

Coaching Report for 2015

Well it's been a whole year at our new site and I'm still pinching myself that we have such wonderful facilities. Passing Southampton St. Tennis Courts the other day I felt a bit sad to see it in such disrepair that it is hard to imagine that 90 plus years of tennis was played there. It doesn't look like a tennis club anymore. Just the sign on the wall near the entrance and faded court lines a reminder of it's past. The journey to the new tennis courts are diametrically opposite in my case as I head out uphill to the new site out of Faringdon to Folly Sports Park. What a vista that is, as you stand above the park from the trim trail adjacent to Stanford Road. At night time with a full moon above it does take on a magical quality. And the sunsets are so varied throughout the seasons giving off fire glows of colour, yellow, golden, red, crimson, purple, orange and all ranges in between. Where's my paint brush and easel? Having said that, it does blow a bit up there and has required us all to adjust our game to the new environment. I must admit I am still struggling to master the new problems set by the wind and sun but a little bit of patience will not go unrewarded, and I suspect those of us who play league matches on some of Oxfordshire's more illustrious club venues will know that we are not alone in having that problem. It goes with the territory as most courts are situated in parks with a wide expanse of empty fields. If Wimbledon was played on park courts such as Blewbury on a cold January afternoon we would have had several British Grand Slam Champions. Federer, Djokovic, Williams, Graff would only be footnotes in tennis history whilst Fred Rowbottom from Lancashire and Herbert Bartrop the famous Yorkshireman who always played with the florescent southwester and a scarf would be among the pantheons of tennis champions young children would aspire to become. "Do you remember Fred hitting that winning volley whilst hanging on to his umbrella in a force 10 gale to win his fourth title?" Where was I? Oh yes this is supposed to be about the tennis coaching year so I better get on with it. First of all I would like to congratulate Guy Mobey for becoming Oxford Boys Under 14 County Champion. His dedication and hard work aided by Matt Williams brilliant coaching has yielded a deserved title. Mum and dad Tessa and Mark who are model tennis parents make up a great team and I wish them all well for the future. Rewards for them are few and far between and all the dedication and time spent achieving this goal are richly deserved. We are lucky to have such a dynamic team being part of our club.

The coaching programme continues to grow with Susanna, Matt and myself coaching an array of different ages from tennis tots to adult squads, beginner, intermediate and progressive players, mini red, orange and green. Boys squads, Girls squads. Rusty Rackets for adult players. Some programmes have continued from the old site whilst many more have been added to the new itinerary. Off site coaching has gone on throughout the year with regular taster sessions held at Faringdon Leisure Centre, Faringdon Junior and Infants Schools, Stanford and Shellingford Junior Schools. The Great British Tennis Week-end held in June had a turnout of 100 people all coming to play tennis on that Sunday, many for the first time. I have recently started a Rookie Night on Fridays for new junior and senior members. I feel that there is a need for us to do more for our new members and this is just one step along the way to make the club a family, friendly experience for them. We have always been a friendly caring organisation and it is great to see that we have continued that path which was started at Southampton Street. So there is a lot to be proud of this first year into our new abode, but there is still a lot more to do.

May I take this opportunity to thank you all for your support, particularly the committee who have always encouraged the coaches over many years

Alan