



Annual Report 2019

THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OLD BOYS' LAWN TENNIS ASSOCIATION

Officers and Committee Members

President	H.B. Weatherill (Malvern College)
Hon. Secretary	J.R. Cooper (Colston's School)
Hon. Treasurer	P. Siviter (Bromsgrove School)
Committee	A.J.K. Tatum (KCS Wimbledon) – Chairman
	J.H. Barr (Stewart's Melville College)
	J. Basell (Royal Grammar School Worcester)
	C.P. Billington (Bradfield College)
	A.J. Blackman (Reed's School)
	C.P. Boden (St. George's College)
	E.A. Cooper (Bristol Grammar School)
	B. Gordon-Smith (Bromsgrove School)
	C.M. Jenkins (St. Paul's School)
	B. Keenes (Bloxham School)
	C.M. King (Stowe School)
	R. Searle (The Leys School)

Contact Details

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Annual Report 2019

The Committee has pleasure in presenting its annual report for the year ended 30th November 2019.

2019 AGM and Annual Dinner

The Annual General Meeting of the Association was held at The All England Lawn Tennis Club on 21st March 2019. Messrs Weatherill, J. Cooper and Siviter were elected as President, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer respectively. Mrs B. Gabriel was re-elected as Hon. Independent Examiner.

Messrs Barr, Billington, Blackman, Boden and King were all re-elected to the Committee and Mr Basell was elected to the Committee for the first time. The Committee's Report and the Accounts of the Association for the year ended 30th November 2018 were presented at the AGM and unanimously adopted. At the meeting of the Committee immediately following the AGM, Mr. Tatum was re-elected as the Chairman of the Committee.

The Annual Dinner followed the AGM where 124 members and guests enjoyed a brilliant evening at The Courtside at The All England Lawn Tennis Club.

Our 2019 Annual Dinner speaker was Alistair McGowan (television actor, impressionist and comic). It was an excellent evening with a record number of attendees to a PSOBLTA Dinner. Alistair certainly was not fazed by this record attendance and kept the all the guests amused with fantastic impressions from newscasters to well-known sportsmen.



90th Anniversary Events

2019 saw the Association celebrate its 90th anniversary. To celebrate the anniversary, four celebratory events took place.

Annual Dinner

The flagship event of the year, which did not disappoint. A PSOBLTA record number of attendees (124) celebrated the start of the season with a fantastic evening of fine company, fine dining and topped off with one of our most amusing evenings with Alistair McGowan. If you have not seen his Roger Federer impression, I would urge you to see one of Alistair's impression shows!

Tennis Tournament



Under August blue skies, 16 members of the Association complete with family and friends descended upon the lush grass courts of Stoke Park to partake in a mix-in tournament.

The format of the day would see eight pairs pooled into two groups. Each pair would play three matches to see who would top each group. After some great matches, Rob Blythe and Sancho Simmonds emerged victorious from their group whilst Jono Summer and Davor Pavlovic topped their group. The stage was set for the final match where Rob and Sancho secured a well-earned victory.

After the matches were concluded, the members enjoyed a wonderful BBQ and the opportunity to mingle with family and friends in the marvelous grounds of Stoke Park. For those members who still had some energy in the tank after lunch, padel tennis beckoned!

The Association's sincere thanks goes to Stoke Park for their hospitality and continued support of the Association in facilitating a wonderful day with particular thanks to Chester King and Marc Codling.

Real Tennis Evening



In September, the next 90th Anniversary event took place at The Queen's Club. 16 Pubs members took to the real tennis court.

With various standards of lawn tennis players playing (from current pro to club standard), the real tennis was certainly a leveller! It took time for all to adjust to a different racquet, court and balls.

The evening took the form of a skills evening, carefully managed by Pubs member, James Acheson-Gray. Varying points on offer for hitting, what felt like, smaller areas of the court as the evening went on.

At the end of the evening, two teams ended up in joint first place – many congratulations to Team 1 (Johnny Barr, Scott Clayton and Sean Murphy) and Team 2 (Charlie Billington, Chris Jenkins and Rory Pullinger).

After the real tennis, we all retired to the bar and enjoyed some excellent dinner. All in all, a great fun evening and there were calls for this to be an annual event. Our thanks go to The Queen's Club, James Acheson-Gray and the club pro's for making this such a superb evening.

Table Tennis Evening

The next racquet sport evening resulted in 16 members enjoying a knock-out tournament at Bounce in Holborn. A hugely entertaining evening with some excellent rallies on show under the UV lights! The overall winner was Richard Ground who narrowly beat Paul Siviter.

The evening did not stop there as the post-tournament analysis commenced while the drinks were flowing!

Overall, a series of great events demonstrating the continued strength and spirit of the association 90 years on from its inception.

Fixtures Report 2019

2019 was a year of renaissance for British sport – England winning the Cricket World Cup, the England rugby team being tantalising close to getting their hands on the Webb Ellis Cup, Lewis Hamilton dominating the F1 circuits, semi-finals for the Lionesses, a British fighter holding three of the heavyweight belts and Liverpool being crowned European and world champions. However, we felt all of this paled in comparison with some of the wins the Pubs achieved over the year to get to a 47%-win ratio!

Familiar territory

That said.... overall, it was a fairly average year again for the Association. 28 matches were played, with the Pubs winning 13 (47%) matches, drawing six (21%) and only losing nine (32%) times. A result spread that was strikingly similar to the results of last year and 2016 and a marked improvement of the *annus horribilis* of 2017.



PSOBLTA v St. George's Hill

Form is temporary

Mirroring the template of 2018, it was once again a very slow start for the Pubs which left us with six losses, three wins and three draws by mid-June. Whether it was the old joints taking their time to warm up, the absence of Summer weather or just the strong standard of the opposition it is hard to tell. Some very spirited performances by Bradfield College, Imperial University and Felsted together with the perpetually tough challenges of Cambridge Blues, Eton and Reeds meant that it was an uphill battle for the rest of the season to get the win ratio back on track.

One shining diamond in the rough first-half of the season was the victory against Fitzwilliam which reversed the result of last year.



PSOBLTA v Fitzwilliam LTC

Class is permanent!

Leading by example – our very own Chairman, Ash Tatum, captained not only one, but two, sides to victory on 15 June 2019... 'Ash Saturday' as it is now known...to reverse the trend. Success at KCS and Ashmansworth ushered in a golden age for the rest of 2019. Like a phoenix rising from the Ash (Tatum) - the rest of the season saw us only bested three more times with 10 going our way and three being evens.



PSOBLTA v IC of GB

Victories against The All England LTC and Oxford Blues perhaps crowned the remarkable success of the second half of the year.



PSOBLTA v AELTC

Full reports of those matches can be found at the Association website (<http://www.psoblta.co.uk>) – which I would recommend checking out.



PSOBLTA v Bromsgrove School

As ever, we have a huge amount of gratitude to those that make the season happen – we have a busy calendar and it takes a lot of effort from a number of members to make these games so enjoyable and competitive. This also could not happen without the generous and welcoming hospitality of our opposition for which we are very thankful.



PSOBLTA v The Leys School

2020 vision

The 2020 calendar is near enough complete with only a small number of fixtures yet to be confirmed – please check the website for more details. Also we strongly encourage anyone interested in playing to get in contact with the captains – new members and new players are always welcome to the teams. We have a lot of new members over the last couple of years and it would be great to have as many of you on the court as possible.

Even better if you would like to sign up as a pair to a fixture with another member. Full details of all the matches can be found at <http://www.psoblta.co.uk>.

Hopefully see you all on court or at the Annual Dinner in 2020!

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

D'Abernon Cup 2019

2019 saw the familiar faces and we also welcomed new teams into the tournament, demonstrating the success of the D'Abernon Cup. Overall, we had 18 teams enter the tournament. Of which, 16 one-pair teams played in the three qualifying groups. Once again, our thanks go to Stoke Park, St. George's College and David Lloyd Raynes Park for allowing us to use their indoor courts.

The first qualifying event took place at Stoke Park. Five teams of Old Boys were playing. It was an excellent morning of tennis and all matches were played in good spirits and was a closely fought battle for the top two spots. The day concluded with Old Westminster qualifying in first place with four wins, closely followed up by the Old Bradfieldians in the runner-up position.

The second qualifying event was held at St. George's College. The Old Georgian's were keen to impress and put on a dominant display of tennis winning all their matches with the loss of just four games during the day. The battle for second place was tightly contested with the Old Etonians coming through, winning four matches.

The final qualifying event was at David Lloyd Raynes Park. KCS Old Boys and Old Bromsgrovians fought through with hard earned wins from some titanic matches to make it through to the main draw. Featuring recently world ranked player Tom Calautti, KCS Old Boys were pushed all the way by two excellent teams in Sevenoaks and Bromsgrove.

The quarter-finals were all relatively one-sided matches which resulted in the Old Reendonians, Old Georgians, KCS Old Boys and the Old Reptonians progressing.

The semi-finals saw the Old Reardonians just beat the Old Georgians by one set and in the other half of the draw, KCS Old Boys conceded against the Old Reptonians. The final was a repeat of five of the last six years, where the Old Reardonians (2015 and 2018 winners) were pitted against the Old Reptonians (2014, 2016, 2017 winners).

The early September sun was shining, which meant the final was played on the grass courts at AELTC.









There was some fine grass court doubles on show with close matches, four of the rubbers were decided by a champions tie-break (Old Reedonians had obviously practiced these as won three of them!). However, after nine rubbers, the Old Reptonians reclaimed the D'Abernon Cup and secured a 5-4 victory (the Old Reedonians will be rueing not winning that fourth champions tie-break!).



D'Abernon Cup winners – Old Reptonians

Our thanks to all the teams that entered the D'Abernon Cup to make it such a success and many thanks to all the qualifying host venues and particularly, the All England Lawn Tennis Club for once again hosting the final and its excellent hospitality.

With the ongoing success of having three qualifying events and new teams wishing to enter, we will continue this format for the 2020 D'Abernon Cup whereby the prior year finalists will automatically qualify to the quarter-finals along with the winners and runners-up from each qualifying event. The three qualifying round robin days for this year's competition will take place on Saturday, 28th March (Stoke Park) Saturday, 4th April (St. George's College) and Sunday, 19th April (David Lloyd Raynes Park). If you would like to enter a team for the 2020 D'Abernon Cup please contact Jonathan Cooper for an entrance form (email: psobla@live.co.uk).

Quarter-final		Semi-final		Final	Winner
Old Reendonians (1) (H) Old Bromsgrovians		Old Reendonians (3-1)		Old Reendonians (2-2, won by one set)	Old Reptonians (5-4)
Old Bradfieldians Old Georgians (H)		Old Georgians (w/o) (H)			
Old Westminster KCS Old Boys (H)		KCS Old Boys (3-1)		Old Reptonians (w/o)	
Old Etonians (H) Old Reptonians (2)		Old Reptonians (3-1) (H)			



New Members

We were delighted to elect and welcome the following 16 members to the Association during the year:

Life Membership:

Ali Anderson	<i>RGS Guildford</i>
Samuel Ashcroft	<i>Trent College, Nottingham</i>
Tony Ballardie	<i>St. Mary's College (Crosby)</i>
Jeffrey Chow	<i>Repton School</i>
Thomas Colautti	<i>KCS, Wimbledon</i>
Miles Edmeston	<i>Stockport Grammar</i>
Patrick Foley	<i>Repton School</i>
Harry Gardner	<i>Bradfield College</i>
William Handley	<i>Charterhouse School</i>
James Macleod	<i>Wellington College</i>
James Marsalek	<i>Kings College Taunton</i>
Harvey Morgan	<i>Colston's School</i>
Conor Niland	<i>Millfield School</i>
Harry Rees	<i>Stowe School</i>
Ben Rogers	<i>Bromsgrove School</i>
Ben Zuckerman	<i>University College School</i>

Recruitment

In recent years, we reached an unprecedented number of new members, both in life members and also a growing number which have taken advantage of the five-year free trial membership for recent school leavers.

The aim of our five-year trial membership is to provide us the opportunity to introduce many more school leavers to the Association, a significant number of which we hope will chose to apply for Life Membership before their fixed term is completed.

As we grow our fixture list each year, we are keen to continue to grow our membership in parallel so we have more members playing more matches and enjoying what the Association can offer. Please be as active as possible in recruiting members and application forms can be obtained from the website (www.psoblta.co.uk) or are available directly from the Hon. Secretary.

Website and Social Media

The PSOBLTA website (www.psoblta.co.uk) is the place to find all the latest news from the Association including any new fixtures added during the year, D'Abernon Cup draws and match 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 always looking to add more photos and match reports, so please feel free to send Jonathan Cooper anything you would like published.

We are pleased to announce that the Association continues to publish news updates via Twitter (@PSOBLTA), so please do join our followers to read the latest news and comments.

PSOBLTA Merchandise

A reminder that PSOBLTA merchandise is available including a tie, Nike branded tennis shirts and caps. Merchandise can be purchased by contacting the Hon. Secretary (psoblta@live.co.uk). 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



PSOBLTA Nike Dri-Fit Tennis Shirt £38.95



PSOBLTA cap £15.00

Finances

The Committee is pleased to report that the Association is in good financial health. The Association's balance sheet at 30th November 2019 reported net assets of £14,426 (30th November 2018: £13,772).

A full set of accounts will be available at the 2020 AGM.

Nominations

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

President	Mr. H.B. Weatherill
Hon. Secretary	Mr. J.R. Cooper
Hon. Treasurer	Mr. P. Siviter
Hon. Independent Examiner	Mrs. B. Gabriel

The following members of the Committee retire by rotation in accordance with Rule 8 and being eligible offer themselves for re-election: Messrs E.A Cooper, Gordon-Smith, Jenkins, Keenes and Tatum.

In accordance with Rule 9, Mr. Jamie Muirhead (Repton) is proposed for election to the Committee for the first time, thus filling the vacancy created as a result of Mr. Searle's retirement from the Committee. The Committee would like to thank Mr. Searle for his time on the Committee.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

(6.45pm on 12th March 2020)

The Courtside, The All England Lawn Tennis Club

AGENDA

1. To approve the Minutes of the AGM of 21st March 2019 and consider any matters arising.
2. To receive the report of the Committee and Accounts for the year ended 30th November 2019.
3. To elect the Officers, Committee and Independent Examiner for the upcoming year.
4. Any other business.