

16 players
took part in
the event



Pictures: Mark Somerville (07968 488631)

First 'Fives McNab' completed

Fives at Rugby, Eton & Winchester in one day

Marlborough Town Fives Club completed its 'Fives McNab' last November. Having left their home town at 6.15am, the 16 members played at Rugby, Eton and Winchester before returning home.

The day's exploits were inspired by a John Buchan book in which three successful but bored friends in their mid-forties decide to turn to poaching. Under the collective name of John McNab, they set off for Scotland to anonymously poach a salmon, a stag and a grouse from three estates.

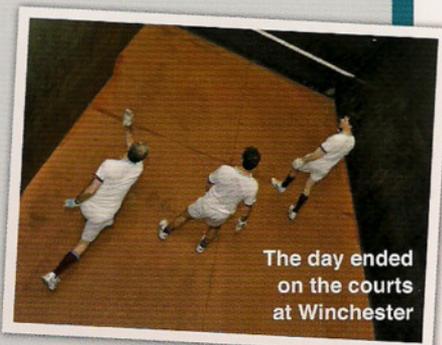
In this spirit, the players went first to Rugby for a Rugby Fives tournament before a 'smoked salmon' breakfast. Then they drove to Eton for a 'venison' lunch and an Eton Fives tournament. Finally, they played a Winchester Fives tournament in Winchester and had 'grouse' sandwiches for tea.

The first shot was hit just after 8.30am, and the final winner struck some 10 hours later at Winchester, the two separated by some 150 miles of driving.

Peter Grant, principal organiser, said, 'Playing at each

of the homes of Fives has never been done on the same day before. Our Club wanted to be the first to pioneer such an event'.

After 13 hours on the road, cream teas, sticky toffee pudding and a traditional English chilli, he reflected: 'This madcap road trip, dreamt up over warm ales in a Marlborough pub, is an adventure totally in keeping with the spirit of English eccentricity. While we are not yet able to attract the TV crowds or sponsorship of Wimbledon,



The day ended on the courts at Winchester

Badminton or Twickenham, we can rival the sore limbs and heads of any top English player.'

Planning for 2012's event has begun, but in the meantime, there's a film of this event on Youtube (search 'Fives McNab').