladies' team (who still have to travel further than anyone else!) finished 6th in division 3. There were several tough matches, especially when playing fixtures like Eastbourne College away.

Club Tournament

With so many new members showing a hunger for a club tournament this year, we didn't want to disappoint!

I would like to thank Josh Thomas for stepping in this year and running the event.

It was great to see so many new people entering the events with some great matches too. Although a few too many squash players gate crashing the party!!

Well played to everyone who took part, it was a really enjoyable atmosphere at finals day and gives us the impetus to make it even better next year.

2020 Roll of Honour			
Mens Singles	Dan West	bt	Daud Sadiq
Mens Doubles	Dom Hall & Daud Sadiq	bt	Dom Robeson & Glyn Jukes
Ladies Singles	Sophie Kitson	bt	Donna Copeland
Ladies Doubles	Tessa Walder & Helen Windwood	bt	Sophie Kitson & Donna Copeland
Mixed Doubles	Sophie Kitson & Dom Robeson	bt	Helen Windwood & Jerry Windwood
Mens singles Plate	Freddie Marchant	bt	Stephen Hoad
Mens Doubles Plate	Josh Thomas & Zach Hodges	bt	Adam Garner & Claudio Reddi *
*Claudio plying in place of Rob Newman (injured)			

One final reminder, please remember the courts have seen unprecedented demand, if you book a court and realise you now longer require it please cancel your court to allow other members the opportunity to book.

I would like to end the report by once again wishing you and your families well and I can't wait to see you all back on court again soon.

There has been a great feeling around the club and lots of enthusiasm from our members, lets continue this in to next year and make Horsham Lawn Tennis Club the place to play.

Glyn Jukes

HLTC Chairman.