**SQUASH SECTION REPORT**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 13th November 2018**

The last AGM was held 18th January 2018 and we have been asked by the General Committee to convene a Squash Section AGM in advance of the main club AGM on 28th November 2018.

**Committee**

A lot of work has gone on behind the scenes since the last AGM but before I relay those points, I would like to formally welcome and confirm that Graham Pickup and Jack Parkin joined the Committee as Treasurer and Competitions Organiser respectively.

**Squash Captain** Graeme Mascall

**Secretary** Kathy Leahy

**Treasurer** Graham Pickup

**Men’s Captain**  Jonathan Peak

**Ladies Captain**  Lucy Emsden

**Squash League Organiser**  Andrew Campbell

**Racketball League Organiser** Steven Rawden

**Competitions Organiser** Jack Parkin

**Social**  David Wall Jnr

The Squash Section Constitution has been reviewed and updated at the request of the General Committee. It is our intention that this revised document is adopted at our AGM, a copy is attached and has been circulated to the Section previously.

As a Section we have also contributed towards the ongoing “Vision & Strategy” document for the wider club. This document is still ‘work in progress’ and further details will be presented in due course.

**Membership**

Across all membership categories there are around 400 members who are entitled to play squash. In terms of our core active adult members, we have remained broadly consistent at around 85. One area where we struggle to attract new membership is at junior level. This is partly due to the very strong junior set-ups at Leamington and Kenilworth squash clubs. Efforts and initiatives will be made over the coming year to try and address this issue. Otherwise, our new member letter has been updated, supplemented with an information sheet providing more details about our Section.

**Finances**

As a Section we are broadly in line with our annual budget on a year-to-date basis. There is £2,000 set aside for maintenance that has not yet been utilised. However, part of this sum will be used towards some minor plastering repairs (see below). The club changed accounting system (to Xero) earlier in the year and going forward it will enable the Section to budget and record expenditure in a more consistent manner.

In light of the club’s development proposals which have recently been presented to WBC members there is no planned capital expenditure investment for the Squash Section in the immediate future. This item will be kept under review pending how matters progress.

**Teams**

Our Men’s 1st team managed to secure promotion in the main winter Warwickshire League (2017-18). However, because of new teams entering the league, we have been notified that the 1st team will remain in division 4. The 2nd team will compete in division 5 and the 3rd team in division 7. The 2018 summer leagues provided a stiff challenge for both men’s teams with a number of squad players out injured/unavailable. Despite their best efforts both teams finished up towards the bottom of their respective divisions.

The ladies team finished mid-table and remain in division 2. Several clubs have merged their ladies’ teams in order that they can submit a combined team. It is a testament to Lucy Emsden and the ladies who turn out for WBC that we continue to field a competitive squad in the ladies’ winter Warwickshire League.

Arrangements for catering have also changed for the current season. Café Willow will be taking matters on for all team matches (as they will be for the Tennis Section). This should enable us to accommodate any vegetarian/vegan or other dietary requirements. The match fees have been reduced slightly to £6.

**Coaching**

Coaching arrangements have recently been subject to change. Individual coaching with Jonathan Peak has reverted to a Tuesday evening, thus freeing up the courts on a Thursday evening for the Autumn Team Competition. Feedback from last year provided a consensus that members would rather hold this event on a Thursday (rather than Friday) evening. Ali Jafari has now departed to take a squash coaching role in Sydney, Australia. In his place we welcome Josh Owen who will take individual coaching on Friday evenings. Saturday group coaching remains unchanged with Jonathan and Josh taking alternate weekends. If Josh is competing at a tournament, we hope that cover will be provided by Jack Turney.

A decision has been taken by the directors of WBC that all coaches (of all Sections) should hold DBS certification through the relevant sporting body, which in our case is England Squash. This has been relayed to our squash coaches and we hope to have this issue concluded by the end of Q1 2019 at the latest.

**Competitions**

Firstly, congratulations to the winners at the 2018 Spring Tournament. The Autumn Team Competition is underway with Finals evening & dinner booked for Saturday 8th December 2018. Please put the date in your diaries and come along to support the finalists for what is always an enjoyable occasion. Consideration is also being given to revive the ‘all in one day’ handicap event on the Spring Tournament Finals day to encourage more members to participate and thereafter attend the finals evening dinner/presentations.

**Court Availability**

Comments have been made about court availability at peak times (5:50pm to 7:50pm). The Committee is aware and conscious of this issue. We aim to maintain a balance in order to accommodate the following:- Warwickshire League matches on Monday (men) and Wednesday (ladies). Tuesday night squash coaching (one court), Autumn Team Competition (Thursdays in October & November), Friday night racketball mix-in and squash coaching (one court). In the future, team training will take place at Warwick School on a Monday evening (between late August / early October) unless the courts are still available on the relevant morning. Additional court slots have been made available on a Wednesday evening as a result of the ladies team matches having four as opposed to five games. When the likes of the Spring and Autumn competitions are running, we continue to extend the internal league period so that members have additional time in which to play their matches.

**Maintenance**

The main issues to address over the coming year will be to monitor the small crack on the side-wall of Court 2. Thankfully over the last 12 months there has been no material deterioration. Patch repairs will be made to the front wall of Court 1 where one or two small ‘pock marks’ are appearing where small patches of plaster have fallen away. Otherwise, the flooring, new squash court doors and lighting are all in good condition.

**Social**

During the last 12 months we have hosted Porthcawl Squash Club for an evening of competitive play, held our annual summer BBQ and visited Birmingham University to watch Premier Squash League (PSL) matches which features some of the world’s top ranked players. Warwick University/Kenilworth have also submitted a PSL team for the 2018-19 season and thus we hope to make trips over to Kenilworth during the season. Other planned forthcoming events include an evening ten-pin bowling at Lane7 in Birmingham, an evening trip/dinner to Church Farm Brewery. A challenge will also be put to the Tennis Section for an evening of handicapped squash matches so we can start to atone for our not fielding a rowing team against them at this year’s regatta. The Brophy Trophy is also due to take part during 2019 where we compete against the other Sections at bowls. Our 24hr squashathon was held on 12-13th October to coincide with World Squash Day; we raised over **£1,700** for our nominated local charity, the Friendship Project. A big thank-you to those members, guests and friends who participated, donated or simply helped out. Ideas for what we can do for World Squash Day 2019 would be gratefully received !

As a Section we will be seeking to make better use of the club’s social media platforms and noticeboard/whiteboards to relay information in respect of both playing and social activities. If you are not already familiar our current digital platforms comprise:- WBC website, Facebook page, Twitter feed (@warwickboat) and Instagram (warwickboatclub).

On a final note, please remember the Section is what we all make it. We, as a Committee, put a lot of time and effort in to try and provide the best squash/racketball experience we can. If you are interested in getting involved in any of the matters above, serving on the Committee, or have any ideas or constructive comments, then I would be delighted to hear from you.

Regards,

**Graeme Mascall**

**Squash Captain**