

Southport & District Tennis League

Chairman's Report 2019 Season

I am writing this report in January, it already seems a long time since the end of last season and the new one is beginning to approach! The months around the end of the year are quite busy for the League Executive Committee as there are a lot of things to review from last year and plans need to be put in place for the AGM and the coming season.

Overall the League ran smoothly in 2019 with no major issues for the League Executive Committee to deal with. The refinements to the rules following the major changes the previous year seemed to have improved the running of the League but it was apparent that further changes would be needed for 2020 and recommendations have now been circulated to all clubs. One major benefit of the changes for 2019 was that the matches conceded were mostly for clubs' lower teams rather than for the higher ones the previous year. However, there were still a worrying total number of matches conceded over the season and also a large number of ineligible players. A number of further refinements are proposed to the rules for 2020 and it is hoped that these will address the issues.

We should all be grateful for the work carried out to organise the League by our League Match Secretary, Jeanette Heague and by our League Planner Manager, Christian Bryan. Without their efforts we would not have had a League! I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank all the club Match Secretaries as I know they put in a great deal of work over the season and this is also vital for the running of the League.

Thank you also to all those involved in the 2019 cup competitions. This includes our Tournament Secretaries, Mick Walsh and Sam Johnson as well as the venues that hosted the various finals and all those who took part. Unfortunately Sam is unable to run the individual tournaments in 2020 but I am delighted that we have a volunteer to replace him and so we will still be able to run these in 2020. Don't forget that any club who hosts a final will receive a £100 grant toward the cost of hosting the event and providing refreshments. Any hosting offers should go to either the appropriate Tournament Secretary or to the League Secretary – all contact details will be in the League Handbook.

While on the subject of resignations and thanks, I must mention three further people who are stepping down this year:

Jason McLeod has put in a very helpful three years as Treasurer which is one of those often unnoticed jobs that are essential for keeping the League going. He will be missed but fortunately we do have a volunteer replacement that I am sure will also do a great job.

Neil Leadbetter has chaired the League Match Regulations Sub-Committee for the last few years and his pragmatic approach to issues has always been of benefit to a smooth settling of any disputes.

Last but definitely not least, Hilary Bell is also stepping down this year. She is currently Handbook Secretary but, as most of you will know, before that she was League Match Secretary for many years. Hilary has made a huge contribution to the League over the last twenty years and all those on the League Executive Committee will miss her knowledge and experience which has been invaluable on many occasions.

I must also thank Pauline Pope and all at Croston for hosting a very enjoyable Presentation Evening in October of last year. It was a very well run evening with some excellent food. Thanks also go to Denis Swainson who organised the cups and ensured that they all looked their best for the occasion.

I'd also like to thank all the other members of the League Executive Committee for their work over the last year. In particular I should mention our President John Spurr who has attended a huge number of League matches during the year and Pauline Pope in her first year as Secretary whose excellent organisational skills have already been very valuable and made my job as Chairman relatively easy!

There are still some vacancies on the Executive so please consider whether you could help the League by giving only a small amount of your time. Most of the roles do not require a huge time commitment but are important in keeping the League running well and enable you to have some influence over the future direction of the League.

As I said at the beginning of this report it is now not long until the 2020 season which will be upon us all of a sudden! I hope you all enjoy your tennis in 2020 and that the League and other events run smoothly.

Rob Hemmings
Chairman, Southport & District Tennis League
January 2020