



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Kent County Lawn Tennis Association

Held 7.00pm on Monday 7 December 2020
via Zoom video call

Present:

Council (24):

John Ratcliffe in the chair, John Watton (President), Mary Evans (Deputy President), Jason Baker (Hon Secretary), Nigel Jordan (Hon Treasurer), Phil Lynch (Hon Assistant Secretary and Kent Tennis Office Manager – taking minutes), Denis Costelloe (Life Vice-President), Angela Darby (Life Vice-President), John Darby (Life Vice-President), Stuart Smith OBE (Life Vice-President), Stephen Woodley (Life Vice-President), Jim Barton, Tom Defrates, Susan Finch, Tony Fisher, Sarah Langford, Rosemary Lee, Sandi Procter, Graham Silvester, Malcolm Smith, Graham Sutherland, Vanessa Webb, Keeley Wicks, Anna Wilson.

Representatives of Clubs, Schools and Other Affiliated Organisations (30 clubs represented):

Abbey Wood (2), Avenue Tennis (2), Bearsted & Thurnham (1), Beckenham (1), Bexley (1), Blackheath (1), Bromley CC (1), Bromley Wendover (2), Chipstead (1), Corkscrew Hill (1), Crescent (1), DL Sidcup (1), Gravesham (1), Headcorn (1), Herne Bay LTC (2), Horsmonden (1), Hythe (1), Kings Hill Community (1), Maidstone (2), Margate (2), Meopham (1), Old Wilsonians (2), Shooters Hill (2), St Johns (2), Sydenham (1), The Parklangley Club (2), The Sundridge Park Club (2), Walmer (1), Whitstable (1).

Kent Supporters Club Members (4):

Sally Dawtry, Alan Lynch, Sally Pratt, Chris Russell-Vick.

Others (5):

Harri Izzard (Kent Tennis Office Team), Hazel Lindfield (Ladies Seniors County Team Co-Ordinator), Dino Skeete (Kent Seniors Men's 50s Captain), Lisa King (nominated for Council), Tim Freeman (Trevor May Contractors).

Apologies for absence (17):

Austin Smith (Life President), Roger Bottomley OBE (Life Vice-President), John Povey (Life Vice-President), Luke House, Clare Lilley, Geoffrey Stephenson (all Councillors), Janice White (Kent Tennis Office Team), Andy Burgoyne (Men's County Captain), Cynthia Smith (former Ladies Seniors County Team Co-Ordinator), Steve D'Almeida (Communications Volunteer Group), Sharon Chastang (Canterbury LTC), Gillian Newsom (HSBC LTC), Janice Boardman (Otford LTC), John Swannick (Staplehurst LTC), Dez Lewington (Sydenham LTC), Kathleen O'Hanlon (East West Connect), Penny Toogood (Head UK).

73 people attended (82 in 2019)

Welcome.

Kent Tennis Office Manager, Phil Lynch, greeted the attendees as they joined the meeting online, before handing over to the Chairman, John Ratcliffe, who welcomed everyone to the meeting and set the ground rules to follow for the first ever online Annual General Meeting.



1. Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2 December 2019:

The Minutes were introduced by Jason Baker. With no matters arising, he requested the meeting's approval of the minutes. They were approved unanimously.

2. Kent tennis - Highlights of 2019

Nigel Jordan (Kent and LTA Councillor), presented a review of all the year's highlights. He advised most of the information was in the Annual Review but, in what had been such a difficult year for everyone with the pandemic, he was pleased to be able to highlight the following:

- Emma Raducanu was LTA's Junior Girls Player of the Year, selected for GB in Federation Cup, won \$25k ITF title in India (her third ITF Ladies Singles title), and won two of the British Tour Women's Premier singles titles in the summer.
- Ben Gusic-Wan was LTA's Junior Boys Player of the Year, won the 12U Orange Bowl Singles (first British player since Andy Murray to do so) and represented Great Britain in the 14U Tennis Europe Winter County Cup.
- Kent Ladies Team – Winter County Cup Champions for 4th year running (end of last year).
- Kent Men's Team – Won Group 2 end of last year, gaining promotion to Group 1.
- Kent Boys 18U – Won Group 2 in February, gaining promotion to Group 1.
- Kent Tennis Summer Series – With the County Championships cancelled, we ran a Summer Series of 1 day events to get players competing again, with 80 County Training players involved in 5 Invitational Events and a further 70 players participating in 7 Local Matchplays. These were run by 7 Referees from across the county at 8 different venues.
- Simon Grieve was National Runner-Up in LTA Awards for Performance Coach of the Year and Captained the Boys 12U Great Britain Team.
- St Peters CE School, Aylesford were National Runner-Up in LTA Awards for School of the Year.
- Sadie Bristow Foundation was National Finalist in LTA Awards for School of the Year.
- Denis Costelloe - LTA Meritorious Award for services to tennis, having been volunteering in tennis for over 50 years. Denis is a former Kent Tennis President, remains a Kent Tennis Life Vice-President and is the North Kent LTA President.
- Kent Tennis Coffee Mornings were introduced early in the first lockdown online via Zoom, fortnightly, to help bring club volunteers and coaches together, so everyone could share ideas, best practice, updates and information (especially COVID-19 guidelines) between all. Over 150 people from 74 different clubs attended the 17 meetings run and these will be continued into 2021.
- Kent Tennis Instagram was fairly new for Kent Tennis in 2019. For 2020, Kent Tennis set itself a target for 1000 followers, and despite fewer events to report on, Carol Harrison remained determined and by May the target was hit, finishing with 1217 followers this year. Thank you to Carol.

3. Annual Review

John Ratcliffe asked the meeting to approve 2020 Annual Review. The acceptance of the Annual Review was approved unanimously.



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4. Financial Report

The Hon Treasurer, Nigel Jordan, provided the report for the 2019-2020 financial year ending 30 September 2020 and advised on the following points:

The very unusual year has translated into Kent's accounts. Although Registration Income had remained the same, Kent Tennis refunded the County Fees back to clubs, and everything else (income and expenditure) was impacted in one way or another to varying degrees.

Points of note were holding the fees for the cancelled Summer Leagues over to the winter, the Performance & Competitions Manager being furloughed, additional costs generated through providing grants to help part-time coaches who had lost work, and reduced Sponsorship. These were offset by savings on County Training, County Cup teams, competitions costs. Therefore, the overall loss was less than predicted at £21k.

As the Board of Management looks to plan for 2021, they will look at what sustainable cost savings could be made in the short and medium term to reduce future losses.

Nigel Jordan thanked everyone who has helped with the preparation of the Accounts, including Martin Leonard of Hayfield Bookkeeping. He thanked the Kent Office Team (Janice, Phil and Harri) for their support too.

5. Appointment of Reporting Accountants

Nigel Jordan advised that FW Berringer & Co had been in place for many years and they currently offered the best price and, although he will continue to review this again next year in light of the earlier mentioned error, he recommended that they be re-appointed. Nigel Jordan then requested that the meeting vote for accepting the accounts and for the appointment of FW Berringer & Co as Reporting Accountants for next year. This was approved unanimously.

6. Considering Charitable status

Nigel Jordan presented some slides on the consideration of charitable status for the Kent County LTA. He explained that at this stage, the Association wished to have the meeting's approval for investigating Charitable status, be it that as a Limited Company or as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

Nigel explained that an Association is a loose body of people with a common purpose but no substantial legal structure compared to a company. All contracts, agreement and property ownership rests with members/trustees which leaves them in the firing line with unlimited liability should things go wrong. Becoming a Limited Company or CIO would limit the liability and, as a charity, there may be some additional opportunities that would help Kent Tennis too.

Nigel briefly advised on the two main options (Limited Company and CIO). He stated that the aim is to explore whether the benefits of change are sufficient to pursue for either option, the respective merits of the two lead options, understand the consequences for how Kent Tennis works together and how we ensure everyone's voice will still be heard. Ultimately any change will need to be agreed at another AGM or EGM.

Nigel then asked the meeting if they would agree to exploring charitable status in the coming year. This was passed unanimously.



7. Competitions rule changes

Harri Izzard presented the following rule changes to the meeting:

Kent County LTA Council proposes the following changes to the Kent Tennis HEAD Inter-Club Regulations:

A4. Player Eligibility and Restrictions – eligibility for Veteran's teams overall

EXISTING WORDING (any wording being removed is highlighted in grey): Competitions: A player may play for only one Club in the Competitions of any one summer or winter season, except for Veterans and Ladies midweek events as below.

Veterans: Players shall be eligible for Veterans' events if they have reached the specified minimum age (Ladies 40 and 60; and Men 45, 60 and 70) or will do so on or before 31 December of the calendar year in which the competition starts.

Ladies Mid-week and Veterans: The above restriction on playing for only one Club shall include Veterans', and Ladies midweek events, except that a player may play for one other Club in a Ladies Mid-week or Veterans' event, if the Club the player plays for does not enter a team in the event.

CHANGE: Clarify that someone playing for one club in mens/ladies and/or mixed can play for a Veterans/Ladies Mid-week team at another club provided the first club does not already have a Veterans/Ladies Mid-week team.

NEW WORDING (any additional wording is highlighted in yellow): 3rd paragraph only changed to:
Ladies Mid-week and Veterans: The above restriction on playing for only one Club shall include Veterans', and Ladies midweek events, except that a player may play for one other Club in a Ladies Mid-week or Veterans' event, if the Club the player plays Ladies/Men's and/or Mixed for does not enter a team in the event.

A4. Player Eligibility and Restrictions – eligibility for Men's 70s (players aged 65-69)

EXISTING WORDING (any wording being removed is highlighted in grey): Competitions: A player may play for only one Club in the Competitions of any one summer or winter season, except for Veterans and Ladies midweek events as below. One player who is over 65 can be used per team per match in the over 70's leagues.

The above restriction on playing for only one Club shall include Veterans', and Ladies midweek events, except that a player may play for one other Club in a Ladies Mid-week or Veterans' event, if the Club the player plays Ladies/Men's and/or Mixed for does not enter a team in the event.

CHANGE: Remove the under-age exception for Men's 70s league in this rule by deleting the last sentence greyed out above.

NEW WORDING: Competitions: A player may play for only one Club in the Competitions of any one summer or winter season, except for Veterans and Ladies midweek events as below.

The above restriction on playing for only one Club shall include Veterans', and Ladies midweek events, except that a player may play for one other Club in a Ladies Mid-week or Veterans' event, if the Club the player plays Ladies/Men's and/or Mixed for does not enter a team in the event.

Both rules were passed by the meeting, the first one unanimously and the second change by a majority of 46 votes to 2.



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8. Election of nominated Officers and Councillors for 2021.

(See Appendix 3 for full list of Council for 2021)

- i. **Officers:** Jason Baker explained that the officers of the Association (President, Deputy President, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and Hon Assistant Secretary) were elected to end of 2021, so no election was required on these roles.
- ii. **Councillors:** Jason Baker explained Councillors are elected for 3 years. This year he advised that Matt Perfect was standing down and not seeking re-election. Jason thanked him for his work these past 4 years. This left 3 vacancies on Council for 2021 and there were two nominations for these. The following were then elected unanimously:

- Jacqueline Darby (to end of 2023)
- Lisa King (to end of 2023)

Jason asked if anyone was interested in the newly created role of Inclusion & Diversity Councillor then they should get in contact with him.

- iii. **County Colours.** Jason advised there were no Honorary or County Colours to be presented.

9. Winners of the 2019/2020 Winter Competitions

John Ratcliffe advised that without a face to face meeting this year, the winners were shown on the screen. It was hoped everyone could meet up at next year's AGM, when the trophies for 2019/2020 would be presented.

10. Kent Tennis Awards - announcement of short-listed candidates for the 2020 awards

John Ratcliffe introduced the shortlisted nominations for the 2020 Awards, which will be presented online on Thursday 21 January 2021. There were 108 nominations this year and John thanked Mary Evans and the Awards Committee for applying the selection criteria to arrive at the shortlist. Whilst running through the names of the short-listers, John explained that with curtailed opportunities in some areas of tennis in 2020, due to the pandemic, the Awards Committee had decided not to shortlist for two of the categories; these are the Disability Programme and Performance Coach categories.

John advised he was looking forward to seeing as many people as possible would join Kent Tennis for the Awards on Thursday 21 January.

11. Any Other Business

- John Ratcliffe thanked everyone present and volunteers at all clubs for running things in the most difficult of years to keep people safe, playing tennis and growing membership. Well done to all!
- Keeley Wicks congratulated and thanked Phil Lynch, Janice White, Harri Izard, John Ratcliffe and Nigel Jordan for the very good and informative online Coffee Mornings run fortnightly since the start of May. She had watched these grow, with clubs of all sizes and in all parts of the county contributing. She was impressed that every question gets answered so well. Keeley felt like this is a real community and that she's proud to be a part of Kent Tennis. Phil Lynch thanked Keeley for her kind comments and also all 74 clubs who had participated in the meetings in 2020.
- John Ratcliffe thanked everyone for attending, wishing all a very safe Christmas and a much better New Year.

The meeting closed at 8.11pm.