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**Real Tennis update for OCs 2023**

**Match V Leamington – March 2023**

The OCs first match for 2023 took place on Sunday 12 March against the Leamington Tennis Court Club, Leamington Spa, which is the oldest purpose-built Real Tennis Club established in 1846. Representing the OCs were: Ben Andrews (WaH 2000), Peter Ashmead (ET 1964), Jeff Avery (ET 1964), Jason Briggs (WiH 1989), Miles Buckinghamshire (OH 1963), Henry Lidington (ST 2015), Simon Richards (OH 1982), Ed Smith (NT 2006)

The match was closely contested with Henry Lidington, our lowest handicap player at 25.3, beating his Leamington opponent to set the score level at 2 each for the final match for Peter Ashmead and Jeff Avery to win. Alas, it was not to be as Leamington, helped by Miles Buckinghamshire, who stood in for a Leamington player marooned in Geneva, won the final match and the contest for Leamington 2/3. All players enjoyed the day at this most convivial of Clubs with a fine lunch and good company. Our thanks go to the Leamington Club for hosting the day and to Lewis Williams, the Leamington Head professional, for marking the matches and undertaking all the organising to make the day enjoyable for all.

**News from Bordeaux**

Congratulations to Lea Van der Zwalmen (WT 2015) on being elected President of the Bordeaux Club. She becomes the youngest person and the only woman to have held this post of President at a French Club. We wish her all success in taking the Club to new heights. Hopefully, as OC real tennis develops, an OC team will visit Bordeaux to support Lea in her endeavours at this new purpose-built court.

**News from Bristol**

Congratulations to Bristol (BRTC) on reaching their 25th Anniversary duly celebrated with a weekend of real tennis from 9-12 February with a Champagne Reception on the evening of the 9thFebruary, hosted by Cherry Bretten, Honorary Member of the Club and widow of the late John Bretten (ET 1964). A dinner was held at the Clifton Club for 100 guests, including many OCs, on the evening of the 10th February. Over £9000 was raised to help fund the BRTC youth development program. This will augment the award to BRTC by the Dedanists to fund free taster sessions for Juniors over the Easter Holidays. Please contact the Club for more information for what will be a very popular experience for our potential new real tennis players so vital for the future success of the game.

BRTC was formerly known as the Bristol and Bath Real Tennis Club. The driving force behind the formation of the Club and its establishment at Beggars Bush, was John Bretten. John was a fine all round sportsman at Clifton who went onto win his tennis blue at Oxford and was Captain of Fives.

Current Clifton students (there are a number of promising juniors playing the game) and Old Cliftonians , who play this wonderful game, owe John and his Bristol and Bath colleagues of 25 years ago a huge debt of gratitude for his and their legacy. Thanks are also due to Clifton College for having the foresight to allow this new Tennis Court to be built on the College playing fields across the Clifton Suspension bridge 25 years ago. It is good to see many OCs involved in the Club with Bruce Newman, Dan Brown, James Johnson on the Committee along with members of the Bretten family, George Bretten and Charlotte Wilsher (daughter of John and Cherry).

The OC Real Tennis Society are looking forward to their match against the Club on the 28th May 2023. This follows on from the successful first match in May 2022 of the OCs V BRTC.

Any OC wishing to play in the 2023 match, please could they contact miles@milesbuckinghamshire.co.uk or Ben Coleman, professional at BRTC. email@bristolrealtennisclub.org.uk (0117 973 3444).

**News from Hatfield**

Nick Esses (PH 1979) and Harry Swindon (SH 2014) won the 2022 Cattermull Cup (Schools alumni handicap doubles). This was the third time since 2010 that Clifton have won this cup. Jonny Whitaker (ET 2012), Captain of Tennis at Queens, and Henry Mullan (ET 2015) were losing finalists in the 2022 Henry Leaf Cup (a level handicap competition for School Alumni )

The OCs play Hatfield on 30 April. We still wish to field more OCs for this match. Please contact miles@milesbuckinghamshire.co.uk or nicholas@escotex.co.uk if interested and available to play on the day.

OCs are also making their mark in the wider Real tennis world with Lea Van der Zwalmen being the No 2 Ladies 2022 world champion player along with Henry Mullan representing the victorious GB team in the Van Alen and George Limb Cups versus the USA and Australia in 2022.

Miles Buckinghamshire

22 March 2023