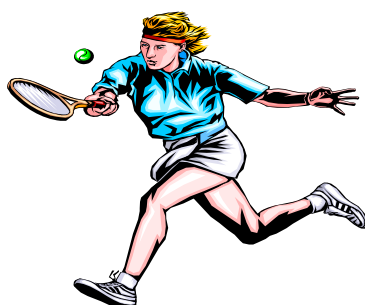


# TOWN GREEN TENNIS CLUB NEWSLETTER

## 2008



### Welcome to the New Season

Welcome to the new season at Town Green Tennis Club. The first club night will be held on **Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> April at 7pm** and as in previous years, will be followed by the usual celebration in the clubhouse.

Most members will know by now that first club night is the perfect opportunity to bring prospective members down to the club to enjoy the occasion and see what the club has to offer. So if you know anyone who is interested in playing tennis – please make sure they get an invite.

As you can see, the newsletter is not in its usual printed format due to time constraints. This does however have one benefit in that it allows us to have a couple more articles than in previous years.

There is a small article - Behind the Scenes, which is worth taking a moment read as it gives members an idea of how the season is organised. As always, any help from members is greatly appreciated, so if you want to get involved please let us know.

If you want more information about the clubs activities, please log onto the clubs website [www.tgtc.net](http://www.tgtc.net) or contact Janet our Secretary.

Sadly, no 2008 newsletter would be complete without an article on John Spurling who passed away. Hopefully, the short piece on John acknowledges his significant contribution to the club.

As usual, we look forward to seeing you on the 15<sup>th</sup> April. Enjoy your tennis!

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## **Hello and Goodbye**

This year's coaching sessions see the departure of an old friend and the welcome of a new coach at Town Green

After many years of coaching at the club we have to announce that Margot Knowles will no longer be running the Wednesday night coaching sessions at Town Green. After some discussion with Margot it became clear that it was increasingly difficult for Margot to commute from Bolton to run the sessions. In turn, the club wanted to try and make the coaching sessions more flexible to satisfy demand, an arrangement which would be more acceptable to a coach local to the area.

It has to be said that Margot has spent a considerable amount of time at the club running the coaching and summer sessions and we thank her for her involvement with the club and wish her well for the future.

As one chapter ends, so another begins and we are very pleased to welcome Andrew Carey as the new club coach for Wednesday nights. Andrew has been coaching for some years and is already known to some members through his coaching activities at Wigan.

Andrew's coaching sessions begin on **Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> April at 7pm**. The coaching application form is available in the membership pack as and you can see we have initially booked Andrew for one hour though this can and will be increased to accommodate demand. It is quite possible therefore that there will be an extra session from 8 till 9 p.m. and this will be advised before the coaching begins.

Both seniors and juniors are asked to apply using the same application form. As always, please do book early to ensure your place.

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## **Junior sessions for 2008**

As in previous years the club will be setting aside two hours on Saturday afternoons for junior club members. This means that juniors have priority use of the courts.

After some discussion it seems that many junior members like to come down to courts at different times and subsequently the Saturday afternoon slot is not as busy as it once used to be. With this in mind we have decided not to supervise the juniors at the Saturday session for 2008.

When we started the junior supervision it was mainly to ensure that if the courts were full that games were rotated and all juniors got the opportunity to play. Obviously this doesn't seem to be a problem any more and hopefully any juniors that do use the courts on Saturday will be able to enjoy a game without the supervision.

As always we will continue to monitor the situation and review the situation if necessary.

This doesn't mean that we have lost Bill Dow who used to supervise the sessions. Bill is now concentrating his efforts on running mini tennis courses which are aimed at children below the normal

club junior age. Bill is using club time to run these sessions and is promoting them through the local schools.

These courses run on Saturday morning between **10 and 12 p.m. from the 12<sup>th</sup> April to 19<sup>th</sup> July** and cater for children under the age of 8. The club has no direct involvement with these sessions and provides the court time to generate interest in the game of tennis and to contribute to the local community. As usual, places are likely to be limited so watch out for Bill's leaflets to the schools.

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## **Town Green working with Edge Hill University**

Town Green has had a good relationship with Edge Hill for a number of years. The club has sponsored junior open days at the Edge Hill and employed its Sports studies students to run junior sessions at Town Green.

This year we are pleased to announce that two students, Marc Ryan and James Brookes are seconded to the club to assist in the club's development. Marc and James will be contacting local schools to run tennis taster sessions in the schools. These sessions have always been very popular in the past. and have introduced many youngsters to tennis when they might not have had the opportunity before.

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## **A Club Milestone**

Last year the club celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> year in the Liverpool league. A short retrospective on how it all started.

As a veteran of the very first league match it hardly seems possible that 20 years have passed since the men's team took to the court for its first tentative steps in the Liverpool league. The first two fixtures against Rainhill and Palmerston are clearly remembered and didn't go well as we lost both by a fair margin. If memory serves me right I think that we played their 5<sup>th</sup> teams, though it has to be said that tennis was a much stronger sport in those days with the average club being able to field up to 6 strong teams on a weekly basis.

The first year we finished about half way down the table but the following year we started to get our act together and buoyed by new members managed to win the bottom division. As many of you know this was followed by successive wins through 6 divisions leading to the team's record-breaking run of 66 wins and 1 draw in 67 league fixtures.

This success was closely followed by the ladies who not wishing to be left out, had by this time started their own Liverpool league team. Eventually the ladies achieved even greater success being promoted to the First Division, the highest playing level ever achieved by a Town Green club.

Further teams became established as we then started a men's second team who also won divisional honours in the Liverpool league. This was followed by entering two mixed teams in the Southport league, which once again was rewarded with divisional wins.

Yes, it has to be said that twenty years have flashed by in seemingly no time whatsoever. Memories of triumphs and disasters survive and hopefully the club will have more successes to celebrate in the future.

Today we don't quite have the same league participation, but still have teams competing in both the Liverpool and Southport leagues. There is standard for everyone and new players are most welcome. If you are interested, please be sure to read the article on club captains and team arrangements for the 2008 season.

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## **New Committee Members Announced**

In a small club like ourselves it's always very helpful to get fresh blood onto the committee. Quite often we will go some years without a change in personnel so it's a pleasure to welcome both Tony Gaynor and Keith O'Donnell onto the committee.

Those of you who play in the Southport league will know Tony and Keith well and we hope that with their knowledge of the club that they are able to make a positive contribution in the future.

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## **Team Captains Confirmed.**

The team captains have been confirmed for the 2008 season...

Men's Liverpool League - Greg Birchall (Assisted by Daryl Birchall)

Ladies Liverpool League - Rachael Coulthard

Southport Team - Liz McDonald

If you are interested in playing for any of the teams - don't be shy and give them a call. They would welcome calls from prospective team members.

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## **John Spurling**

I think we were all deeply shocked when we heard that John Spurling had passed away.

As many of you are aware, John was a huge influence on the junior development at Town Green for a number of years. His energy and enthusiasm were pretty much unstoppable and under his inspiration our junior boys won trophies, quite often beating players from larger and better resourced clubs. I can recall one particularly successful year when I stated publicly that I didn't think that anyone in Lancashire had done more than John to promote and develop tennis in the County.

John was a classic example that you did not need a long list of coaching qualifications to achieve great results. His organisation and sense of purpose ensured that his junior sessions were always well attended and enjoyed by many. If this was not impressive enough, John found time to arrange various junior events, which raised vital funds for local charities.

Its hoped that many of the juniors who thrived under John at Town Green continue to play and enjoy their tennis and understand the huge amount of effort that was undertaken on their behalf. I suspect that their life-long enjoyment of the game of tennis is a legacy John would have wished to leave.

John will be sorely missed and I know that club members will want to pass on their best wishes to his family.

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## **Behind the Scenes – How it all comes together**

For most members the new season will start on opening club night. The courts will be ready, the floodlights will be working and the food waiting for the usual pares tennis celebration. The fact the club has done this for over twenty years now probably masks the huge amount of effort behind the scenes to bring affordable and enjoyable tennis to its members.

In order to get ready for the April start, the committee usually try to get the season organised in January. This is followed by the various league meetings in early February where the forthcoming leagues for the Southport and Liverpool league teams are announced Then comes the unenviable task of scheduling all the various activities into the court time we have available and then getting the information out to members.

An important partner in all this preparation is Aughton Parish Council - who as many of you know, own the courts that we use. The club pays the council rent for the use of the courts and in return the council agree to maintain the courts. The council also have to ensure that the public get the opportunity to use the courts at set times so that in itself requires some careful planning.

It is an arrangement that has worked well over the years. As many members know, there are two plaques on the pavilion wall as the council has won the award for best-maintained playing field in Lancashire on two separate occasions. This is a well deserved accolade and hopefully it won't be long before a hat trick of wins is achieved!.