

BARNET WOOD

NEWSLETTER OF HAYES TENNIS CLUB

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HAYES CHARACTERS

DAVID STIRK

Dave & Teresa



African who is happy at Hayes

I first came to the UK from Zimbabwe in 1993 to join the British Army but after a year of phase 1 and phase 2 training I was unsuccessful in my application for Officer Training at Sandhurst. By then I was missing family and the African sun and returned to Zimbabwe. I enjoyed my time in the military and was grateful for all the adventure training I was able to do as a result, such as skydiving and abseiling.

As a junior in Zimbabwe I represented Matabeleland at Provincial level but did not play much tennis after I left school after A Levels in 1987. I trained as an auditor for the international firm Coopers & Lybrand in my native Bulawayo and worked as a Company Accountant in various firms since. I permanently moved to the UK at the end of 2000 when there was political turmoil in Zimbabwe due to illegal government-inspired seizures of private land and property that has permanently destabilised the country.

I'm currently the reigning Mens' Hayes Doubles Champion with Richard Payne (who I concede has the biggest part in this). I admit I struggle in the singles against the younger, fitter and harder hitting members.

I joined Hayes Tennis Club in April 2020 just at the start of Covid. I was previously a member of Farnborough Tennis Club in Locksbottom and although I enjoyed the social tennis there, they did not participate in any club tennis leagues. I really enjoy the competitive edge and camaraderie of being in a Hayes team and the opportunities to play in club tournaments. Between social play, tournaments and league matches I have as much tennis as I can handle at Hayes and feel I get very good value for the yearly membership fees and am happy the tennis committee is doing a great job.

DAVID STIRK

HERE COMES THE SUN

Members, coaches and club leaders were gearing up for Spring and Summer as the Winter season at Hayes closed under the damp floodlight. The final floodlit session on Thursday March 30 ended an hour early at 9pm as rain pelted down on soggy players. The club President and floodlit tennis organiser Clive Cushen was having an evening off after heading for Spain and better weather for a few days. Treasurer Alan Lennox left the numbers behind and joined his Scottish family north of the border. Membership for the current year was in the 70s and is expected to climb higher in Summer 2023, Chairman Felicity Crowther told the newsletter, “ We are optimistic our membership will grow this year. We already have several new members. Subscriptions are now due and hopefully all our members will rejoin. The new one year introductory offer of £135 for full membership is proving popular.” Summer matches had started, and Hayes had teams in both the Kent and North Kent leagues. Felicity added that coaching groups run by Dennis Saunders had got off to a flying start with many new people joining in. Summer Club nights were starting on Thursday April 6 at 7pm followed by a drink in the bar. These sessions are open to all full senior and midweek members, finishing late under floodlights if necessary. The club wants to encourage everyone to include current members who are interested in upgrading to full membership and friends who may wish to join the club.

We normally play doubles and a maximum of 7 games per set if other members are sitting out and waiting to play, but if not please feel free to play a full set.

At a recent committee meeting Alan Lennox said the club was in the black overall with a credit of £16206 and a debit of £11629. Subscriptions would increase much more than rent. But money was not being put away for refurbishment.

Clive Cushen said that was the only way we could get the courts done. “No courts no club.” Clive added that the starting point was that we needed funding for the courts. Clive and Karl Kelledy agreed they would put together a five year plan for the club.

Karl is also setting up mixed singles leagues for members.

Leagues will be 5 or 6 players each and each league will be based on ability and will last six to eight weeks.

Hayes coach Dennis Saunders was made Kent LTA Development



Dennis with his new recruits

Coach of the Year 2022 for the innovations he'd introduced to the club.

Dennis was putting on four half term Easter tennis camps at Hayes during the school break, with sessions on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.

New members and new

coached players played in Team Challenge competitions for the first time in their lives. Existing players were improving and in some cases excelling.

After the first issue of “Barnet Wood” arrived, some kind readers sent flattering compliments. Others made justified criticism. Send all comments to anthony@doranpressagency.co.uk In future we'll try to publish readers' letters.