



COURT CIRCULAR

DECEMBER 2005

THE LADY HAMILTON TROPHY

September 2005. Report by Barbara Nicol.

The first tournament of the season is customarily the ladies handicap singles. Last year we had to move to later in the calendar to raise sufficient interest but this year the girls got their act together practising over the last few sunny weeks ready to compete on the 25th of September.

The matches could not have been played in better spirit (emotional not alcoholic that is). Those who had practised together played suitably competitively on the day but the atmosphere was fun with great respect being shown to and between all opponents. There were even hugs over the net at the end of matches!! What a delightful ladies section we have.

The game took the form of two boxes but due to illness we were down to seven competitors.

The smaller box was awarded an entire extra game of play, to six games instead of the customary five! Jane Sloan and Barbara Nicol managed to go through.

In the second box there was nail-biting adding up of "games against" to decide the semi-finalists. Jill Slora and Alice Hamilton finally triumphing over Kerry Ward who is to be congratulated on great play in her debut tournament.

The final was a legendary battle between Alice and Jill who both played superbly. A certain parent was heard to remark that his daughter had it all under control when the score line was beginning to look one sided at four games to two. Unfortunately daughters have excellent hearing and there then followed a slight hiccup as the determined Jill fought back. Alice found the nick (how is that spelt?) with serves again and again, and matching each other point for point, the girls brought the score to five games all, forty all.

Everyone held their breath.....and Alice triumphed, leaving Jill runner up for a second year running!

Our thanks go to Nick and Tom for marking and making the balls and also to one year old Jack for a walking demonstration. At only just a year he's showing great balance-surely a future player in the making. Jill managed to do food as well as concentrate on playing. All were worthy of a cheer!





THE MORETON SHIELD.

October 2005. Report by the editor.

The holder – Richard Seymour Mead – romped through his group but his title (NO more mentions of this achievement please: ed) defence was buried 5/0 by John Miller. The only decent cut the doc has made this year was to the wisteria outside the club.

In the last eight Jill Slora (Handicap 57) beat Bob Hurrion (28) in a typically gritty match.

Sir Andrew Hamilton (25) tickled and caressed (surely not :ed) the ball, not giving his young opponent Tom Lewis (58) any hope. There is no doubt that this talented player (Tom not Andrew) will improve and an encounter with Hamilton in his most ruthless form will have taught him much.

John Miller (22) relentlessly served his ‘undertaker’ serve which bored and beat another talented youngster Roly Grant (48). Let us hope the efforts of our committee to recruit the young have not been undermined by the club chairman and the secretary so early in the season!

Simon Allen (43) beat Simon Hobson (23) with great haste!

In the first semi, Hamilton managed twice to lose games by serving faults and once by hitting the banned tambour at game point. Slora’s retrieving made him play far more rallies than he wanted and she was unfortunate to find him – apart from those 3 errors - in superb form. Hamilton won 5/3.

In the second semi, Miller continued to launch many unreturnable high sidewall serves. These missiles threatened an Allen explosion on several occasions. DEFCON 3 status (very high alert) was defused when Allen managed to get to the service end. Miller won 5/3.

The final was between two of the clubs most regular tournament entrants and best players. That is unusual in handicap tournaments and promised a treat for the gallery.

The match unfortunately did not flow as games between players of this level often do- perhaps the slow serves, perhaps the canny play into the corners. It was certainly close- there were 6 games that went to 40 all – Miller took four to Hamilton’s two. Hamilton was unable to raise the pace of his game – he was receiving ? 15- having been giving owe 40/ 30 in his previous two matches .

The result John Miller beat Andrew Hamilton 6/4.

NATIONAL CATEGORY ‘C’ CHAMPIONSHIP 2005 Handicap 20-29

Leamington October 2005. Report by the Editor.

20 players entered this year. In the higher group (20-24) four Moreton Morrell members reached the semifinals.

Robert Allsop beat John miller 6/4 6/2 and Paul Holland beat David Bryant 6/1 6/3. The two finalists are also Leamington members so there was no home court advantage. In a match of the highest standard, Holland beat last years winner Allsop 6/4 6/4.

The 13 players in the 25-29 group saw two Moreton Morrell members through to the semifinals.

Richard Seymour Mead lost to Robin Barlow from Manchester 3/6 5/6 but Andrew Hamilton (rather surprised to find himself in this more lowly section) beat the young Petworth pro Lee Andrews 6/1 6/3.

Hamilton went on to demonstrate that he might indeed be in the wrong section by taking the first set in the final 6/0.

However Barlow (who lost in the 2004 final) dug in, started retrieving as well as his opponent and took the 2nd set 6/3.

Hamilton reasserted himself to take the third and the match 6/0 3/6 6/2.



BRITISH UNDER 14 CHAMPIONSHIP

Report by Madeline Grant.

At the end of August my brother Roly and I went to the British Junior Real Tennis Championships at Queen's Club. I was in my first year of Under 14s and hoping to do better than last year when I was runner-up in the Under 12 Girls' Championship. It is a very friendly tournament and organised into mixed groups of different standards so if you win your group, you move up into the next group to see how you get on there. Roly who had only just come back after a foot injury, was in a very strong group of Under 16s and although he lost two of his group matches, each by a single game and won one more easily, he got better and better and ended up with a win against the only unbeaten player in the section, finishing sixth overall. Luckily for me I won my first group as I got through both my matches, one of them very narrowly, beating Jack Dodgson from Seacourt 4-3; this was specially lucky as it was game point to him when the bell went after 20 minutes!

In the next group the former world champion Penny Lumley's son John was the favourite and we all lost to him fairly easily but I won most of my other games, including beating one of the French boys from Fontainebleau and finished second highest on game score. As I was one of the two highest placed girls in the tournament, I then got to play in the girls' final and faced Finola Simpson who is a nice, stylish player from Prested Hall in Essex, She has a hard forehand and thinks about where she is putting the ball. Unlike some of the girls at lawn tennis tournaments she does not cheat or whine and is fun to talk to at change of ends. I kept the service end for most of the first few games and tried to play it to her backhand. My favourite shot is the volley but as I'm not very experienced I still find it difficult to take the ball off the back wall and dig it out of the corners. When I was 5-1 up she suddenly played some winners but I tried to keep calm as she won the next two games. Luckily my backhand half-volley started working well and I forced some returns into the dedans, eventually taking the match 6-3 with a serve that hit the nick.

It was the first time I had won a national title and we each received vouchers for sportswear too. Roly and I are also going to play against a French Under 15 side at Fontainebleau in October. It is a big encouragement to keep training and see if I can get better in time for next year's championship.

THE FIELD TROPHY

November 20th 2005 At Home.

Report by Phil Shaw-Hamilton.

We had a very successful 5-0 victory over Jesmond Dene.

The only points of interest were that our opponents had rather over done it the day before having put in 4hrs of driving, 4 hours of practising and then 4hrs of drinking and eating at the Regent Bistro. I heard that many of them are well accustomed to losing in the first round 'so why don't we enjoy ourselves while we are at it' - and proceeded to have a bottle of wine with each course!

For our part Sally, nursing injured limbs, hardly made a mistake and ably supported by Andrew had no trouble putting us into the lead (beating Richard MacAlister & Jamie McEwan).

I then went on nursing a bad elbow, did my best to lose to Paul Hetherington (who actually hit the ball hard and low creating outright winners many a time) to make the match an interesting one but thought better of it in the third set. So 2-0.

Paul Wilson-Gunn played a reasonably controlled (for Paul) game but pulled a groin muscle in the second set which then looked terminal - but miraculously, despite freezing off-court temperatures, the muscle warmed up and he played the best tennis I have seen him play in the third and gave us our victory.

John Miller played John Duns and Richard Carr & David Bryant played Alan Douglas & Chris Gerber but the rest of us were having far too nice a lunch to watch too closely!

Thanks to Tom Granville for getting up at 8.00am to light two magnificent fires and thanks to our opponents who took defeat so gracefully that they have invited a contingent to go up north after the deep freeze - say in May.

S Grant & A Hamilton	<i>beat</i>	R MacAlister & J McEwan	6/3 6/2
P Shaw-Hamilton	<i>beat</i>	P Hetherington	6/2 2/6 6/1
P Wilson-Gunn	<i>beat</i>	R Skinner	6/5 5/6 6/4
J Miller	<i>beat</i>	J Duns	6/4 6/1
D Bryant & R Carr	<i>beat</i>	A Douglas & C Gerber	6/3 6/1

THE BRODIE CUP

November 20th 2005 Away at Leamington

Sadly our gallant team went down to the might of our sister club at Leamington 4/1

We must record our only victors and thank the other representatives anonymously

Roly Grant & Stuart Hodges beat Alistair Robson & Peter Stringer 3/6 6/1 6/2

LODDERS NATIONAL INTERCLUB TOURNAMENT

12th/13th November. Report by Tom Granville.

This year's Interclub saw eight teams taking part. Two of which were from Manchester and two from Moreton.

In the singles semi final Moreton's John Miller had a 6-4 win over Holyport's Richard Marmoy. Richard, like most players, found John's high side wall serve difficult to return.

The second semi-final saw Leamington's Charles Wade not having to break a sweat as his opponent, Petworth's Harvey Rawlings, was a no show. Harvey had driven back to Petworth the night before and unfortunately found himself in a ten mile traffic jam on the M25 on Sunday morning.

So a fresh Charles Wade took on John Miller's high side wall serve in the final. John soon went into a 5-2 lead playing very steady tennis. Charles seemed to relax at this point and won the next four games to win 6-5.

The doubles semi-finals were two good matches. First up were Manchester's two time winners, Aldonna Greenwood and Tim Parker, taking on Petworth's Richard Williams and Andrew Falk. The match was very close at 5 all, 40 all — it was anyone's game. As Tim Parker found out, it is fine line between success and failure. Tim had an easy volley (if there is such a thing at 5 all, 40 all) and managed to smash the ball into the net cord from four feet away ending a third successive final appearance for the pair.

The second semi-final was an all Moreton affair with Mathew Fattorini and Anthony Parmiter taking on Nick Mills and Flo Holland. Nick and Flo coming out on top 6-2. Nick and Flo having played so well together throughout the tournament, unfortunately, could not repeat their early form in the final and lost 6-0 in short order to Falk and Williams. The team prize also went to Petworth.

Thanks to David Bryant for organising the tournament as it is difficult to get players from other clubs to commit to play.

THE CENTENARY GOLF DAY

Stratford Golf Club. October 2005. Report by Hipocrotease.

Harry Vardon won the Open in 1905. (To the ignorant this means the British Open Golf Tournament).

It is appropriate therefore that Simon Allen, who organised this event postponed from the Centenary week, named the handsome prize the **Harry Vardon Centenary Trophy**.

The course was in wonderful condition and the autumn sun shone down upon us.

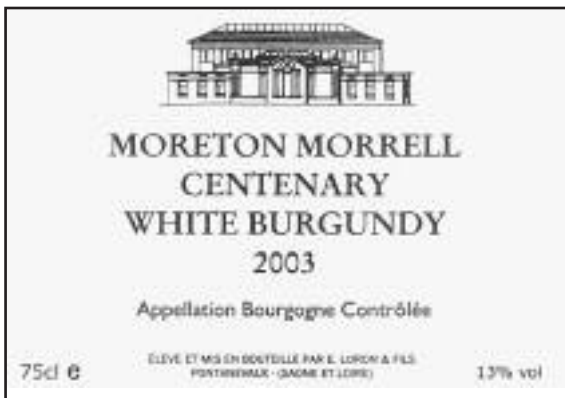
The team winners were David Matthews (a Stratford member), Jill Slora (no slouch with the golf clubs) and Tom Granville (a perennial golf pot hunter).

The Harry Vardon Centenary Trophy was awarded to another Stratford member – home club advantage is high in golf. It has been said that Annie Oakley was both a bandi* and a *ar*. She also showed no shame. Well with a handicap of 18, Sir Andrew Hamil*on can be renamed Annie.

To be fair (why weaken now?: Ed) Andrew must have played very well—particularly as his first shot landed in a bush.

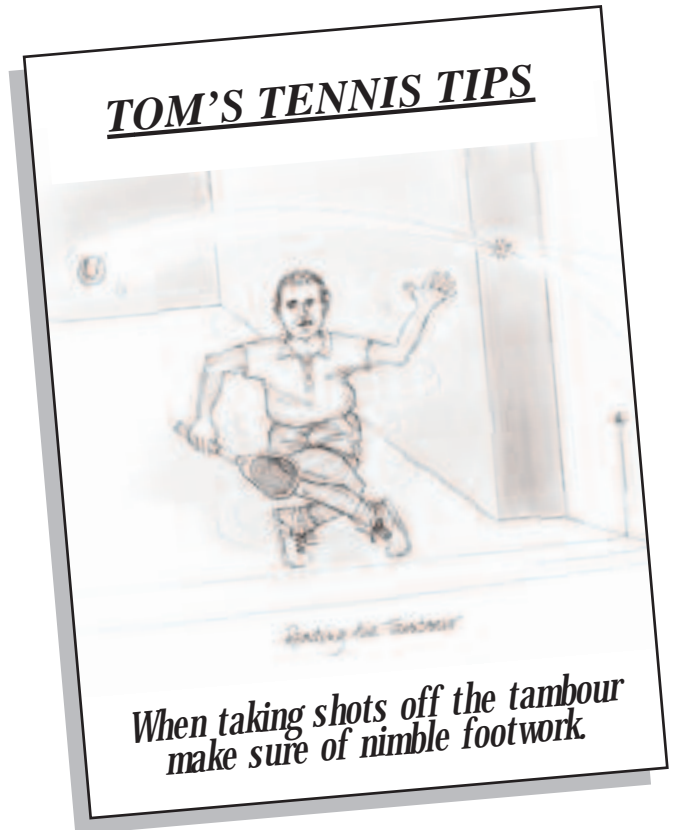
CENTENARY CLUB WINES

These two excellent wines are available by the case if you phone the pros. A bargain at £95 per case collected from the club.



MORETON MORRELL MERCHANDISE

The website has all the details
www.mmtcc.co.uk



CAMEL

Following his great success with STRIP (Showers To Radically Increase Power), the editor has been asked to head a campaign to improve the court lights.

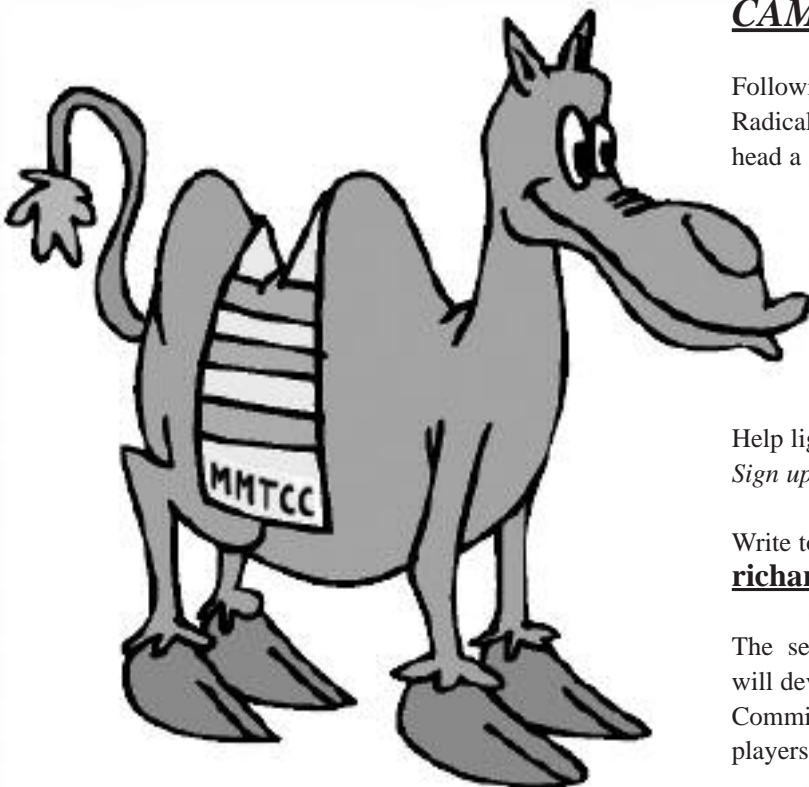
- Is your tennis in the gloom of despond?
- Are your excuses based on visual difficulties?
- Do you play better in daylight?
- Will you help?

Join our campaign.

Help lighten our darkness we beseech you.
Sign up now.

Write to the editor to add your name to the list or email
richardsm@doctors.org.uk

The secretariat of *Campaign for Effective Lighting* will devote themselves to getting the Main or the Tennis Committee to improve our ability to see the ball and the players at the opposite end.



It seems that during the day our wonderful court with both electric and daylight to illuminate proceedings is a joy to play on but as wintery dusk and then night falls there is a gloom of yellow haze at the far end of the court. The balls remain of the highest standard and do not lose their colour with use but nonetheless the difficulty is apparent to any regular players.

Are we to remain only saved by the balls?

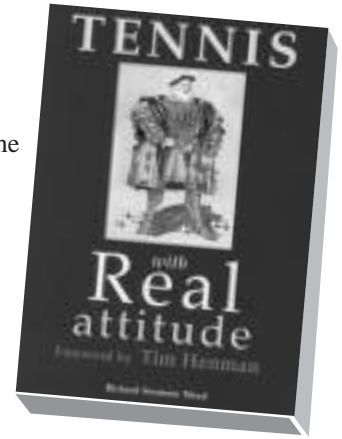
Could the bulbs be changed to a whiter shade or renewed to give a higher light output? Is the power supply sufficient? Should we have a professional lighting agent examine the problem? Do you have any ideas or expertise?? — If so get in touch.

INTERNATIONAL BEST SELLER

The editor is immodestly claiming that his opus **Tennis with Real Attitude** published in aid of the Centenary Fund is the fastest selling real tennis book of all time.

It has sales in Europe, Australia and the USA.

If you have not yet purchased a copy or wish more copies, supplies are running low and you can avoid disappointment by placing orders at the club or online www.mmtcc.co.uk or direct from the publisher richardsm@doctors.org.uk



THE OGILBY CUP

December 3rd/4th . Report by the editor.

Some tremendous tussles took place in the three boxes and in the first knockout round.

The lowest handicapped pair Paul Wilson-Gunn and Richard Carr (20.5) reached the first semifinal where they played Chris Northcote-Green and Martin Ryan (43).

They started with some dire unforced errors and as the handicap was 30 owe 15 , 30 owe 30 they were 3 love down in as many minutes. Sense and skill then surfaced and they took 6 games in a row to win 6/3.

Andrew Hamilton and Simon Allen (27.8) – the lovies from Stratford – played against George Kruszynskij and Chris Creighton-Thomas (50) in the second semi. George was defending the Ogilby Cup which he won last year with Phil James.

The lovies- inspite of indulging in high fives or fist kisses like a pair of Junior Wimbledon girls - played some solid tennis- Andrew is rarely flustered and keeps errors out of his game for rest after rest. Simon avoided the action but played sensibly when required to. They led 5/3 before letting concentration slip and the fierce forces by George both to the dedans and into the forehand corner started to bite.

5/3 became 5/4 and then 5 all. Andrew serving.

George lays chase 3 and 4 with the first return of serve. The points reach 40 all . George serves a poor wimp of a serve which 9 times out of 10 Andrew would cut to about chase 2.

On this occasion the leading lovie waved a handbag at the ball which dribbled dreadfully into the net.

So the final was between ‘the best’ and ‘the worst’ — but only in handicap terms.

Paul and Richard were confined to 1 serve, banned the tambour and owe 15 30 every game.

Thus the serves were emasculated and the grill too risky to force. George and Chris rapidly established a 5/0 lead. Both players forced firmly and put the lower handicapped pair under pressure. A 5 love lead was rapidly established and then they lost a game!

At 1/5 owe 15 40 down, 5 match points were saved by Paul and Richard. 5/2.

Two more match points saved in the next game. 5/3.

But that was it.

The result:

George Kruszynskij & Chris Creighton-Thomas beat Paul Wilson-Gunn & Richard Carr 6/3

