

Tony Hamilton 1950-2025



1. Tony with Spencer Beal after their first Masters win in 2017

2. Tony & Spencer Beal after winning the 2018 Masters, with RFA President Bernard Atkinson

Many achievements

Schools Doubles Finalist (with Tony Owers) 1969

Masters (over 65) Doubles Winner 6 times 2017, 2018, 2019, 2022, 2023, 2024

- 2017-23 with Spencer Beal
- 2024 with Peter Ross (current holders)
- Tony's winning run from 2017 to 2024 was only interrupted by the Covid years of 2020 & 2021

Tony was a stalwart and leading supporter of the OW Fives Club over many years



2024 All-Whitgift Masters Holders Peter Ross & Tony, with organiser John Hawke

Tony Hamilton, 1950-2025 died aged 75. Old Whitgiftian and former captain of Oxford University Rugby Fives Club, long-standing RFA Club Match Manager.

Masters Doubles champion with Spencer Beal (2017-23) and with Peter Ross 2024

From the RFA President's Winter Newsletter January 2025

Many of you will now be aware of the recent sudden death of Tony Hamilton, a notable schoolboy player at Whitgift and a stalwart of adult Fives for over 50 years. Only a few months back he wrote to the General Secretary on another matter and included the following in his email: "I just wanted to express my gratitude at being part of such a great community of people, for whom Fives seems not just to be a tremendous sport but to build and sustain something important." I am sure many of us would echo those sentiments.

Tony's friend and playing partner, Peter Ross, has provided the following reflections:

"Please find attached a picture of Tony surrounded by his fellow West Country Tour team mates and some of the opposition at Blundell's in February 2023.

Always in his element and at his absolute best on a fives court, Tony was not only one of the best players of his generation but the most loyal and steadfast of friends.

With a wicked, hilarious sense of humour and fun, supported by a genuinely inquisitive and highly intelligent, intellectual cast of mind, no visit, walk, pint or game passed without some insightful observation or rib tickling moment.

As a doubles partner, he was a dream, being completely ambidextrous and willing to play anywhere in support of his frequently less fit, less naturally talented mate.

Many revered legends of our beloved game, including Wayne Enstone, Dave Hebden and Ian Fuller have commented that had Tony been able to play more regularly during his busy career and family years, he would undoubtedly have collected many more trophies."



Tony Owers: “To have Tony as my fives partner from about the age of 14 (1965) until I left England in 1977 (I was at the courts at least once a year after that until a few years ago), and as my very close friend for over 60 years was of course an enormous piece of good fortune for me. In addition to Vs, we did many things together, including two exciting motorbike holidays and plenty of cycle rides, walks, camping and chess. His sense of humour was splendid and often we would be in fits of laughter at some simple (or silly!) joke, pun or circumstance.

Most Vs doubles pairs are two right-handers, which means the opposition concentrates on the left, while sometimes you get the more ideal combination of a left- and right-hander (in which case a good shot down the middle can work wonders!). With Tony being so ambidextrous (at cricket he would bowl left and bat right), strong, very fast off the mark, and with a keen eye and ability to execute a winner, it was easy for me -- he took everything except a shot down the right wall, thus in some matches, I spent much time simply getting out of the way! When I received service (it did not happen often!) from a right-hander, we sometimes changed sides mid-rally, or occasionally confuse the opposition with Tony staying on the right (well more like the middle!). What a joy!

A few school team photos attached (in the 1969 1st IV, Tony is holding the Shield we won at the Northern Schools Tournament in Durham that year. In the rugby one that's him and me at top left). Also a Cumbria walk from 2010 (with Ed Andrews and Robert Dalman), and of course, the three musketeers (now reduced to two) with one of our heroes, Basil Brush!”



Whitgift School 1st IV 1968



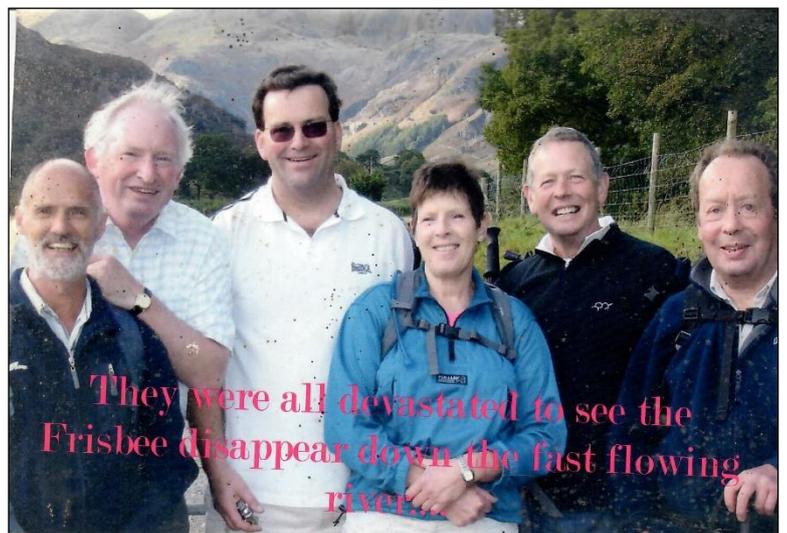
1st XV Whitgift School 1968



Whitgift School 1st IV 1969



Hamilton, Ross and Owers 1980s?



2010