

Leader invites Henman. "He can learn from us"

The leader has invited young Henman to spend a few days in our midst. "I feel that, now this young man has discovered the pleasure in winning, it is important that he should learn to do so with the grace which we have acquired in many years of keen combat. We do have many former International players in our ranks, as well as more than one well recognised coach." At this moment in time, no



reply has been received from young Henman - he is most probably so thrilled at the prospect that he has forgotten to do so. Demonstration matches will be played with the over 70s taking on the under 60s and, of course, winning. The coaches will be instructing the young player in how the thrill of match play is being combined with the fixing of the result.

Wine notes

Grievous bodily harm left the other member of the wine committee d(u)mb with frustration (and with clouded vision after the extensive sampling needed) before a conclusion about the fortified grape juice to be presented at the Annual Dinner was reached. Their final choice is seen below. No complaints are permitted.

From our Cellar

Casal di Serra '95
Sauvignon Blanc / Verdicchio

Castors del Segre '92
Cabernet Sauvignon / Tempranillo

Aequa di Leith '97

Cheese, cheese, wonderful cheese!

Guests at last year's dinner wrote afterwards to thank the organisers for the excellence of the dishes provided, which complemented the company par excellence. All but one commented upon the unconflicting flavours, in that every course and every dish was lightly seasoned with cheese. It happened that the Guest of Honour suffers from fromagiphobia, dating from an early encounter with a strict nanny. We offer our apologies, regrets and congratulations to him for not making a nasty scene until the next day and hope that the management committee have done better this year.

THE SPECTATOR



The leader, in an exclusive interview with our reporter, said that he was not happy about the mockery of the players on court by those in the gallery. He said that those in glass houses should not throw stones and that the mote should be cast out before the mill wheel and planks and other things, which went completely over the head of your reporter, got in the way. He was of the opinion that spectating should be a considered time for studying the techniques of play; much could be learnt from the failure of the players to use the court effectively and to exploit the weaknesses of the opposition. He would be looking next season to a more sober approach to this important aspect of training.



Motoring News

Complaints have recently been heard about the inadequacy of the car park for those with more than ordinary compact automobiles. In an exclusive Club of this sort one would expect, as a normal priority, to have space for a gentleman's motorised carriage. We have heard that a member who recently acquired a B*****y has yet to bring it to the premises. It is reliably reported that this is not because he is still either polishing it or sitting at the controls with the manual in his hand, nor because in retirement he can no longer afford fuel for the journey from the suburbs to the club. We understand that he is not sure whether he can negotiate the narrow road down, or more importantly if having done this he will be able to turn it round. (As of this

moment in time he has not located the reversing mechanism). We helpfully suggest that if he were to park in the grounds of the Gallery of Modern Art (where there is a circular route available) he could with minimal expense summon a taxi cab for the final stage.

Le menu pour

Mercredi, 27th January 1997

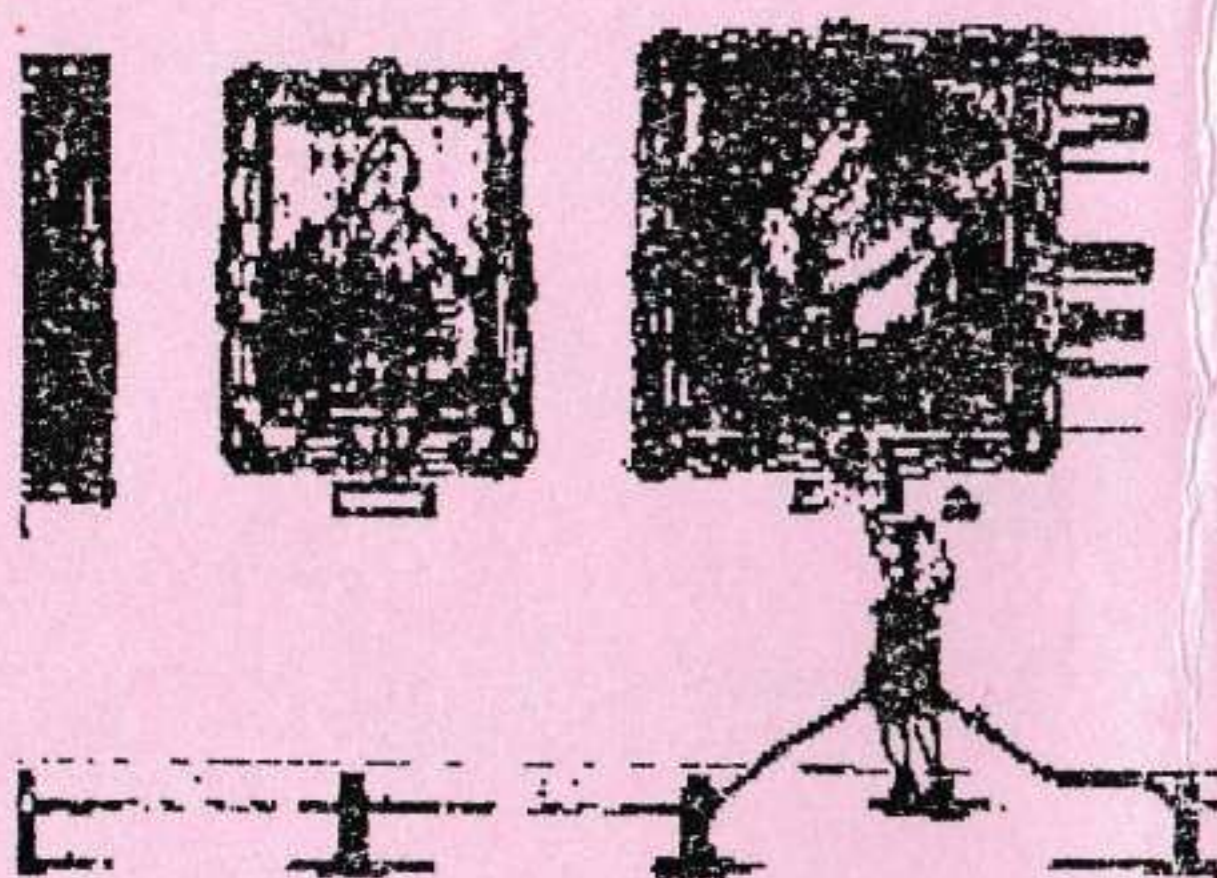
Canapes

Terrines de mare

Chere ou chookie

Just desserts encore

Cafe



When ever I see an OLD MASTER.....

The younger members of the Club are impatient to reach the years of maturity when they can join the ranks of the elite, mature players. Once again we have have opened our ranks, this time to include a young Hippy of impeccable pedigree who is certainly never found sitting on the fence in our midst, and even the brewer's salesman is included, when not having finger trouble although he is sometimes wont to put sampling his wares before important match play. We are not pleased to see the young distiller playing pat-ball on so many occasions; it is felt that a little more practice at the main court game would be rewarding. After returning from his hacienda in Chili our youthful fruit farming friend showed a tendency, possibly developed there among foriegners, to wish to win even when playing against the Leader and his distinguished, normally jovial, tomato-juice loving partner. Let's hope these all failings will be suppressed as we progress towards the summer season and playing in full view of the young and innocent.

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Another Kraut Technic Breakthrough!



Herman demonstrates our newest all purpose device. Are you deaf? Is your hair too long? Do you have difficulty going down hill? Do you lack a dancing partner? Then our researchers at STIHL have come up with the solution for your problems.

Write at once giving your details and enclosing a draft money order for £49.99 to Herman at Stihlenstrasse 105, Frankfurt, and he will, confidentially under plain cover, send you details.

THE DOUBLES TIMES

Mr. Laing ②



Scotland's Only Voice for the Mature Player.



Annual Dinner a Sell Out.

On Wednesday, 29th January 1997, all the leading doubles players are gathering at the Edinburgh Doubles Sports Club to honour Mr C.A.Crole, their Leader, for his continuing work in keeping up the tradition of the Belford Club to be the only facility in Scotland making a court available for the splendid and unique game of Doubles Squash. He is to be congratulated not only in keeping the spirit alive but in introducing younger members to the sport. The notable event this year was the re-introduction of the Doubles Match Play Tournament. Whilst being pleased with the entry of two young players to make the total entry to a neat sixteen, it was most unfortunate that they did not realise, when beating the leader and his randomly selected partner in the Final, that the whole point of the exercise was to enable the gallant Fuhrer to have his name engraved on the cup which had been unearthed from the basement and polished for the occasion.

Those invited to share his moment of triumph found that the champagne, salty with tears, had a somewhat bitter taste. It has to be admitted that the losing pair did so with the grace expected in doubles circles.

This trophy had been keenly competed for up to 1953. It has an historic and most distinguished collection of names of great former players recorded upon it. We hope that the new management will go out of its way to foster the use of the doubles squash court (sic) for its intended purpose, encouraging not only those nearing the years of discretion to take up this game, more social and requiring a greater degree of cunning than its solo counterpart, but also the younger generation.



Not the attitude to victory that we expect

TENNIS BALLS These will once again be available for the spring-time ahead if ordered when replying to the festive invoice for this feast. Our good friend Mr D. Kennedy is holding the price to that of 1996 at great personal cost. Please do not think that his absence tonight is in any way connected with the hard bargaining done on your behalf.

Historical Note about the Coronary Foursomes

This "Doubles" group was started way back in the mid '60s under the leadership of **Bill Nimmo** (G 31) (Lawyer) and included such giants as **Jamie Stormont-Darling** (National Trust) **Lawrie Sleigh** (Car Salesman), **Mike Gwyer** (Wine Merchant), **Gordon van Reenan** (Personnel Officer) and **Ronnie Mackay** (Travel Agent). The only club rule was that once booked in, there was no calling off - each player had to provide an equivalent substitute. As time passed, the group grew in size as younger players were recruited.

Although continuing to play, in the '80s, Bill handed the leadership over to a much sterner taskmaster, **Colin Crole** (Accountant). Further recruitment of talent meant the group continued to grow in size, with five foursomes playing each week. Although Mike Gwyer had arranged peripatetic dinners, even including wives latterly, this annual feature was originally organised by **Philip Mackenzie-Ross** (Investment Guru) and became a regular event as a means of showing gratitude to our Fromagophobic Fuhrer.

The current "*Leadership*", since 2004, is the highly successful triumvirate of clip-board carrying youths - **Charlie Laing** (C 49) (Fencer), **Graham Anderson** (Offshore Money Launderer) and **Bim Bertram** (Poly Entrepreneur) - long may they thrive.

Most of us play in a gentlemanly way - to win but not to **WIN**. Any bus-pass carrying enthusiast is welcome to call for a test run.

The demo. (*see the back page*) was given by two former Fettes Housemasters, a former step-parent and a Sedburghian - school colours an imitative magenta and brown. We have also, among current members with a Fettes connection, **Ian Boyd** (CE 53) (Legal Beagle), **Richard Keith** (Globe Trotting Ex-parent), **John Lang** (C 62) (Money Raiser) and **Angus Crichton-Miller** (Real Tennis Enthusiast) with us - we are trying to get Angus's weight down; he has good acceleration but dreadful brakes. All these add a certain enviable quality to the group as a whole.

A Wee History Lesson about the (*now mainly*) Geriatric Doubles Squash Players

About fifty years ago Bill Nimmo (*Lawyer*), then aged 42, gathered a small group of similarly aged ESC members to play doubles squash as being more sociable and less violent than singles. This developed into a regular Tuesday and Thursday pre-prandial event for Mike Gwyer (*Liquor marketer*), Gordon van Reenan (*Company Secretary, later Secretary of Muirfield*), Jamie Stormonth-Darling (*Director, National Trust of Scotland*), Laurie Sleigh (*Garage Owner*) and Ronnie Mackay (*Travel Agent*). Note the singular range of occupations – unusual for Edinburgh of the era.

Bill arranged the two foursomes the week before and it was a binding rule that any player who found they were unable to play provided a suitably talented substitute. Such substitutes included a then young Robin Crole (*Rtd. District Officer*) and even younger George Preston (*Schoolmaster*) followed by Colin Crole (*Accountant*). During the 70s and 80s the membership grew to include *investment and fund managers, manufacturers, beer salesmen, even fencers and ironmongers*. Deserving of special mention was the incorporation of Jimmy Scott, our own special *orthopaedic advisor*. Such numbers meant that not only were there two foursomes on Tuesdays and Thursdays but also one on Monday. Bill continued to organise all this until he handed the baton on to Colin Crole in the 80s – although he played regularly and with undiminished skill until shortly before he died in 1997 – not quite reaching the four score year target now passed by many.

In the early days the ball was much heavier, so the wooden racquets used were much heavier with a thick shaft and strung with gut. This meant that the racquet barely lasted a year and, even so, had to be restrung and have splints bound on to the shaft during the season. In summer often the tennis courts were out of action and we retreated to the Grange and played on grass.

HONOURABLE COMPANY OF GERIATRIC PLAYERS

ANNUAL REPORTS 1993 Season with 2012 additions

For our longer serving members, their Report, tactfully, remains much as that made in our 1993 review

ALLANACH, A., An energetic, high speed player – experienced partners learn how to fill in the gaps as and when required, thus being able to enjoy reflected glory. However, it has been noted that some of his shots reflect a slight “antipodal” style and finish on the tin or in the net.

Old ANDERSON, G. Sadly Graham has taken Dutch Leave too frequently this season and as a consequence he carries too much weight to have achieved any victories. He does try and gives much pleasure to the opposition - but not to his partner. (His cool organisational powers however have only recently been fully appreciated.)

Old BERTRAM, B Although our consultant orthopod deems that Bim should be unable to play, he remains a good runner on form and has many surprises for the unwary when he gets near the post. (He is however extremely efficient and popular in coping calmly with the Club’s booking system)

BOYD, I., A true artist in the art of the “one-step” play, Ian is happier in the fresh air where his mid-field cover is formidable. He loves the use of the lobbing, but is not very stoical when on the receiving side. Absolutely unbeatable with a well chosen partner.

CALDWELL, C., Now retreated to the Highlands, Colin is much missed as a regular member. A great sportsman, able to observe club rules at all levels - one was almost able to forget he was a “Collman”. Hopefully he can be persuaded to make Guest Appearances for old time’s sake.

Old COWPER, R. Keenly sought after as a partner, Roy provides an excellent pair of legs to support the older members. At his best after a strenuous singles game and as a preparation to his post-game work-out in the club gym.

CRICHTON-MILLER, A., Frequently demonstrates what happens when an unstoppable object meets an immovable one. This player reaches maximum velocity in a most remarkable time, plays elegant shots but could do better with better brakes – he actually needs these reined fairly frequently. Newton one is sure is redefining his Laws of Motion however.

CROAN, J., A younger, very mobile member of the Company who regrettably hits the ball with the middle of the racquet, in the direction intended, very hard. We are not used to this kind of thing - but a good partner to choose.

DONE, J., Frightening with his backward display of nationalistic leanings – since he haunts the front of the court this is the view mostly seen by the opposition. John, sportingly, has lapses at appropriate moments in order to give the opposition some hope – a trait some find strangely difficult to cultivate.

GWILT, G., Spectators are astonished when told that George has broken all records of maturity and even now is making plans for the 12/13 season - he leaves many younger at the starting post. His ability to disguise the direction of his shots confuses even our best tacticians and improves each year.

JESSOP, R., Roger has developed “one-step play” into “no-step play” with extraordinary success – elusively confusing the opposition with sneaky shifts of position when their backs are turned. Perhaps this skill has been honed while practicing in his specially designed mobile court when on holiday.

Old KEITH, R. Richard is inclined to neglect his partner when serving and it is wise always to adopt a careful defensive position for his first serve. The opposition takes comfort that the success rate of this particular missile is such that it does not dominate the game. If you fail to see it, it probably missed the court completely.

LAING, C Oh joy unbounded, our Teflon coated, robotic Leader is thankfully restored to almost youthful mobility again and, as of old, can prove to be a formidable opponent at all levels. Your leave of absence is forgiven, sir.

PHILP, R., His slight difficulty in manipulation of the racquet in a classical style is more than compensated by his unbelievable speed of travel – one never quite knows where Robert will appear next. At his best in the open air where the opposition can just keep tabs on his movements.

Old PRESTON, G., This member is inclined to take play too seriously and he would achieve better results if he adopted a more relaxed approach. Although much sought after as an opponent, play is even better on the days when he does not.

Old SINCLAIR, R., Now that the new hip is in operation, it becomes mightily difficult to keep the ball out of Ronnie’s lethal orbit. The young are advised to choose him as a partner if they wish to clock up a win.

SPENCE, I., A splendid addition to our indefatigable members, Ian never knowingly relaxes so it is wise to ensure that he chooses you as his partner. Even the more elderly members clearly have been known to raise their standards to match his enthusiasm – ensuring that they leave the court unbeaten (*Club Rule No. 1 – No “Victors” permitted*).

Old WISHART, B., Brian has this season perfected the sea-gull approach to serving - the sight of this causes the opposition to panic. Grand-parenthood does not seem to have affected his play by any marked amount - he remains a sporting loser who can recognise a good vintage.

CROLE, C., pensioner Our former leader, Mr Crole, showed excellence, determination and the very best of sporting spirit (*except when challenged on his scoring*). Retirement did not seem to have affected his game too adversely and younger members were well advised to model themselves on the impeccable standards which he epitomised.

LOWE, D., pensioner. Douglas was known as a player one was wise to allow to take the fore court, but has been off-changing for many years. Who knows now that he has joined the robots he may return. However, as a regular dining member he has always been prepared positively to test vigorously all the vintages chosen.

MACKAY, R., pensioner When Ronnie retired he left a permanent mark on the game. Even today (and surely unintentionally) the *Mackay Out* cry continues to be too frequently heard, although sadly the new green gallery netting in the doubles court has rendered the *Mackay Leap* obsolete.

MACKENZIE-ROSS, P., pensioner A glance from the sidelines told one whether Philip is winning - a U-• shaped mouth indicated success and an inverted-U, the reverse. Never knowingly the first on to the court, Philip could be counted upon to pay careful attention and to be punctilious as the special “Carlsburg Hour” approached.

The Geriatrics

When the Edinburgh Sports Club was built and opened its doors in 1937, it was compact. A modest foyer with men's changing room ahead, and the passage to four single squash courts, a doubles court and the Championship Court with galleries and then Fire Door and stairs to first and second floors. To the north of the foyer, stairs went up one flight to give access to the galleries of the courts and a passage to the compact "Club Room". No comfortable seats, but with bar serving simple food and ample ale, managed by the manager seven evenings a week.

Membership was modest. At that time Edinburgh was renowned for its cliquiness – you were not accepted until you had lived here for more than 25 years. It was in this atmosphere that Bill Nimmo, son of a Falkirk lawyer, who was a patriarch at Fettes, set up the Edinburgh branch of Russell and Aitken. Youngest and only WW2 survivor of four brothers, all of whom had distinguished records. Bill himself served behind the lines in the hills of occupied Burma, gained the MC but never talked about it. He was a great sportsman, loving team games, mainly hockey for Inverleith, doubles tennis and squash.

It was in the mid 50's that he started the group, now known as "The Geriatrics", which grew from a small group of friends of similar age and of all walks of life, all hockey players for Inverleith. The other first members were –

Mike Gwyer – Leith Liquor salesman.

Ronnie Mackay – pioneer Prince's Street Travel Agent – famed for his Mackay Jump.

Lawrie Sleight – Garage owner - Rossleith's superior cars

Jamie Stormont Darling – Director of Scottish National Trust.

Robin Crole – Schoolmaster

Once a pattern had been established, the rules were simple. Members indicated the days when they would like to play and Bill Nimmo allocated places. The **Golden Rule** was that when this place had been agreed, the member concerned **HAD** to provide another player of acceptable skill and temperament to take their place. This led to the group getting larger with those who met Bill's standard being invited! New members were gradually added after a trial game or two. This was how the group grew in size and age until it became known, affectionately, as "The Geriatrics".

Although Bill continued to organise the games – three days a week and often two courts in summer – he handed over the reins to Colin Crole, who had retired from his International Hockey career and became our "Fuhrer" and ruled like one. Since Colin retired, Charlie Laing has held the reins lightly for many years and, although many now play well into their 80s and even one well over 90, many young are continuing to maintain the traditions.

Bill continued to play skilfully, often taking a break to unobtrusively put a wee nitroglycerine pill under his tongue - in those days not considered as drug taking. He continued to play until he had a severe heart attack and died three weeks later at the age of 79.