



The January 2008 Newsletter

New Year. New resolutions. Get fit. More activity. The gyms are full. But there's still lots of court availability in Rathgar. Admittedly the weather has been depressingly inclement (ie it's been lashing rain, with gales added) since early January. But it seems to be picking up now - so get out there on court and see what 2008 has to offer.

The AGM...

Way back when, in late November, we had the club AGM. A disappointing turnout was taken through a review of the highpoints of the year. Tributes were paid to Pauline Scannell, Manus McClafferty and Alison Graham, all of whom retired from the committee. Gerry Walsh retired from the role of President, but agreed to stay on the committee going forward., and happily all the rest of the committee have agreed to stay in situ for the upcoming year. Paul MacCarthy rejoined the committee to bring his experience to the table. Adrian Fingleton was elected as incoming president, Vincent O'Sullivan took over as Hon Secretary, and Bill Collins agreed to continue in his role as Treasurer. The main tasks facing the committee in 2008 are to complete the practice wall project and to look for ways to get as many of the members out and playing competitively as possible. We look forward to another exciting year in RTC! The full committee is Adrian Fingleton, Vincent O'Sullivan, Bill Collins, John Gleeson, Ruth Moore, Gerry Walsh, Veronica Donnelly, Aidan Corcoran, Philip Hardy, Paul MacCarthy and club coach Kieran Galvin.

Winter League...

Once again, we're back in action. It's Winter League time. There are four mens' league teams in action in classes two, five, six and seven. On the female side of the equation three teams are turning out, in classes two, four and five. The format, as we're sure you all know, is three doubles pairs per team, and we are already eating into our batteries of subs. So if you are willing and able, there's every chance you may get a run if you are not already on a team.

To try to shake off the midwinter sluggishness the tennis committee have organised some specific times for league squad training during the week. These are posted clearly on the boards in the club and team captains have also advised their squads - so do come down and get some useful gametime, ideally with your regular league partner

With just two rounds played there are no clearly discernible patterns as yet, save to say that there dont seem to be many easy matches. So hang in there and lets see where we do all end up on February 17th as the first phase ends. Which leads us neatly to the twist in the tail.

All three ladies league teams play at home on the afternoon of February 17th - the last day of the group stages. While we're confident that all our 7 teams will make the playoffs, we have to admit the possibility that some wont. So we'd like to use the fact of the three ladies teams being at home to be the focus for a celebration of all the teams efforts, female and male, subs and all. We'll give you more details before the date but in principle we'll try to organise a running buffet around 4pm. All the ladies will be there (obviously) but we'd encourage all the male league players to drop down for a bite as well, and bring any kids that need minding with you if that makes life simpler. The idea being to try to encourage a bit of interaction and to let all the teams reflect on either where it all went right, or horribly pear-shaped. More anon!

JUNIOR UPDATE

Junior social tennis is starting back this Saturday Feb 2nd at 4.30pm. The round robins will also start back next week, and there will be a slight change to the format. For the teens, we'll look to coach Kieran Galvin to do the groupings and winners in each section will move up a group for next round robin, and results will be taken into account for the selection of junior league teams. - We are hoping this will help energise teen tennis. We will also give prizes at the end of each round robin.

There are some open junior weeks coming up - the local ones being Brookfield and Templeogue - both in March and we will put up notices for that on the board to encourage participation. And finally, there will be a junior social tennis in Brookfield on Sunday 24th Feb. - A signup sheet will be up in the club shortly. Age group will be similar to the last time i.e. aprox 9-12 year olds. Its a return match for the one we hosted last year which went off very well so we look forward to your support.

Developments!

Well we're always trying to push forward and to get the place looking that bit better. Here's a short roundup of the forward steps since the last newsletter in November.

The practice wall continues to be the major focus item. We have come up with an imaginative double sided staggered design and you can see a copy of same on the noticeboard in the reception area - it doesn't reproduce too well in this format. So in order to position this just beyond the clubhouse, we know that a number of not especially memorable trees will have to go. So we had to run that by DCC to ensure that they had no objection. They didn't, so we lodged the planning permission just before Christmas. However in mid January we were advised that we'd have to get the DCC signoff in writing and resubmit the planning permission. We're now doing that, which is why it's disappeared temporarily from the spot beside the gate, shortly to reappear we hope. Nothing, it seems, is ever simple!

Having said all that we're going ahead with the getting of quotes and so on, and we'd hope to have all the technicalities sorted out by the time planning permission hopefully comes through around April (yes, 2008!). So that is, as we fondly describe it at the committee meetings, the 'big one'.

On a less spectacular scale we think we have finally cracked the riddle of the non-draining showers. We do seem to have a somewhat erratic drainage system underneath the building but detective work (and lots of poking) seems to have identified the sources of the problem. They are not draining effectively, so no need to feel worried when a visitor asks where the shower block is, or to rush home yourself to avoid the trauma of angle deep drainoff. More seriously, do tell us if the blockages seem to be returning.

In reception we have finally (thanks John) got a plug fitted to enable us to move the drinks machine across the hall and reclaim the noticeboards. We'd hope to 'jazz these up' a bit in the near future now that the access is cleared, and set specific areas for different elements within the club.

Outside, the deck had become a bit of a death trap with a very slippery surface, so we've gotten that cleaned down and it's much better. A big thanks to those committee members, ex committee members and even the spouse of one committee member who came down the night before the Winter League started and scraped off the mud from the front courts (created by January monsoons), swept up many annoying pine needles, and generally did a tidy up all round. It really did make a difference, so thanks to all - you know who you are!

Needless to say we'll be striving to keep everything in tip-top shape as the year progresses... so tell us if something in particular is bugging you!

Great Victories

You may have noticed that after a few false starts we got all our pennants from past league victories into a display cabinet upstairs beside the kitchen. However after a burst of success in the early days there seems to have been a very bare patch in the late nineties through to the early noughties. In reality we think we're missing a number of pennants, so if you have them adorning your kitchen wall (sad), or more likely stuffed in a drawer somewhere, please bring them in and we'll happily restore them to a place of honour. No questions asked!

What else is new?

Well a brief recap of everything else : We had (a lifetime ago) a very good turnout for the traditional **St Stephens Day** morning Irish Coffee and surplus mince pies tournament (phew). Everyone collectively agreed that Christmas had been 'quiet' and played some friendly but competitive tennis, then went home after some friendly chat to the leftover turkey. We hear persistent rumours that **St Marys** in Donnybrook are anxious to revive the challenge nights we enjoyed (perhaps over-enjoyed) in 2007 so we'll be keeping our ear to the ground in that direction. It is hard to believe but the **Spring Chicken** tournament is just around the corner, given how early Easter is this year, so the signup sheets have just gone up. If you can't get down by end of the day next Wed Feb 6th please e-mail us and say you want to play. **Matches will start on FEB 11...** We also currently have signup sheets for the **Charity league** on the noticeboard in the club (ladies only, fellas) so again think about signing up if the times suit - we have a great track record in this very worthwhile but competitive event. We are pleased to say that the **Tennis committees**, both Junior and Adult are currently looking at all possibilities to maximise our activity in 2008 so watch this space. We'll give you the full membership of each committee in the next editin when we have more space.....Finally a bit of **housekeeping** - which we all forget from time to time. To turn on the hot water for showers, press the green button above the light boxes. Go get into the dressing rooms, the code is top and bottom (1 and 5) together, then the middle (3) then twist the knob. Lots of **RTC clothing** still available (for the league playoffs), talk to Frank in the committee room. If you change your e-mail details or phone numbers or address, please let us know. On court, try not to walk across other people's courts, look where the gates are. Also the **back courts** currently have better drainage and better lights than the front ones. Why not use them? No more news - talk to you in February.... PS Wasn't the Australian open GREAT???