

Club Captain's Report 2017-2018

Aegon Competition (formerly NCL and soon to be Team Tennis)

For the Aegon summer league you need a team of 4 players and matches are played on Sunday mornings. All 4 players first must battle away in singles, then play 2 doubles rubbers where you can only mix pairs per ratings. If it's all even after 6 rubbers, the rules now dictate a 'shoot-out': 2 singles victims must be nominated and the other lucky players get to play doubles, so 3 more rubbers are played, each consisting of a match tiebreak.

As perhaps a sign of our ageing membership, the ladies team this year decided not to enter the Aegon team tennis competition. The men had stopped entering last year, so maybe age isn't the only factor.

Middlesex Cup

The Middlesex Cup is a doubles only knockout competition, requiring teams of 6. The order you play the opposing pairs is determined by pulling from the hat at the start of the fixture.

In the winter, the Middlesex Cup is mixed only and this year we were in the highest division. After beating Harrow Lawn (a new club to me after only 20 years in the league – they play on the grounds of Harrow school) at home, we earned the right to play Cumberland away. They were fielding past professional Naomi Cavaday who was number 5 in the UK before she stopped playing the tour. She was familiar to Mayela as one of the coaches at Roehampton, the LTA National Tennis Centre. Mayela and James were our star pair, winning one of their matches. We lost 5-1, but it looks like Cumberland are in the final against Queens on Sunday 25 March. That would be good to watch!

Danny White noted after playing the last winter mixed against Hackney, also very strong, and then this match against Cumberland, that he'd played 24 games over the course of the two matches and won none! That's how strong the opposition can be in the winter.

Middlesex Summer League (6 teams)

The Ladies 1st team have won promotion to the Premier division for the second time in 3 years and will this summer aim to beat the 2016 total of 30 points or 29% of games won.

Promotion to Premier is in part thanks to four appearances by Mayela and one by Yemisi. We are hoping they can come back and help next summer, since only 3 points promoted us and they certainly contributed more than that.

Star player: Grainne White winning 13 out of 18 rubbers.

The ladies 2nd team are happy in Division 3 for the 7th year in succession, with joint star performers Sally Meacher and Emma Josty notching up 14 wins from 15 rubbers. That's dominance and consistency.

The ladies 3rd team will stay in Division 6 for the 7th time in 9 years. Leading by example, the star player is Mary Dinwoodie with 11 wins from 16 rubbers, although a special mention

to Sue Du Bois for being such a consistent team member all these years. I think she has been a stalwart of the ladies 2nd and 3rd teams for the whole 24 years I've been at the club.

The mens 1st team will continue to play in Division 2 this summer and Tim will hand the captaincy back to Jeremy Tuck.

Star player: James Entwisle

The mens 2nd team was captained by Dave Crout, new in post, and sadly drop to Division 5, but he is building a new squad and now he's more familiar with the role, the team will surely bounce straight back up.

Star player: Sandy Balfour

The mens 3rd team keep their place in Division 8 under Fred's eternal captaincy.

Star player: Jerry Whittaker who played all 21 rubbers, winning 10 of them.

Winter season

We have 6 teams in the Winter Floodlit League, (1 mixed, 3 ladies and 1 mens) and 2 vets teams.

Winter mixed is always a good standard and we will finish mid-table, avoiding the drop, and stay in the highest division for next winter.

Star player statistically: Grainne White winning 5 out of 12 rubbers.

However, Tim Brennan wins the star player for effort by coming out to play at Coolhurst in the sleet and snow even though I had failed to find him a partner. It was the windiest, most challenging of evenings up on the exposed hard courts of Coolhurst, so well done Tim!

The Ladies 1st team, captained by Gill Parrott, stand a good chance of being second in Division 1 pending a good result in the last two matches next week.

Star player: Claire Unwin currently 7 from 8!

The Ladies 2nd team, captained by Kate Engineer, are looking good for second place in Division 3 and promotion to Division 2.

Mary Dinwoodie steered the 3rd team into winter tennis last year, and this year they were in Division 6 against 4 teams from Enfield in one division! Perhaps we should invest in accommodation up there next year!

The mens winter team look set for a second consecutive promotion this winter under Tim Brennan's captaincy, which will take them into Division 2 next winter pending a good result in the last match. They are currently second behind our friendly neighbours, the Pavilion.

Click [here>>](#) for a cool graph of our teams' standings in the Summer and Winter Leagues, together with the star players.

Grainne continued the captaincy of the vets 1st team, who yo-yo between Division 1 and 2. This winter we are top of Division 2 with one game left to decide if we go up again.

Kate Engineer continues as captain of the vets 2nd team, who are building a willing squad but will likely slip from division 5 to division 6 next year.

Junior matches- refer to Joe

Despite saying captaincy can be a thankless task I'd like to thank all the captains for volunteering their time. The simple challenge of getting the right people in the right place at the right time AND for the weather to stay fine can try the patience!

Thank you to Gill Parrott for captaining the ladies 1st team for so many years and for sorting out the fixtures and booking the courts. Thank you to Mike and Ian for ensuring there are always match balls.

And thank you to all the team players for turning out, providing food, playing in good spirit and representing Muswell Hill Methodists. Across the teams, we have over 100 players involved in matches and to have 3 mens and 3 ladies teams supported all year round is a credit to the club!

Stay fit and enjoy your tennis in 2018.

Claire