**SQUASH & RACKETBALL SECTION – CAPTAIN’S REPORT**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 21st November 2019**

The last AGM was held 13th November 2018, and, in the usual manner, we have been asked by the General Committee to convene our Squash Section AGM in advance of the main club AGM on 27th November 2019.

**Committee**

During the year Graham Pickup has stood down as Treasurer and I have recently received confirmation that Jack Parkin will be standing down as Competitions Organiser, thus we have two vacant positions on the Committee. As at the time of writing the report, we have not received any nominations. If you are interested in taking on either of these roles, please contact me.

After many years as serving as our ladies’ captain, Lucy Emsden is handing over the reins to Jessamy Linford. Lucy has been ladies captain since for some considerable time and has been, and will no doubt continue to be, an absolute stalwart of the Squash Section. For a relatively ‘small’ squash club, it is a testament to Lucy that she has consistently been able to field and manage a competitive team each year in the Warwickshire leagues even when a number of larger clubs have had to ‘amalgamate’ their ladies in order to maintain a team. On behalf of myself and the Section, a huge thank-you for your efforts and commitment.

**Squash Captain** Graeme Mascall

**Secretary** Kathy Leahy

**Treasurer** **VACANT**

**Men’s Captain**  Jonathan Peak

**Ladies Captain**  **VACANT** (provisionally Jessamy Linford)

**Squash League Organiser**  Andrew Campbell

**Racketball League Organiser** Steven Rawden

**Competitions Organiser** VACANT

**Social**  David Wall Jnr

**Membership**

Across all WBC membership categories there are around 380members who are entitled to play squash. In terms of our core active adult members, we have remained broadly consistent at around 90. This compares to 400 and 85 as reported at the 2018 AGM. 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, Kenilworth and Freedom Fitness squash clubs. Efforts and initiatives will continue to be made over the coming year to try and address this issue.

**Finances**

As a Section we are broadly in line with our annual budget on a year-to-date basis. An up-to-date position will be presented at the meeting.

In light of the progress being made on the club’s development proposals, there is no planned capital expenditure investment for the Squash Section in the immediate future, save for a holder for safety glasses to be erected by the courts.

**Team Squash**

Our Men’s 1st team narrowly missed out on promotion to division 3 in the main winter Warwickshire League (2018-19). It all came down to the last game of the final match of the season, so close but so far ! Our 2nd team had a tough year and we unfortunately relegated to division 5. Our 3rd team is continuing to improve with a mid-table finish in division 6.

Our ladies’ team, competing in division 2, finished second in the first half of the season and third in the second half a commendable effort.

In the 2019 summer leagues we submitted two teams, the 1st team consolidated their position in division 4. The 2nd team again showed fighting spirit but eventually succumbed to relegation after a second half of the season battle with Freedom Fitness.

I would like to extend a thank-you to Martin Smart (Hayward Smart Architects) and James Alty (Apteco Marketing) for their kind sponsorship of our new team t-shirts. Every squad member has received the first shirt free, with subsequent shirts available ‘at cost’.

All members who wish to play in the Warwickshire Leagues must now have an activated England Squash account in order to be eligible. If you are interested in playing team squash please contact either myself, Jonathan Peak or Jessamy Linford.

Arrangements for catering have again changed for the current season. Lucy Agog (Men’s) and Lindsey Butler (Ladies) are dealing with catering at an increased fee of £8 per head. I intend to explore with the General Committee about a subsidy towards our match fees in a similar fashion to what the Tennis Section has adopted.

**Coaching**

Coaching is currently provided by Jonathan Peak on a Tuesday evening and on alternate Saturday afternoons (4pm to 6pm). It is proposed that the Tuesday evening slots will move to Thursday after the Autumn Team Competition has concluded. Josh Owen, who had been providing coaching on a Friday evening has confirmed that he is unable to continue as he focuses on his professional squash career and improving his PSA ranking. We will gauge sentiment about whether we seek a replacement for Josh or whether we look to ‘open-up’ Friday evenings for a squash mix-in (after the racketball mix-in).

**Competitions**

Firstly, congratulations to the winners at the 2019 Spring Tournament. The Autumn Team Competition is underway with the Finals evening and dinner booked for Saturday 7th December 2018. Please put the date in your diaries and come along to support the finalists for what is always an enjoyable occasion.

**Court Availability**

Just to follow through on the minutes from the last AGM, to the best of my knowledge, and the other Committee members, we have not received any negative comments about court availability albeit that the court remain congested at peak times (5:50pm to 7:50pm). If anyone does have any concerns in this regard, please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss.

A successful trial period for yoga on a Sunday morning has now been ‘adopted’. This is run by Stephanie Summers, with Samantha Wesley being the WBC point of contact. We are looking at introducing a mid-week morning session on one of the courts and further details will be circulated in due course.

**Maintenance**

Plastering repairs have been made both courts during the year as we seek to mitigate expenditure. We continue to monitor the small crack on the side wall of Court 2 but there has been no material deterioration over the last twelve months. A rolling programme will be put in place to clean the walls but otherwise, the flooring, lighting, heating and pumps are all in good repair. The one outstanding point to address is a replacement spring for the flood gate.

**WBC Development Proposals**

In line with the member consultation sessions, a planning application has now been submitted to, and validated by, Warwick District Council. Full details of the application, plans and supporting documents can be seen on the WDC planning portal (planning reference W/19/1526).

**Social**

During the last 12 months we :

* Hosted Porthcawl Squash Club for an evening of competitive play
* Participated in the “Big Hit” for World Squash Day 2019.
* Held our annual summer BBQ
* Attended the finals of the PSA Canary Wharf Classic Tournament.
* Contested an evening of ten-pin bowling at Lane7 in Birmingham
* Played on the new squash doubles court at the University of Warwick
* Visited Church Farm Brewery for an educational trip (!) and dinner.
* Put in a strong performance to finish second at the Brophy Trophy event(Bowls)
* Battled bravely but lost out on the McClosker Trophy (Rowing)

For the coming year we hope to visit Flight Club in Birmingham for an evening of darts. Warwick/Kenilworth have entered a team in the Premier Squash League (PSL) matches which features some of the world’s top ranked players and some trips will be organised for their home matches either at Kenilworth squash club or Warwick Arts Centre (full glass court). Finally, and ideas of what we could do for World Squash Day 2020 would be gratefully received.

As a Section we have sought 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, these comprise:- WBC website, Facebook page, Twitter feed (@warwickboat) and Instagram (warwickboatclub). Should you be interested in writing an article for the Squash Section to be included in the WBC “All4One” newsletter, please let me know.

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**

**Enc.**