

Susanna's Coaching report for 2015

We have now completed a year at Folly Sports Park. The grip on the courts is superb, the run back behind the baseline is a real luxury and the feeling of space, greenery and views around the courts is a pleasure. We have coped with the more exposed aspect and dealt with the windy days. Visiting teams have been full of praise for the courts and clubhouse. Southampton St, loved as it was, is now a distant memory.

The new club with its' enviable facilities and more visible situation has attracted new members, several of whom have joined the coaching sessions.

My adult doubles sessions which take place mid-week, 4 mornings a week, continue to be well-attended. The majority of the players are female, but I do have several men who attend too. These sessions prepare players for match play tennis and social tennis, so they can feel confident about attending the other tennis sessions offered by the club.

The men are well catered for with Steve's doubles sessions on Tue/Thur which follow on from my coaching at 11am.

The biggest news to report this year has been the creation of a Ladies C team in the summer which was captained by Mary Mountford-Lister and a Ladies D team in the winter, captained by Sian Starr. These teams have allowed more players the opportunity to play competitive tennis and provide a great training ground for when players are needed to play up for the higher teams.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the ladies' team captains who have done a wonderful job, organising their teams and also those ladies who have volunteered to organise the Ladies Team practices on a Monday evening.

I believe that the creation of additional teams, combined with the opportunity for match practices has been responsible for the success that our teams have enjoyed this summer, with four teams out of seven gaining promotion.

In addition to the Adult Sessions, I also run two girls teenage groups and a few of those players have played for the ladies teams this summer which has been a lovely opportunity for them, as there are no girls junior doubles leagues in the county.

My favourite addition to my coaching this year has been the creation of the Teenage Mixed Doubles Tournaments. There have been 6 of these which ran through May/June/July. Combining 8 teenage boys from Matt's sessions with 8 of my strongest teenage girls, proved a winning combination. The format was similar to Pimms and Prizes, playing with 4 or 5 different partners, against different opponents, with a point per game won and concluding with a Top Girl and Top Boy. These were invitational events, with Matt and I carefully selecting children of similar ability, which is I believe why they were so successful. The key is to try to match standards in tennis and when you do that, it provides great enjoyment.

At the beginning of September, I ran a 'Dads and Sons' tournament along a similar format which also worked well. The plan is to run more of these during the summer months of 2016.

In addition to the regular sessions, Alan and I have also run a couple of Mini Red tournaments in conjunction with local schools and also Faringdon Guides spent an evening during Wimbledon learning to play tennis with strawberries and cream in the clubhouse at the end!

There have also been several Pimms and Prizes evenings for members and a Welcome Event for all the new members, in addition to the Folly Sports Extravaganza day when the courts were teaming with families.

Also, thank you to Steve Pugh, who organised an internal club tournament and to Alan for organising the trophies for the event, which was very successful.

Alan, Matt and I between us try to offer a coaching programme which covers all ages and abilities, with Alan predominantly working with the Mini tennis players and also Rusty Racket Adults, Matt working with the performance players and also teenage boys groups and myself covering the girls and adult doubles.

We look forward to the Winter Season with a newly created Men's C and Ladies D Team competing. The future of the club is looking good.

Susanna