



## The January 2009 Newsletter

Here it is, the very first newsletter of the year. It'd be difficult to pretend that the landscape hasn't changed in a negative way over the last two months but remember when you're out on court it's hard to think about anything else except returning that round yellow object. So get out and play and put it all out of your mind for a while. Think positive!

### **If you build it they will come...maybe.**

Those of us who served on the committee over the past few years knew when a certain item on the agenda was coming. The engineers around the table would get excited (well, more excited than usual at any rate). And then someone would say the magic words. 'And now we come to the wall'. Let's talk about the wall.....

Non-engineers would blanch. We'd had our moment of fun, talking about stuff like finances, the state of the courts, even occasionally league matters. But this was different. The engineer tribe would get animated suddenly and talk about unintelligible things, words us mortals could never understand. Words like core, solid, breeze block, floating foundations, return, reinforced, pour, and so on would be strung together in torrents. Grown men debated whether or not 'staggered' or 'A line' was best. While other grown men and women blinked and said things like - 'Uh, but can we afford it?' 'Do we need Planning Permission', 'How big will it be? (HUGE, they said) and other basic dumb questions.

The engineers smiled enigmatically and told us not to worry. And you know what? They were right. It may have taken us a long time to get there, multiple planning false starts, visits from irate but misinformed neighbours, a brief garda presence, tree surgeons, a lot of muck and a frayed set of engineers nerves. But fair dues, a very simple, sylish, 'classic' designed (to the laymen and women) wall is now standing proud in the former wasteland beyond the clubhouse. Weather permitting the wall will be surfaced smoothly in the next week or so and thereafter we'll move to fence it in properly. We may just get some basic lighting up initially, but it will be use-able. And as a side effect it's certainly tidied up what was basically an area of scrub.

So all you engineers, take a bow. You know who you are so so do we. The people with tears in their eye when they look at that legacy. Some men see things that never were and say why not. And fool me once, fool on....uh....you? And emm, wont get fooled again. Bye, Dubya.

# It all seems so long ago now..and it was.

After a dwindling crowd at the 2007 Christmas Party we decided to offer gift grub (a free meal) this year and while we didnt have to beat people off with a stick we did have a good turnout at the 'End of turkey and Xmas Party combo night'. We followed this up with a rather amazing turnout for the traditional 'St Stephens morning Mince pies, Tennis and mulled wine' event. Nearly 40 people turned out, probably a record in the modern Olympic era. Most of the refreshments were provided by Angela O'Gorman and Brid Dunne with some other eats being brought by the players. Thanks to all who attended both events and we think you'll agree that both were very convivial affairs. A few pix below!



# Development News

Apart from the rather wonderful wall and closing that out thru fencing and lighting, we are also aware that we need to address the drainage on the front five courts. In a nutshell the sand is now compacted so whenever it rains to any degree ponding occurs. So to fix this we'll have to take out the sand, and replace it with fresh supplies. It's not cheap but we know we have to do it. So that's on the agenda once the weather starts to improve. Bear with us. We also need to replace some of the nets and will be moving to do that. Behind the scenes we revamped all the wiring in the clubhouse before the end of 2008 (you may have noticed the security lighting has changed) so another little step forward.....

## Doubles Round Robin

Just started for adults in the club (and meant to augment the squad sessions for the Winter league) there is a doubles round robin now running for both ladies and men. Ladies is on Wednesday nights from 8-10pm (8 courts are booked) and mens is on Thursdays (4 courts booked from 8-10pm also. So please be aware of that and the impact on court time.

## Management Changes!

We're sad to announce that after a few years of giving incredible support to the club, to focus on personal commitments **Frank Gaynor** will be leaving that role shortly but - we hope - still continuing to show off his incredible drop shot technique on court. Obviously we're sad to see him go and want to pay tribute to the judgement and dedication he brought to the role during his tenure. You will be missed Frank! The Committee are working on a backup solution but we will ensure in the short term that phone and e-mail queries are answered and would urge you to use the website where possible to get answers to basic questions. We also will be looking for someone to sweep the courts and check the nets once a week or so (for a fee) so if you know anyone that might be interested (student, retiree etc) please give their phone # to any committee member. Many thanks.

## Court Usage

As activity levels in the club start to pick up again, this will create pressure on courts. Is a good thing in one sense, but it does mean we'll all have to plan when we play a little better, sign in when we come down, and the bottom line is : dont expect to play for more than an hour at peak times (ie 7pm to 9pm, Monday to Thursday. We do now have a Google calendar up on the website which is updated with all that is scheduled, so you may want to look at that and figure out what your chances are prior to coming down 'on spec'. Click on the members zone, the userid is 'tennis' and the password 'herzog'. Then the link to the calendar - use weekly view - will tell you about upcoming events. At least now you have a wall to practice against while you are waiting!

## Winter League

The FIRST league event of the new year kicks (?) off next Sunday January 25th - yes it's time to get the thermals out. We have three mens and three ladies teams in action and we'd like to wish all of them well. If you are selected but need a sub for one of the weeks then work with your team captain to figure out who can come in for you, and please call it out early that you cant make it - it's a killer to be looking for a sub late on a Saturday night....

As always the leagues will place a bit of added pressure on courts on Sunday mornings and afternoons, so please be mindful of that if you are used to having the run of the place for social games on Sundays. We'll post all the home games well in advance so you will know when court availability is likely to be affected.

# Junior Tennis - Into the New Year.

The second term of coaching for juniors started on 12th January, and will run for 10 weeks with a 1 week break to coincide with the school mid-term. Once again there has been a great take-up on the coaching, and additional classes have been scheduled to cater for extra demand.

Social tennis for teenagers will resume on Wednesday 28th January at 8.30, with the normal fee of €3 per session per person. The social programme for all other age groups will start in February, and details will be posted on the Web, and sent to juniors by email.

Upcoming Leinster junior tournaments can be found on [www.leinstertennis.ie/calendar/tournaments/junior\\_calendar](http://www.leinstertennis.ie/calendar/tournaments/junior_calendar)

The Club Junior Coach, Mark O'Neill, will hold a practice seminar for juniors and their parents on Sunday 8th February at 4.30pm. This promises to be a very useful seminar, with parents and children getting guidance on how to make the most of informal practice sessions. There will also be some tips on how to make the best use of the new practice wall. So come down to this session with Mark - no booking necessary.

Some early notice - there will be new format Junior Club Championships this year. The championships will run from 29th August to 6th September, after everyone has had lots of chance to play over the summer months, and both doubles and singles will run at the same time. We will have lots more details nearer to the time.

## Turkeys and Chickens updates

Just for the record, *fado, fado*, in the Turkey tournament The winning team was Gabon with 38 points. The pairings were Eddie McNally & Ruth Moore, John Foley (Fix!)& Aideen Quinlan. John Ivers & Elizabeth Roe, Robert Boland & Joan Ennis, Lee Guckian & Mary Cody

Luxembourg were runners up with 37 points and that team was Cathal Tuffy & Nuala O'Reilly, Richard Parfrey & Angela O'Gorman, Andrew Clark & Emily Shea, Gerry McCarthy & Susan Murphy, Mary Hughes & Maeve Kidney

The Spring Chicken Tournament is starting on Monday 9th Feb.

As several players have said that Friday nights are not the best for playing we have moved the second day's games to Tuesday nights. So now there will be two matches on Monday nights, one at 7 p.m. and one at 8.30 p.m. and then one at 7 p.m. on Tuesday nights. The finals will be on Tuesday 10th March. That leaves everybody free to head off early for Patrick's weekend.

Please sign up on the notice board or reply by e-mail to [rathgartennis@eircom.net](mailto:rathgartennis@eircom.net) before Friday 30th January. This is always a great event so do please participate.