

## Nominations

The following nominations have been received for the offices of President, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Independent Examiner:

President:	Mr. G.B. Brown
Hon. Secretary:	Mr. J.R. Cooper
Hon. Treasurer:	Mr. P. Siviter
Hon. Independent Examiner:	Mrs. Barbara Gabriel

The following members of the Committee retire by rotation in accordance with Rule 8 and being eligible offer themselves for re-election: Messrs Barr, Billington, Blackman, Boden, Compton-Dando and King. In accordance with Rule 9, Mr. Chris Jenkins (St. Paul's School) is proposed for election to the Committee to fill the vacancy created as a result of Mr. Siviter's nomination for Treasurer.

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### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (6.15pm on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2015)**

**The Courtside Restaurant, The All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club**

#### **AGENDA**

1. To approve the Minutes of the AGM on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2014 and consider any matters arising.
2. To receive the report of the Committee and Accounts for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> November 2014.
3. To elect the Officers, Committee and Independent Examiner for the upcoming year.
4. Proposal to amend the Association Rule 6(b) from:

*"FIXED DURATION MEMBERSHIP – The Committee shall have the power in their discretion, to offer a five year membership without payment of Subscription to members of the ISTA Team that play against the AELTC and to members of the Youll Cup winning team each year" to:*

*"FIXED DURATION MEMBERSHIP – The Committee shall have the power in their discretion, to offer a five year membership without payment of Subscription to leavers of Public Schools and other educational establishments on the Headmasters' Conference List at the time of application."*

5. Any other business.

**THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OLD BOYS'**

**LAWN TENNIS ASSOCIATION**



**ANNUAL REPORT 2014**

## Officers and committee members

<b>President:</b>	G.B. Brown (UCS)
<b>Hon. Treasurer:</b>	B. Rusling (Malvern College)
<b>Hon. Secretary:</b>	J.R. Cooper (Colston's School)
<b>Hon. Fixtures Secretary:</b>	E.A. Cooper (Bristol Grammar School)
<b>Committee:</b>	A.J.K. Tatum (KCS Wimbledon) - Chairman J.H. Barr (Stewart's Melville College) C.P. Billington (Bradfield College) A.J. Blackman (Reed's School) C.P. Boden (St. George's College) J. Compton-Dando (Framlington College) E.A. Cooper (Bristol Grammar School) A. Coventry (George Watson's College) B. Gordon-Smith (Bromsgrove School) C.M. King (Stowe School) P. Siviter (Bromsgrove School) H.B. Weatherill (Malvern College)

### Contact details

Website:	<a href="http://www.psoblta.co.uk">www.psoblta.co.uk</a>
Email:	<a href="mailto:psoblta@live.co.uk">psoblta@live.co.uk</a>
Twitter:	@PSOBLTA

## Aims and future funds of the Association

The aims of the Association are:

1. to assist the development of lawn tennis at Independent Schools and other educational establishments; and
2. to encourage the game amongst old boys by arranging matches, tournaments and other fixtures.

The Committee is generally able to ensure the continued pursuit of these aims through judicious use of funds emanating from membership subscriptions, match and entry fees and the occasional donation and Premium Bond win. However, our ambitions are inevitably limited by the funds at our disposal. If any member would like to make a donation or leave a legacy to the Association, please notify the Hon. Secretary, Jonathan Cooper, who will follow up accordingly.

Any funds raised would be put towards the further pursuit of the above aims, particularly as they pertain, for example, to:

- raising awareness of the Association among school-leavers;
- increased participation in the Association by our younger members; and
- greater involvement with and support of lawn tennis at Public Schools themselves.

## Social media

The PSOBLTA website ([www.psoblta.co.uk](http://www.psoblta.co.uk)) is the place to see all the latest news of the Association including any new fixtures added during the year, D'Abernon Cup draws and results. On the website there is also a link where you can register to receive any new articles directly into your inbox.

Also, we are looking to add more photos and match reports to each fixtures, so please feel free to send Jonathan Cooper anything you would like published.

We are pleased to announce that the Association now has a Twitter account (@PSOBLTA), so please do join our existing 170 followers to read the latest tweets.

## PSOBLTA merchandise

The PSOBLTA merchandise range continues to grow and in the last few months we have added a Nike branded hooded sweatshirt to the range. Merchandise can be purchased online ([www.psoblta.co.uk](http://www.psoblta.co.uk)) or by contacting the Hon. Secretary. Given the excellent value, we encourage all members to wear a PSOBLTA tennis shirt when representing the Association and the Pubs' tie whenever possible!

The following Association merchandise is available:

Association ties (silk)	£15.00 available from Hon. Secretary
PSOBLTA Nike Dri-Fit Tennis Shirt	£38.95 including delivery
PSOBLTA Nike Cotton Tennis Shirt	£28.95 including delivery
PSOBLTA Nike hooded sweatshirt	£38.95 including delivery



## PSOBLTA affiliates

A reminder, the Association has partnerships with the following prestigious locations where, as a PSOBLTA member, you will receive discounts and offers:

- Stoke Park
- La Manga
- Prince
- Fila
- Wigmore Sports

Please see the website (or contact the Hon. Secretary) for further details.

## ANNUAL REPORT 2014

The Committee has pleasure in presenting its annual report for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

## 2014 AGM and annual dinner

The Annual General Meeting of the Association was held at The All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2014. Messrs Brown, Cooper and Rusling were elected as President, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer respectively. Mrs B. Gabriel was re-elected as Hon. Independent Examiner.

Messrs E. Cooper, Coventry, Gordon-Smith, Siviter, Tatum and Weatherill were all re-elected to the Committee. At the meeting of the Committee immediately following the AGM, Mr. Tatum was re-elected as the Chairman of the Committee. The Committee's Report and the Accounts of the Association for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> November 2013 were presented at the AGM and unanimously adopted.

Following the AGM, the Annual Dinner was held at the All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club. Our guest speaker was Leon Smith (Great Britain Davis Cup captain) with Dan Lobb (TV presenter) hosting the 'Questions and Answers'. It was a most enjoyable and entertaining evening and it was fascinating to hear all about the Davis Cup tie with USA (which had just been won) and the planning that was being done in advance of the upcoming Italy tie.

## Hon. Treasurer

*Mr. Brian Rusling has indicated his wish to retire from the role of Hon. Treasurer at the 2015 AGM. The Committee would like to place on record its huge thanks for all his considerable efforts and achievements during the seventeen years he has served as our Treasurer. Brian has ensured our books are balanced, our funds are always in the required location and has provided the Committee with his invaluable counsel on financial and other matters. We are most grateful for the significant contribution he has made to the running of the Association.*

*Mr. Paul Siviter has been nominated as the next Association Hon. Treasurer.*

## Fixtures report 2014

It was a busy 2014 for the Pubs and I am also very pleased to report that it was also a successful year. As ever, some very competitive fixtures were played at some great locations and above all in spirit of great sportsmanship. The usual round up of some of the matches and the statistics for the season are set out below.

### ***The 'invincibles' (at least between March and July!)***

Our opening match of the season was a new addition to the calendar with a team of four heading to Scotland to take on Merchiston Castle School in what turned out to be a close match which ultimately went against the Pubs. Nonetheless a fantastic new addition to the fixtures list and one which we hope to play next year back in Edinburgh to coincide with the Calcutta Cup match.

Not deterred by this early loss the Pubs then went five months without losing another fixture – including reclaiming the title to the Courtney Salver in our match against the Fitzwilliam Club as well as the Avory Shield with a narrow victory against the Independent Schools LTC. Many congratulations to the players involved.

However, those successes were not enough for the Pubs' hunger for silverware and the Pubs were also able to win the Peter Jackson Cup for the first time in our fixture against The All England LTC. This was our first victory in this fixture since the year 2000, so congratulations are due to Jonathan Cooper, Rob Blythe, Ben Gordon-Smith and Russell Dykes for their very impressive win.



*PSOBLTA and AELTC teams*

## New members

We were delighted to elect and welcome the following twenty members to the Association during the year:

### Life membership:

Mr. Andrew Bray  
Mr. James Burn  
Mr. Tim Davis  
Mr. Tom Green  
Mr. Alex Grocott  
Mr. Charles Homewood  
Mr. Sebastian Jackson  
Mr. Witney King  
Mr. Gregg Kovic  
Mr. Mike Llewellyn  
Mr. Tim Matthewson  
Mr. Angus Nicholson  
Mr. Rory Pullinger  
Mr. George Robinson  
Mr. Robert Searle  
Mr. Josh Southern  
Mr. Matt Thomas  
Mr. Seb Van Aaken  
Mr. Richard Ward  
Mr. Nigel Watts

The John Lyon School  
Bradfield College  
Bromsgrove School  
The Leys School  
Repton School  
Millfield  
Cheadle Hulme School  
Stowe School  
St. George's College  
Repton School  
Royal Grammar School, Newcastle  
Eton College  
KCS, Wimbledon  
Hampton School  
The Leys School  
Reed's School  
Bromsgrove School  
Bryanston School  
Bradfield College  
Canford School

## Recruitment

We have had an excellent number of new members over the last few years and we are keen to keep up this momentum and spread the enjoyment of the Pubs still further, so please be as active as possible in recruiting Members. Application forms are printable from the website or available directly from the Hon. Secretary.

As you will see from the AGM Agenda, it is proposed to enable five year fixed term memberships without payment of subscription to be offered to leavers of Public Schools. It is our hope that this will provide us the opportunity to introduce many more school leavers to the Association, a significant number of which will chose to apply for Life Membership before their fixed term is completed.

A huge thank you to Stoke Park and St. George's College for kindly hosting the qualifying rounds; and once again our appreciation to the All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club for their continued support of the Association and allowing us to host the final of the D'Abernon Cup at such a superb venue.

Quarter-final	Semi-final	Final	Winner
KCS Old Boys (1) (Home) Old Reptonians	Old Reptonians (4-0)	Old Reptonians (4-0)	Old Reptonians (6-3)
Westminster Old Boys (Home) Old Paulines (3)			
Old Bromsgrovians (3) (Home) Old Reedonians	Old Reedonians (2-2, won by one set)	Old Reedonians (4-0)	
Lancing Old Boys UCS Old Boys (2) (Home)			



*D'Abernon Cup winners – Old Reptonians*

The qualifying round robin days for this year's competition will take place on Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> March (Stoke Park) and Saturday, 11<sup>th</sup> April (St. George's College).

If you would like to enter a team for the 2015 D'Abernon Cup please contact Jonathan Cooper for an entrance form (email: psoblta@live.co.uk).

Overall, the results for 2014 stood at 15 wins, five losses and six draws. With some fantastic new matches being played against The Law Society, Eastbourne College, Putney LTC, The Old Harrovians, Lloyds of London and Merchiston Castle School.

Full detailed of the results are shown on the Pubs website.

### ***Records tumbled!***

Although the Pubs set a relatively modest win / loss ratio to beat in 2013 (six wins, nine losses and three draws) this was well and truly beaten in 2014 and it is noteworthy to highlight it as one of the most successful seasons in recent years. Although it has been said that *"statistics are used much like a drunk uses a lamppost: for support, not illumination"*, I hope the following statistics for 2014 (based on the records for the last 20 years) nonetheless shine a light on 2014 as a successful year:

- Most number of wins (15 representing a 58% win ratio), joint with 2008 and 2009
- Third lowest percentage of loses in a season (19%) behind 2012 (15%) and 2009 (17%)
- Highest number of matches being played (26), joint with 2005

As a result of a larger number and more geographical spread of fixtures, we had 49 different members competing for the Pubs over the season – the highest number in the last ten years. Once again Brad 'no match is too far' Keenes was the highest capped player notching up 18 matches with the young pretender, Chris Jenkins, also showing great support on the court by competing in 11 matches and impressively being on the losing side for the Pubs only once (where in all fairness it should be noted that on that occasion the opposition contained a number of ex-pros). Many thanks to both Brad and Chris for their efforts along with all the other players that represented the Association over the year.

Finally a great deal of thanks is offered to all of our hosts and our match managers for their support to the Pubs.

## Fixtures for 2015

Despite a successful and busy 2014 we have looked to expand our activities further, with 37 fixtures confirmed already for 2015; all of which are included in the fixtures card. We are still seeking to add more fixtures as the season gets underway, so please keep an eye on the Pubs' website, Twitter, Facebook and the periodic e-mail newsletters for details.

The first match of the season will see our boys going to Dublin at the end of February, where no doubt they will be aiming to "play to the best of their abilities" (*apologies – in joke: please see Ben Gordon-Smith for details...*).

All members, in particular new members, are encouraged to get involved in matches and to take the initiative by contacting the relevant match managers or myself should they be keen and available to play in any fixture this season.

### Potential Bermuda fixture

The Association loves any opportunity to travel abroad to play matches. In addition to the current 'on-tour' matches, we have been offered the chance to play in a match in Bermuda. This match would be over the course of five to seven days with at least two fixtures being played. Accommodation is likely to be with members of opposition teams, with players being required to pay their own travel and incidental expenses. The match date is flexible, so if you are interested in this potential match, please contact the Hon. Secretary.

Wishing you all the best for 2015 and hoping to see as many of you as possible on court over the coming year!

*Edward Cooper - Hon. Fixtures Secretary (psoblta.fixtures@gmail.com)*

## D'Abernon Cup 2014

It was very pleasing to see that the 2014 D'Abernon Cup attracted some significant new entrants. This made the two qualifying days even more competitive than usual. The first qualifying day was held indoors at Stoke Park where Westminster Old Boys (group winners) and Lancing Old Boys (group runners-up) qualified. One week later, the Old Reptonians (group winners) and Old Reptonians (group runners-up) also qualified. It was great to see some new teams in the draw for the quarter-finals taking on the previous year's semi-finalists (who qualified for the knock out rounds automatically).

The quarter-finals saw the Old Reptonians throwing down the gauntlet and beating KCS Old Boys (finalists for each of the last thirteen years and winners of the Cup for the last three years); whilst in the same half, the Old Paulines beat Westminster Old Boys. The bottom half of the draw, saw two tight matches, with the Old Reptonians coming through on sets against the Old Bromsgrovians and UCS old Boys narrowly beating Lancing Old Boys.

The semi-finals were more one-sided affairs with both the Old Reptonians and Old Reptonians both winning 4-0. This meant that for the first time this century, the final included neither KCS Old Boys nor the Old Paulines.

The final was played on grass at the All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club where the Old Reptonians team (Phil Brindley, Phil Cooper, Dan Cottier, Alex Grocott, and Richard Harrison and Jamie Muirhead) played the Old Reptonians (Adrian Blackman, Alex Bull, Ben Haran, Paul Jessop, Gary Le Pla and Josh Miller).

It was a very exciting final, with the score poised at 4-2 going into the final round. But with the Old Reptonians winning the final round 2-1; the score ended up 6-3 in favour to the Old Reptonians. Six of the nine matches went to Champions tie-breaks; of which two of these tie-breaks went to 10-8 and one was 11-9. Demonstrating how close the match was and could have gone either way.

The match was played in excellent spirit and was very well supported by a vast number of spectators from both sides (many of which travelled quite a distance). This is not the first time the Old Reptonians have won the D'Abernon Cup and won the trophy four times between 1995 and 1999. Is this the start of another period of dominance?