

Results and Reports from the RFA Website 2004-2005

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JESTERS CUP NATIONAL SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

4th / 5th December 2004 at Barnes

Matt Cavanagh is the new Rugby Fives national singles champion, beating James Toop 6-15, 15-4, 15-3 in the 5th December final.

Defending champion James struck an array of spectacular angles in the first game but hindered by a painful left arm found Matt too much as he combined consistency and pressure with clean winners in the later stages.

It is the second year running that the fifth seed has won the tournament – despite the fact they face what is, on paper at least, one of the hardest paths to the final. The amount of tired faces and bodies at St Paul's on Saturday was testament to the strength in depth of this year's field, with no easy matches in a high quality draw. The overall entry of 47 players was the highest since 1991.

First round: N Roberts bt Fraser 15-4, 15-1; Bate bt Stone-Lee 15-10, 15-5; Cavanagh bt Fuller 15-7, 15-3; d'Ancona bt Hebden 15-10, 15-1; Buchanan bt S Roberts 15-7, 15-11; Bishop bt Nelmes 15-11, 8-15, 15-13; Fox bt Jones 15-9, 15-6; Toop bt Bowness 15-7, 15-10. **Quarter-finals:** Roberts bt Bate 15-8, 15-5; Cavanagh bt d'Ancona 15-5, 15-3; Bishop bt Buchanan 5-15, 15-12, 0-0 (retd hurt); Toop bt Fox 15-8, 15-5. **Semi-finals:** Cavanagh bt Roberts 4-15, 15-8, 15-0; Toop bt Bishop 15-7, 15-10. **Final:** Cavanagh bt Toop 6-15, 15-4, 15-3. **Plate:** Round robin: Hebden bt Stone-Lee 15-6, Fraser bt Stone-Lee 15-9; Fraser bt Hebden 15-10; Bowness bt Jones 15-7; Nelmes bt Jones; Nelmes bt Bowness. Final: Fraser bt Nelmes.

London Qualifier Results

Prelims: Pringle bt Brooks 15-10, 15-7; Rees bt Abecassis 15-0, 15-0; Elfick bt Grant 15-12, 15-3; Hatton bt Geere 15-12, 15-3; Fuller bt Beverley 15-1, 15-5; Smith bt Hanney 15-0, 15-2. **First round:** Cavanagh bt Pringle 15-5, 15-0; Hebden bt Hayes 15-13, 1-6 (retd hurt); Rees bt Bristow 15-5, 4-15, 15-0; Stone-Lee bt Elfick 15-9, 15-4; Roberts bt Hatton 15-6, 15-8; Bate bt Bowden 15-0, 15-1; Fuller bt Jones 15-8, 15-9; Hajialexandrou bt Smith 15-3, 15-2. **Quarter-finals:** Cavanagh bt Hebden 15-1, 15-1; Rees bt Stone-Lee 15-4, 15-8; Bate bt Roberts 15-6, 15-9; Fuller bt Hajialexandrou 15-13, 16-15. **Semi-finals:** Cavanagh bt Rees 16-14, 15-5; Bate bt Fuller 15-7, 15-1. **Plate winner:** James Bristow

North Qualifier Results

First round: Thomas bt Nithsdale 15-12, 15-11; Henry bt Harrison 15-9, 15-7. **Quarter finals:** Bishop bt Thomas; Bowness bt Korris 15-3, 15-0; Fraser bt Marco Skogia 15-4, 15-3; Fox bt Henry 15-12, 15-5. **Semi finals:** Bishop bt Bowness 15-10, 15-7; Fox bt Fraser 15-3, 15-11. **Final:** Bishop bt Fox 15-8, 15-9. **Plate:** Nithsdale bt Harrison; Skogia bt Korris.

South West Qualifier Results

First round: Bryce bt Grant; Savery bt Landon; Larnach bt Mosse; Maskell bt Lewis. **Quarter finals:** Savery bt Hughes (w/o); Werkshagen bt Maskell, Rew bt Larnach, Nelmes bt Bryce. **Semi finals:** Nelmes bt Savery; Rew bt Werkshagen 16-14, 15-13. **Final:** Nelmes bt Rew 15-3, 15-6.

NORTH WEST OPEN

29th / 30th January 2005 at Manchester

Phil Bishop won the North West Open Singles with a three-game victory over Hamish Buchanan. Hamish and Robin Perry beat Ben Taberner and Paddy d'Ancona in three-game Doubles final.

Singles

1st round: Larnach bt Thomas 11-6, 11-1

2nd round: Buchanan bt Bliss 11-5, 11-1; Taberner bt Brice 12-10, 11-6; Bowness bt Henry 11-3, 11-4; Bristow bt Maskell 11-9, 11-0; Fox bt Nithsdale 11-1, 11-2; E Fuller bt Lewis 11-2, 11-0; Hughes bt Curtain 11-6, 11-0; Beswick bt Harrison 11-2, 11-2; Bishop bt Walker 7-11, 11-2, 11-2; Breslin bt Perry 2-11, 12-11, 11-3; Courier bt Werkshagen 11-9, 5-11, 11-2; Austin bt King 11-0, 11-3; Minta bt Samuels 11-1, 11-5; Hebden bt Korris 11-3, 11-4; Rew bt Hitchens 11-2, 11-2; d'Ancona bt Larnach 11-2, 11-1

3rd round: Buchanan bt Taberner 11-4, 11-0; Bowness bt Bristow 12-10, 11-4; Fuller bt Fox 12-10, 11-7; Beswick bt Hughes 11-3, 11-0; Bishop bt Breslin 11-2, 11-0; Austin bt Courier 11-3, 11-4; Minta bt Hebden 11-5, 11-6; d'Ancona bt Rew 11-1, 11-1

Quarter-final: Buchanan bt Bowness 9-11, 11-4, 11-6; Beswick bt Fuller 11-6, 11-8; Bishop bt Austin 11-5, 11-5; d'Ancona bt Minta 11-4, 5-11, 11-2

Semi-final: Buchanan bt Beswick 11-0, 11-6; Bishop bt d'Ancona 11-7, 11-3

Final: Bishop bt Buchanan 3-11, 11-6, 11-2

Plate: Henry bt Harrison 15-13

Doubles

1st round: Larnach & Maskell bt Darlington & Samuels 11-2, 10-12, 12-11; King & Brice bt Nithsdale & Harrison 11-6, 11-0; Darlington & Thomas bt Kirby & Kirk 10-12, 12-10, 12-10

2nd round: Buchanan & Perry bt Larnach & Maskell 11-3, 11-1; Bristow & Lee bt Bowness & Henry 11-4, 11-1; Hebden & Werkshagen bt Cotter & Curtain 11-7, 11-2; Bishop & Minta bt Fuller & Hitchens 11-1, 11-3; d'Ancona & Taberner bt King & Brice 11-3, 11-0; Hughes & Rew bt Fox & Moar 7-11, 12-10 11-9; Austin & Bliss bt Lewis & Butterworth 11-7, 11-8; Beswick & Roberts bt Darlington & Thomas 11-0, 11-1

Quarter-final: Buchanan & Perry bt Bristow & Lee 11-5, 11-3; Bishop & Minta bt Hebden & Werkshagen 11-9, 11-9; d'Ancona & Taberner by Hughes & Rew 11-7, 11-8; Beswick & Roberts bt Austin & Bliss 11-7, 11-4

Semi-final: Buchanan & Perry bt Bishop & Minta 12-10, 11-7; d'Ancona & Taberner bt Beswick & Roberts 11-8, 11-2

Final: Buchana & Perry bt d'Ancona & Taberner 11-8, 5-11, 11-3

Plate: Bowness & Henry bt Courier & Curtain 15-6

NORTH OF ENGLAND OPEN

26th / 27th February 2005 at Durham University

It was three hundred miles north but this year's Durham final was an all-Alleyn's affair. Hamish Buchanan notched up his fifth victory in six years (and three in a row) as he beat Ed Fuller 11-5, 11-8 in the final.

Fuller the Father already has his name engraved several times on the trophy and the Son looked determined to emulate his feat as he brushed aside the local knowledge of Adrian Lee in the quarter-finals. He started his semi-final against Nick Austin in similar vein, taking the first game 11-1. Austin soon started finding the back wall nicks to level the match in a tight and tense 12-11 second game. And at

9-3 in the third he looked on course to thwart the Fuller ambitions before the bouncing Ed ground his way back into the match and into the final – 11-9.

The other half of the draw had tight tussles of its own from the start. Having survived a three-game encounter with Ed Hatton, Rico Nicholls slumped to 11-0 in his first game against Buchanan. But the Durham student suddenly got the measure of the national number three with some sharp Eton fives-style volley winners and was only nudged out 12-11.

Elsewhere, Dave Hebden made uncharacteristic errors as he lost his first game against Ollie Stone-Lee. Those mistakes were reduced in the second and by the third had been transformed into winners, with the legendary Hebden right-hand seemingly omnipresent in an 11-2 win. Dave could not put quite the same pressure on Hamish in the semi final, losing 11-0, 11-3.

It set up a final where Hamish's sustained pressure was enough to keep Fuller under the cosh. The rising stars late rally in the second could not prevent an 11-5, 11-8 defeat.

The plate final was won by the ever-energetic Ed Hatton beating another Durham student, Rob Ross, 11-3, 11-0.

The doubles saw a student dream come true as Nicholls and Lee and defeated all-time master Wayne Enstone and the fast-improved Kevin Henry in a gripping battle. The wake-up call for the young pair came in the semis, where Buchanan and Austin proved just too powerful and accurate, despite the impressive shot play and retrieval of Nicholls and Lee, who lost 11-5, 11-7.

The other semi saw Stone-Lee and Hebden make their first final together (although Hebden, with his 98 titles, has seen rather a lot in other company) beating Tim Widdop and the hard-hitting Steve Korris 11-4, 11-3.

Stone-Lee and Hebden felt it was all rather too good to be true as they opened the final with a 11-4 first game. Sure enough, the pressure started to build in the second. Thwarted on their only match point by an outright Austin winner, they trailed 3-10 in the third and a recovery of sorts only slowed Buchanan and Austin's 11-9 final game defence of their title.

The plate competition saw Ed Hatton and Ed Fuller stop Enstone winning what must be the first plate title of his illustrious career. Hatton's two pints before the match may not have been the best preparation but he still won his second plate of the weekend.

RFA'S NEW WEBSITE

17 March 2005

Let us know what you think! Contact Paddy d'Ancona at pat.dan@virgin.net or andy.pringle@mac.com.

UNDER 25S CHAMPIONSHIPS

5th / 6th March 2005 at Denstone

This year's tournament moved to Denstone College, close to Uttoxeter and Alton Towers. A slightly smaller entry of 13 for singles meant 4 groups of round-robins to maximise games. Seeding for the quarters was on points' difference, Bristow and Bate cruising through their early stages. The organiser surprised himself with a solid display earning a 3rd seeding. Despite rather favourable results earlier in the season and a dodgy shoulder on his opponent's part, Ed MMC succeeded in out-huffing and puffing the organiser for the 2nd time in three years. Bristow was made to work against Rich Nichol's crisp volleying, and Grant outlasted his nemesis of schoolboy days, Korris. He went on to challenge but fail to overcome the Bristow juggernaut in the semis: Bate meanwhile had cruised through his quarters and semis against a cramped and hurt MMC, much to the organiser's chagrin.

A tired Bristow went on to prove his mettle against a fresh and eager Bate. The former Oxford captain seemed a little nervous and unfocused, probably unhelped by the deterioration of the balls, but Bristow, the current captain, held his nerve and won in a gritty, consistent fashion. Armitstead impressively snatched the plate from his Durham compatriots.

The doubles involved 5 pairs only so again a round-robin was employed. Bate & Bristow did well to comfortably win their games so soon after completing the singles final on Sunday morning; Hatton & Korris could also be pleased with their performance after a scare against Grant & McGairl. Bate & Bristow were generally on top in the final, but their dominance and control was challenged more than once by some determined baseline rallying from Hatton & Korris. Ross & Nichols took a deserved plate.

It was a pleasure to have Geoff and Wayne spectate and present the prizes, and we certainly hope to have stimulated interest at the school.

I cannot end however without expressing the competitors' and my own disappointment at the lack of an entry from Oxford, Cambridge and Edinburgh. I am very happy to listen to students' suggestions about venue and timings, particularly to do with the Varsity match. Durham, next year's venue, is an attractive town, has excellent courts, and as we all know, a great bunch of guys in the fives club. I hope that Edinburgh in particular but also Oxford and Cambridge will make an effort next year to support a competition that the competitors and the organiser put a great deal of effort into.

Singles

Group 1: Edward Hatton beat Hugo Armitstead 15-2; beat Steve Korris 15-4; beat George McGairl 15-2; Korris beat Armitstead 15-0; beat McGairl 15-9; McGairl beat Armitstead 15-5

Group 2: Dan Grant beat Edward Maitland-Magill-Crichton 15-11; beat Rob Ross 15-4; MMC beat Ross 15-7

Group 3: Marcus Bate beat Andrew Hodder 15-1; beat Henry Richards 15-1; Hodder beat Richards 15-5

Group 4: James Bristow beat Hiro Ishii 15-0; beat Rich Nichols 15-1; Nichols beat Ishii 15-10

Quarter-Finals: Bristow beat Nichols 15-4, 15-13; Grant beat Korris 15-5, 15-13; MMC beat Hatton 15-9, 15-13; Bate beat Hodder 15-2, 15-1

Semi-Finals: Bristow beat Grant 15-6, 15-9, Bate beat MMC 15-3 retd hurt

Final: Bristow beat Bate 15-9, 15-11

Plate: Armitstead beat Richards 15-5; beat Ross 15-11; Ross beat Richards 15-0 Winner: Armitstead

Doubles

Round-robin: Hatton & Korris beat Armitstead & Richards 15-5; beat Grant & McGairl 15-10; beat Ross & Nichols 15-6; Bate & Bristow beat Armitstead & Richards 15-2; beat Grant & McGairl 15-5; beat

Ross & Nichols 15-4; Ross & Nichols beat Armitstead & Richards 15-2; beat Grant & McGairl 15-0;
Grant & McGairl beat Armitstead & Richards 15-5
Hatton & Korris did not play Bate & Bristow in the round-robin
Final: Bate & Bristow beat Hatton & Korris 15-6, 15-8
Plate: Ross & Nichols

THE CYRIAX CUP NATIONAL DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

19th / 20th March 05 at Alleyn's

Spectators flinched and the faint-hearted looked away as Hamish Buchanan and Robin Perry retained their national doubles title in a frenetic victory over Paddy d'Ancona and Ben Taberner. An air raid siren rather than calls of 'yours' and 'mine' would have been more suited to this hard-hitting contest. It was not a case of blind power – more a case of targeted smart bombs often defused by spectacular retrieval from both sides – to the delight of the crowd. The 50-minute first game was tightly-fought throughout but Hamish and Robin just had the edge to find the winners at the crucial times and came out 15-12 victors.

Heavy artillery

Paddy and Ben took the initiative in the second from the start, dominating with a mixture of hard-struck angles and dogged consistency. At 10-4 they appeared to have reduced Hamish and Robin to trying just to tire out their opponents for the decider. But the champions rediscovered their form, with Hamish's cross-courts and Robin's artillery bombardment combining to level the scores at 10-10 and edging on to take the trophy.

Other highlights from the tournament included the return of the old Clifton partnership of Johnny Nelmes and Gareth Rees – who reached the semi-finals after an impressive win over Matt Cavanagh and John Hayes. And from the West, Jim Hughes and Alex Rew almost sent John Beswick and Neil Roberts home early: they were 10-0 up in the third before the former champions found the discipline and pressure needed to squeeze into the semi-finals.

First round: Pringle/Stone-Lee bt Brooks/Elfick 15-12, 15-11; Nelmes/Rees bt Hebden/Jones 15-8, 15-12; Cavanagh/Hayes bt Brookes/Smith 15-5, 15-2; d'Ancona/Taberner bt Hatton/Chopra 15-8, 15-6; Austin/Atkinson bt Sinton/Thomas 15-12, 7-15, 15-10; Hughes/Rew bt Maconie/Saltmarsh 15-12, 13-15, 16-14; Beswick/Roberts bt Geere/Grant 15-2, 15-4.

Quarter-finals: Buchanan/Perry bt Pringle/Stone-Lee 15-8, 15-8; Nelmes/Rees bt Cavanagh/Hayes 16-15, 15-0; d'Ancona/Taberner 15-1, 15-4; Roberts/Beswick bt Hughes/Rew 15-13, 11-15, 15-10.

Semi-finals: Buchanan/Perry bt Nelmes/Rees 15-2, 15-10; d'Ancona/Taberner bt Roberts/Beswick 15-8, 15-8.

Final: Buchanan/Perry bt d'Ancona 15-12, 15-12.

Plate final: Hebden/Jones bt Brooks/Elfick 15-6.

NATIONAL CLUB KNOCKOUT (WOOD CUP) PREVIEW

16th / 17th April 2005

National club knockout champions Oxford Past face Bank of England as they try to retain their title.

The first round draw for the Wood Cup sees their strong rivals Alleyn Old Boys take on Old Merchant Taylors' while Manchester YMCA play Old Paulines.

There will be fierce local rivalry in the South West. Tavistock's Deep West club are drawn against Bristol's West of England outfit and Exeter face Winchester's Wessex club.

A North versus south contest is promised in London, where UCS Old Boys play traditional foes the Executioners.

The RFA will be vying with Christ's Hospital for their place at the 16/17 April finals weekend. Another previous winner, Halifax's White Rose Club, plays Derby Moor.

WINCHESTER FIVES NATIONAL DOUBLES

March 13th 2005 at Malvern

see next page for Report

Winchester Fives National Doubles Championships, 13th March 2005
(Malvern College)

1st Round: J Sinton & C Thomas bt R Cothay & A Scholz 15-9 15-2; I de Weymarn & J Fabes bt M Cowie & E Ronan 15-6 15-2; J Hughes & A Rew bt M Arnott & N Arnott 15-2 15-2; G McGairl & H Mohammed bt C Butler & B Kirk 15-2 15-3; T Lewis & S Maskell bt T Kiggell & A Landon 15-10 15-5; H Buchanan & S Roberts bt P Gray & M King 15-4 15-7. *Quarter-Finals:* D Fox & D Hebden bt T Squires & S Stagg 15-2 15-4; de Weymarn & Fabes bt Sinton & Thomas 15-11 15-9; Hughes & Rew bt McGairl & Mohammed 16-14 15-13; Buchanan & Roberts bt Lewis & Maskell 15-5 15-5. *Semi-Finals:* Fox & Hebden bt de Weymarn & Fabes 15-4 15-6; Buchanan & Roberts bt Hughes & Rew 15-9 15-9.

Final: Fox & Hebden bt Buchanan & Roberts 12-15 16-14 15-9.

Plate: McGairl & Mohammed.

A smaller field than usual contested the 24th 'Barnes Bridge' – the sixth time the competition has been held at Malvern College. The weather was cold but dry, and once the players had settled down to the unique demands of the Malvern courts, plenty of good fives was on view.

The first round matches were all two-gamers, the most enjoyable to watch being the one in which Tim Lewis and Old Malvernian Simon Maskell defeated Tom Kiggell and Andy Landon.

While the first and second seeds sailed through the quarter-finals with relative ease, the other two matches produced four cracking games. Iain de Weymarn and Jez Fabes had to play near their best to beat Jez Sinton and Chris Thomas, while Jim Hughes and Alex Rew found the Wykehamist pair of George McGairl and Hal Mohammed a real handful, only scraping home by the odd couple of points in each game.

Hughes and Rew went on to test second seeds Hamish Buchanan and Sam Roberts in their semi-final but just lacked the accuracy onto the buttress to take a game off the London pair. In the other semi, holders Dave Fox and Dave Hebden defeated de Weymarn and Fabes fairly comfortably.

The final – the only three-game match of the whole tournament – was extremely close. The fives may not have been of quite the same breathtaking standard as the final at Sedbergh in November 2004 involving three of the same players (plus a different Roberts), but it was just as exciting. Buchanan and Roberts won the first game narrowly and took a commanding lead in the second, finally standing at 14-7 up. Fox had been struggling with a damaged muscle and had to receive medical attention, and this broke the pattern of the game, with Fox and Hebden saving a match point and then playing unbeatable fives in a series of superb rallies to take it 16-14.

With Fox's injury and Hebden's energies beginning to waver, there was always the possibility that they might not have been able to sustain their form into the third game. But somehow they managed to do so despite continuous pressure from their opponents, eventually winning the game to 9. Congratulations to all of them for a fine show of fives on the aptly-named 'Masters' court – surely the only four-walled fives court in Britain without a door.

The plate – a lengthy affair involving ten pairs – was deservedly won by McGairl and Mohammed, who beat Sinton and Thomas comfortably in the final. Many thanks to Peter Gray for his help with the tournament and to Malvern College for their hospitality. The four-year cycle starts again next year at Bradfield.

David Barnes

NATIONAL SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIPS

29th March - 1st April 2005 at St. Paul's School, Barnes

Key to schools

A = Alleyn's. B = Blundell's. CH = Christ's Hospital. E = Eastbourne. KCS = KCS Wimbledon. L = Loretto. M = Malvern. MC = Merchiston Castle. MT = Merchant Taylors'. O = Oundle. R = Radley. Se = Sedbergh. Sh = Sherborne. SD = St. Dunstan's. SP = St. Paul's. T = Tonbridge. Wh = Whitgift. Win = Winchester.

Open Singles

Pools: A. 1st: J Pendergrass (L). 2nd: S Kirby (SP). 3rd: D Yuen (Wh). B. 1st: J Walsh (CH). 2nd: W Peck (A). 3rd: T Badminton (SD). C. 1st: C Hay (SP). 2nd: C Compton (E). 3rd: H Clerey (Se). D. 1st: O Pumphrey (Win). 2nd: M Knight-Robson (T). E. 1st: D Park (Sh). 2nd: M Hale (CH). 3rd: S Lewis (A). F. 1st: A Rothnie (T). 2nd: M Sands (E). 3rd: B Reed (SP). G. 1st: M Gibbor (SP). 2nd: R Sulkin (A). H. 1st: W Ellison (Win). 2nd: J Raynard (Se). 3rd: F Hopewell-Smith (O). I. 1st: D Kirk (Sh). 2nd: B Robinson (Win). 3rd: R Kanesan (Wh). J. 1st: E Carr (A). 2nd: A Jennings (SP). 3rd: D Roberts (O). K. 1st: C Jones (T). 2nd: A Taylor (SD). L. 1st: A Seigel (SP). 2nd: A Tong (Win). 3rd: M Raikes (Se). M. 1st: M Belassie (CH). 2nd: A Horsewood (Win). 3rd: J Spencer (SD). N. 1st: E Emmett (SP). 2nd: R Dyke (B). 3rd: K Sewell (Se). O. 1st: P Simister (SP). 2nd: D Ackland (A). 3rd: W Moir (T). P. 1st: H Mohammed (Win). 2nd: M Oates-Wormer (Sh). 3rd: C Leggett (MC).
Last 16: Pendergrass bt Walsh 11-2 11-1; Hay bt Pumphrey 11-2 11-0; Rothnie bt Park 11-1 11-5; Ellison bt Gibbor 11-3 11-5; Kirk bt Carr 11-3 9-11 12-10; Seigel bt Jones 12-10 12-10; Belassie bt Emmett 9-11 11-8 12-10; Mohammed bt Simister 11-2 11-0.

Quarter-Finals: Pendergrass bt Hay 11-3 11-3; Ellison bt Rothnie 11-4 12-10; Seigel bt Kirk 5-11 11-5 11-6; Mohammed bt Belassie 11-4 11-2.

Semi-Finals: Pendergrass bt Ellison 11-3 11-4; Mohammed bt Seigel 11-2 11-5.

Final: Pendergrass bt Mohammed 9-11 11-3 11-2.

Plate 1: Sands. **Plate 2:** Leggett.

Open Doubles

1st Round: Alleyn's III bt Whitgift 11-2 11-4; Eastbourne bt St. Dunstan's 11-0 11-0; Alleyn's II bt Tonbridge II 12-10 11-3; Winchester III bt St. Paul's IV 11-3 11-7; St. Paul's III bt Sedbergh II 11-5 11-9; Oundle w/o Christ's Hospital II.

2nd Round: St. Paul's I bt Alleyn's III 11-1 11-0; Eastbourne w/o Christ's Hospital I; Sedbergh I bt Alleyn's II 11-7 11-0; Sherborne I bt Winchester III 11-2 11-4; Winchester I bt St. Paul's III 11-1 11-1; Sherborne II bt Alleyn's I 11-8 11-3; St. Paul's II bt Oundle 11-1 11-4; Tonbridge bt Winchester II 11-9 11-2.

Quarter-Finals: St. Paul's I bt Eastbourne 12-10 11-5; Sherborne I bt Sedbergh I 11-2 11-5; Winchester I bt Sherborne II 11-0 11-2; Tonbridge bt St. Paul's II 11-4 11-7.

Semi-Finals: St. Paul's I bt Sherborne I 11-5 12-11; Winchester I bt Tonbridge 11-2 11-7.

Final: Winchester I (W Ellison & H Mohammed) bt St Paul's I (E Emmett & M Gibbor) 11-1 11-2.

Plate: Alleyn's I (E Carr & R Sulkin).

Under 16 Singles

Pools: A. 1st: D Tristao (SP). 2nd: I Ackland (A). 3rd: D Pugh (Win). 4th: D Yates (CH). B. 1st: J Walsh (KCS). 2nd: B Litherland (Win). 3rd: U Khan (A). 4th: M Laichena (CH). C(i). 1st: J Kelly (CH). 2nd: T

Fabes (T). 3rd: J Somji (Win). C(ii). 1st: K Sloan (MT). 2nd: A Griffiths (SP). 3rd: J Harding (SD). D. 1st: A Ladak (SP). 2nd: C Burrows (O). 3rd: J Brierly (M). 4th: A George (A). E. 1st: E Leakey (Sh). 2nd: W Gilbert (M). 3rd: T Davenport (Win). 4th: N Hemming-Brown (MT). F. 1st: A Ashok (SP). 2nd: J Thompson (T). 3rd: J Brubert (A). G. 1st: J Corbin (SP). 2nd: J Dudding (Win). 3rd: S Leung (A). 4th: G Janes (CH). H. 1st: R Dadia (SP). 2nd: F Hodgson (O). 3rd: A Branchini (A). I. 1st: P Winzeler (KCS). 2nd: N Simpson (CH). 3rd: B Hale (Win).

Last 12: Sloan bt Kelly 15-10; Winzeler bt Dadia 15-11.

Quarter-Finals: Tristao bt Walsh 11-4 11-8; Ladak bt Sloan 11-1 11-1; Leakey bt Ashok 11-3 11-7; Corbin bt Winzeler 11-0 11-1.

Semi-Finals: Tristao bt Ladak 11-5 12-10; Leakey bt Corbin 12-10 11-7.

Final: Tristao bt Leakey 11-1 11-6.

Plate 1: Simpson. **Plate 2:** Somji.

Under 16 Doubles

Round 1: Christ's Hospital I bt Alleyn's III 11-1 11-2; Tonbridge bt KCS Wimbledon 11-8 11-7; St. Paul's II bt Winchester III 11-2 11-1; Alleyn's I bt Malvern 11-9 6-11 11-8; Winchester II bt Oundle 11-3 11-8; St. Paul's I bt Christ's Hospital II 11-0 11-3; Winchester I bt Alleyn's II 11-6 11-3; St. Paul's III bt Merchant Taylors' 11-6 11-4.

Quarter-Finals: Christ's Hospital I bt Tonbridge 11-4 11-9; St. Paul's II bt Alleyn's I 11-3 11-1; St. Paul's I bt Winchester II 11-3 11-1; St. Paul's III bt Winchester I 3-11 11-6 11-4.

Semi-Finals: St. Paul's II bt Christ's Hospital I 11-9 11-8; St. Paul's I bt St. Paul's III 11-6 11-7.

Final: St. Paul's I (J Corbin & D Tristao) bt St. Paul's II (A Ashok & A Ladak) 11-6 6-11 11-2.

Plate: KCS Wimbledon (J Walsh & P Winzeler).

Under 14 Singles

Pools: A. 1st: J Grant-Dalton (R). 2nd: S Tsouloupas (Wh). 3rd: F Rafter-Phillips (SD). B. 1st: P Hanton (A). 2nd: A Rippingale (SP). 3rd: T Simpson (T). C. 1st: J Loo (SD). 2nd: A McDade (M). 3rd: R Sakkali (Win). D. 1st: G Barnes (SP). 2nd: S Mighall (CH). 3rd: N Keppe (SD). E. 1st: M Hine (SP). 2nd: M Frankis (SD). 3rd: H Rogers (Win). 4th: A Thillanathan (Wh). G. 1st: J Mabbutt (Wh). 2nd: S Oberai (SP). 3rd: W Knapp (A). I. 1st: S Coffey (M). 2nd: A George (A). 3rd: C Brouard (Wh). J. 1st: G Kamenou (SD). 2nd: J Bomford (SP). 3rd: R Monroe (O). K. 1st: D Butt (SD). 2nd: F Beardmore (SP). 3rd: Gamble (Win). L. 1st: E Cloke (T). 2nd: C Castelino (Wh). 3rd: M Deighton (SP). M. 1st: L Squire-Smith (Win). 2nd: D Ahrabian (SP). 3rd: F Dinwiddie (T). 4th: G Holloway (SD). O. 1st: T Hennock (CH). 2nd: F Rossi (Wh). 3rd: S Winayak (SP). P. 1st: O Ratnatunga (SP). 2nd: C Murray (SD). 3rd: H Hunter (A).

Knockout stage: Hanton bt Grant-Dalton 15-12; Barnes bt Loo 15-12; Kamenou bt Coffey 16-15; Butt bt Cloke 15-4; Ratnatunga bt Hennock 15-10.

Quarter-Finals: Barnes bt Hanton 15-6; Hine bt Mabbutt 15-4; Butt bt Kamenou 15-6; Squire-Smith bt Ratnatunga 16-15.

Semi-Finals: Barnes bt Hine 15-13; Squire-Smith bt Butt 15-11.

Final: Squire-Smith bt Barnes 11-6 11-9.

Plate 1: Frankis. **Plate 2:** Rogers.

Under 14 Doubles

1st Round: St. Dunstan's II bt Whitgift III 15-2; Whitgift II bt St. Paul's IV 15-4; St. Dunstan's IV w/o Oundle; St. Dunstan's III w/o Tonbridge II; Alleyn's I bt St. Paul's III 15-9.

2nd Round: Malvern I bt Alleyn's II 15-5; St. Paul's II bt St. Dunstan's II 15-11; Winchester I bt Whitgift II 15-13; Tonbridge I bt St. Dunstan's IV 15-7; St. Paul's I bt St. Dunstan's III 15-6; Winchester II bt Christ's Hospital 15-13; Whitgift I bt St. Paul's V 15-1; Alleyn's I bt St. Dunstan's I 16-15.

Quarter-Finals: St. Paul's II bt Malvern I 15-7; Winchester I bt Tonbridge I 15-3; St. Paul's I bt Winchester II 15-3; Alleyn's I bt Whitgift I 15-5.

Semi-Finals: St. Paul's II bt Winchester I 15-12; Alleyn's I bt St. Paul's I 16-14.

Final: Alleyn's I (A George & P Hanton) bt St. Paul's II (J Bomford & A Ratnatunga) 11-6 11-5.

Plate: St. Paul's III (D Ahrabian & M Deighton).

NATIONAL VETERANS CHAMPIONSHIPS

2nd / 3rd April 2005 at Horsham

This year's Veterans Championships at Christs Hospital was once again blessed with glorious weather, and nine participants assembled keenly on the Saturday to do battle for the Singles. The outstanding match of the day was a first round contest between new entrant Richard Kemp and iDidsbury rangerf Brian Nithsdale, with Brian showing great determination and stamina to win 11-8 in the third after well over an hour's play. Richard went on to win the Plate comfortably.

Jeremy Schroeter polished off a tired Brian in the top semi while Dave Hebden won through against John East in the other half. The final was closely fought early in each game, but Dave, benefiting from having had more recent fives than his opponent, pulled away in each game to win 11-3, 11-4.

There were several epic struggles in the Doubles and it was good to see Ian Puckle back on court after a lengthy absence from competitive fives. Ian and Phil Atkinson won an excellent encounter against Stuart Kirby and Brian Kirk, with the losers going on to retain their Plate trophy.

In other first round games, John East and Bernard Atkinson were pressed hard by Brian Nithsdale and Ian Roberts, while Jeremy Schroeter and Chris Horrocks won a 3-gamer against Arnott and Wilkinson. But the outstanding match was the semi in which East and Atkinson triumphed against Schroeter and Horrocks 14-16, 15-8, 16-14 to reach the final.

Top seeds Dave Hebden and Keith Puckle had a more comfortable passage to the final and this was perhaps significant as they proved too strong for their battle weary opponents. There were however some excellent rallies, and it was remarkable that all four players in the final were of 'Vintage' age, with Keith putting on a typically steady and crafty exhibition of fives to become the oldest ever winner of the Veterans Doubles.

All the competitors enjoyed the excellent Christ's Hospital facilities and made a valiant attempt to consume the plentiful provisions, a task made more difficult this year by the regrettable absence of Bob Sandie!

Singles

Quarter-Finals: J Schroeter bt I Torkington 11-0 11-1; B Nithsdale bt R Kemp 11-8 8-11 11-8; J East bt N Arnott 11-5 11-3; D Hebden bt G McIntyre 11-3 11-1.

Semi-Finals: Schroeter bt Nithsdale 11-3 11-2; Hebden bt East 11-3 11-4.

Final: Hebden bt Schroeter 11-3 11-4.

Spoon: East. **Plate:** Kemp.

Doubles

1st Round: D Hebden & K Puckle bt W Avenell & I Torkington 15-1 15-2.

Quarter-Finals: Hebden & Puckle bt J Hawke & G McIntyre 15-2 15-5; P Atkinson & I Puckle bt S Kirby & B Kirk 15-13 15-10; B Atkinson & J East bt B Nithsdale & I Roberts 15-5 15-13; C Horrocks & J Schroeter bt N Arnott & M Wilkinson 13-15 15-8 15-5.

Semi-Finals: Hebden & K Puckle bt P Atkinson & I Puckle 15-4 15-5; B Atkinson & East bt Horrocks & Schroeter 14-16 15-2 16-14.

Final: Hebden & K Puckle bt B Atkinson & East 15-6 15-2.

Spoon: P Atkinson & I Puckle. Plate: Kirby & Kirk.

NATIONAL CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP (WOOD CUP)

16th / 17th April 2005 at Roehampton

As thousands of athletes fought their way round the east of the city in the London Marathon, across town St Paul's hosted a struggle every bit as tough, in which Alleyn Old Boys reclaimed the Wood Cup with a win against Manchester YMCA.

The final was a tense battle between the two sides that have dominated this competition in recent years, and a fitting end to a hard-fought tournament: so hard-fought, in fact, that two of the quarter finals were won by just five points.

Eventually, though, the best two teams won through to the final. And, it was the superb form of the National Doubles champions, Hamish Buchanan and Robin Perry, that saw the Londoners through to a win.

It was only at the last, though, that victory was certain, and the singles showed how close the match would be. With the four games shared between the sides, the YMCA went into the doubles just four points ahead.

Almost immediately, though, the tide began to turn. In an epic encounter that combined delicate touch, devastating power and amazing retrieval from both sides, Hamish and Robin always had the edge over John Beswick and Ben Taberner, winning two games for the loss of twelve points. So, with honours all-but even in the other court, Alleyn Old Boys went into the second round of doubles four points up.

It was in the next game that the match was effectively won, when Hamish and Robin blitzed Phil Bishop and Kevin Henry. Conceding just one point in that first game set them on the road to an overall victory that was sealed by an 11-6 win in the second. Ben and John restored some pride with an 11-9 win over Dave Hebden and Bruce Hanton, but by that stage, Alleyn Old Boys had an unassailable lead and won by 17 points.

At least there was some consolation for the YMCA as, on their long journey home, they could listen to that other great Manchester club – the Red Devils of United – smash four goals past Newcastle to clinch a spot in the final of the FA Cup.

Quarter finals: Manchester YMCA bt Old Paulines 111-32; RFA bt Wessex 112-107; West of England bt Executioners 109-104; Alleyn Old boys bt White Rose Club 123-61

Semi-finals: Manchester YMCA bt RFA 93-52; Alleyn Old Boys bt West of England 122-58

Final: Alleyn Old Boys bt Manchester YMCA 97-80

SCOTTISH OPEN PREVIEW AND DRAW

30th April / 1st May 2005

Fourteen players will compete for the final singles championship of the season this Saturday in the Scottish Open. And again, there's a strong field, with entries from London, Manchester and Yorkshire as well as Scotland.

Last year's finalists, Hamish Buchanan and Neil Roberts, are seeded to meet again in this year's final, but they will need to survive some tough challenges for that to happen – not least of which are their potential semi-final opponents. Neil is seeded to meet his regular doubles partner, John Beswick, while Hamish could meet Dave Hebden, his team-mate in the Alleyn Old Boys side which won the Wood Cup earlier this month.

Local interest centres on John Cooper, who faces last year's plate winner Andy Pringle in the first round, and former Loretto schoolboy Ian Purvis, who is up against Roger Butterworth. Ian may not play that regularly any more but, as any of the Jesters who faced him on their tour in February will testify, he is still a force to be reckoned with, especially on the courts where he learned the game.

In what would be a fascinating battle, he will face Dave Hebden in the quarter finals if both players win their first-round games – against Roger Butterworth and Jeff Thomas respectively.

Elsewhere in the draw, Alex Smith will be looking for revenge over Graham McIntyre after Graham and his partner (a certain Hamish Buchanan) beat Alex and his partner on their way to winning last year's doubles title.

Phil Reynolds has the unenviable task of facing John Beswick in round one, while the final match in the first round features John Hawke and Kevin Henry, the latter of whom won both the singles and doubles plate in January's North West Open.

SCOTTISH OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS

30th April / 1st May 2005 at Loretto

Hamish Buchanan and Jeff Thomas were the big winners in the Scottish Open: each left Loretto with one title and a Plate win.

The singles competition pretty much followed the form book, with the top three seeds – Hamish, Neil Roberts and John Beswick – safely reaching the semi-finals.

However, the fourth quarter-final provided the best game of the tournament: a three-game marathon between fourth seed Dave Hebden and Ian Purvis. In a match for the connoisseurs, they combined power, width and length with astonishingly deft touches and amazing retrieving. The watching crowd was enthralled and, for a few minutes at least, some of them stopped moaning about the size of their B&B's bedrooms. The match could have gone either way, but Ian just prevailed in a tight third game.

His reward was a semi-final against Hamish. And, although he wasn't able to win, Ian can be happy that he scored more points against the defending champion than anyone else.

The second semi-final saw a fine win for John Beswick over Neil Roberts, setting up a final against Hamish, which was anything but the one-sided match the scores may suggest.

In fact, John was playing extremely well – well enough to take a game off Neil to love in the semi – and there were countless long, hard-fought rallies. But, no matter what John threw at him, Hamish always had the answer, and emerged a deserved winner.

The following day saw an equally hard-fought doubles tournament, with partners drawn according to their performances in the singles.

This led to plenty of close matches but, in the end, the Manchester YMCA provided three of the four players in the final. And it was the all-Manchester pairing of Jeff Thomas and Kevin Henry who came back from a game down to win a war of attrition against Roger Butterworth and Dave Hebden. The look of pain on Roger's face as the match went into the third game was matched only by that on John Beswick's as he saw his lift back to Manchester get even later.

After winning the singles Plate, it was Jeff's second piece of silverware of the weekend – matching Hamish, who had partnered John Hawke to the Doubles Plate.

Nevertheless, Jeff's performance will be remembered not for that, but for an on-court cry in the singles that has already entered fives folklore. Like many before him, he was being run ragged by the relentless precision of Dave Hebden when, after a particularly tough rally, he turned to the crowd and wailed: 'He's got me on a piece of string!'

Hear it on a court near you soon...

Singles

Round 1: A Smith bt G McIntyre 11-2, 11-2; I Purvis bt R Butterworth 11-0, 11-1; D Hebden bt J Thomas 11-2, 11-1; J Beswick bt P Reynolds 11-4, 11-2; A Pringle bt J Cooper 11-1, 11-4; K Henry bt J Hawke 11-1, 11-6

Quarter-finals: H Buchanan bt A Smith 11-4, 11-4; I Purvis bt D Hebden 11-8, 9-11, 11-7; J Beswick bt A Pringle 11-3, 11-3; N Roberts bt K Henry 11-4, 11-1

Semi-finals: H Buchanan bt I Purvis 11-7, 11-5; J Beswick bt N Roberts 11-0, 11-7

Final: Buchanan bt Beswick 11-4, 11-2

Plate: Thomas

Doubles

Pool A: Buchanan/Hawke bt Pringle/I Roberts 16-14, 15-10; Henry/Thomas bt Pringle/Roberts 15-10, 15-3; Henry/Thomas bt Buchanan/Hawke 15-2, 5-15, 15-5

Pool B: Hebden/Butterworth bt Beswick/McIntyre 15-13, 15-12; Smith/Reynolds bt Beswick/McIntyre 15-16, 15-2, 15-3; Hebden/Butterworth bt Smith/Reynolds 15-10, 15-10

Final: Henry/Thomas bt Hebden/Butterworth 14-16, 15-7, 15-4

Plate: Buchanan/Hawke bt Smith/Reynolds 15-12, 15-8

SOUTH WEST OPEN PREVIEW AND DRAW

Blundell's School, Tiverton, 30th July 2005

An extremely high quality field will contest the season's first tournament this weekend. In both the singles and doubles, the South West Open at Blundell's School in Tiverton will see three of the country's top four ranked players in action.

Top seed in the singles is current national champion Matt Cavanagh and, if the seedings work out, he will face Hamish Buchanan in the final, in a repeat of last year's epic encounter won by Matt. Also seeded to make the semi-finals are Paddy d'Ancona, twice a winner of this tournament, and current North West Open champion Phil Bishop.

Well before then, though, there are plenty of exciting contests in prospect. As early as the second round, for example, we could see clashes between players in the Top 20. John Minta will face Marcus Bate if

they both win their first-round games, while Mike Hajialexandrou could tackle Dave Hebden at the same stage.

The doubles tournament, too, promises to be an extremely high quality competition. The players in the top two seeded pairs – Hamish Buchanan, Dave Hebden, John Beswick and Paddy d’Ancona – have all won this competition in the past, and Dave and Hamish are the reigning champions.

Mind you, they’ll have to play well just to reach the final. The other seeds scheduled to reach the semis – an ex-Oxford pairing of Matt Cavanagh and James Bristow and the all-Mancunian duo of Phil Bishop and John Minta – are all ranked within the top 20.

In total, 15 pairs will play in the doubles, guaranteeing a combination of quality and quantity. Following on from last season’s record numbers of tournament entries, it’s an extremely encouraging sign and 2005/6’s first tournament promises to be an excellent curtain-raiser to the new season.

Come back here in a week’s time to see who picked up the silverware.

MERCHANT CUP TRUST FUND

The Merchant Cup Trust Fund has collapsed into the Charitable Trust. For further information, **see the PDF on next page.**

THE MARCHANT CUP

The Marchant Cup Fund was established by a Declaration of Trust dated 21 July 1930. The Charity's assets consist of a Cup (which is now presented to the winners of the Schools Under 16 Doubles Tournament) and a small endowment now standing at some £313 and producing income of less than £10 per year.

The Trustees of the Fund (namely myself, David Gardner and Denise Hall-Wilton) have decided that no useful purpose can be served by applying the income only of the fund and that the restriction on the expenditure of the capital (which is a permanent endowment) should be removed.

Our intention, following receipt of approval from the Charities Commission, is to transfer the funds (and the Cup itself, which is a fine silver trophy) to the RFA Charitable Trust, to be used as part of the funds of that Charity.

If anyone has any questions or requires further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Unless anyone specifically objects to the Charities Commission by contacting them as specified in Form D2 attached, I understand that approval for this transfer is likely to be given in about 3 months.

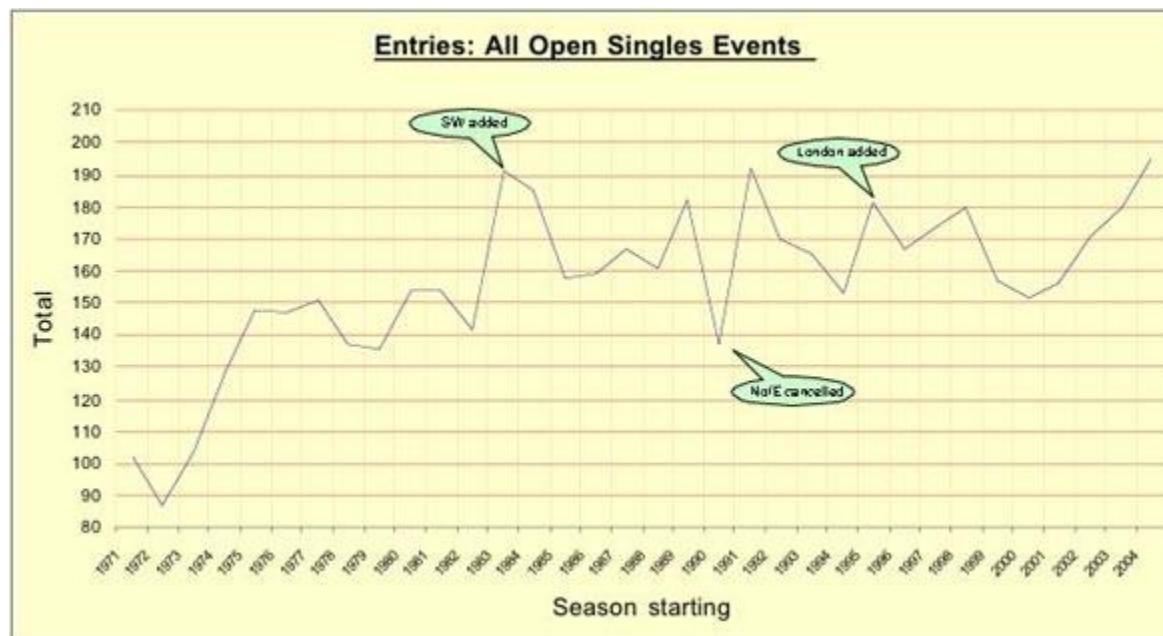
Incidentally, I believe that an article on the history of the Cup will appear in this year's Annual Report.

John East
4 July 2005

RECORD ENTRIES LAST SEASON!

[posted 18 July 05]

Last season was a record for numbers entering the major open fives events. We have fairly complete records for the 7 open singles competitions since about 1970 when there were 5 events (WofE, NW, NofE, Scotland, and the National). Since then the SW and London have been added to the schedule, and the graph below shows the variation of entries over this period. The total for last year was 195, just beating the previous record of 192 (1991).



It's not just on the senior scene where the game is flourishing. We had very healthy entries in both the schools and U25 competitions last year, and a record entry in the Universities event where a total of 45 travelled to Edinburgh to take part in the singles.

The various events have had fluctuating fortunes over the years with the West of England leading the way with its consistently high entry.

	National	SW	London	WofE	NW	NofE	Scotland	Univ	U25
Last year	47	30	27	30	33	14	14	45	13
Average entry	30.9	24.8	26.4	44.6	25.5	20.5	12.3	28.7	14.0
Record	48	33	34	63	41	31	28	45	18

RFA AGM REPORT

15th June 2005

This year's well-attended AGM saw Geoff Sherratt complete his successful tenure as President of the Association, with much progress made on several fronts, not least the formation of the Fives Federation, incorporation of the Association, and implementation of several court-saving projects. Last season also saw the highest level of tournament entries since records began in 1971.

John East was installed as Geoff's successor, with Chris Horrocks voted onto the Board as Deputy President.

Alex Smith and Andy Pringle also joined the Board as Bob Dolby and Johnny Nelmes stepped down, both thanked by John for their contributions.

THE RUGBY FIVES ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEEETING

Agenda Item 5 – Financial Report

Members should again note that direct comparisons with 2004 are complicated by the fact that we had nearly a 14 month accounting period last year so it will not be until next year that like for like comparisons can be made.

Overall a loss of just over £4,750 was made mainly due to the Board's decision to redesign the website which resulted in additional costs of £3,750.

On the Income side, subscriptions were slightly up on last year even allowing for some duplicated payments received as a result of the new standing order exercise. Total income was, however, down as we did not have the benefit of the one-off sale of equipment seen last year nor did we receive the level of donations which we enjoyed last year. Nevertheless, it is again pleasing to see a good profit from competitions even if the figure is lower than 2004 due to the longer accounting period for that year.

On the Expenditure side, costs were pretty much in line with last year other than the website expenses mentioned earlier and the one-off costs of nearly £400 for the vouchers which the Board decided to give to all the Championship organisers last year.

In the light of the above, the Board remains satisfied with the overall financial situation.

Ian Fuller
May 2005

AUDITOR'S STATEMENT

I have examined the Balance Sheet and the attached Income & Expenditure Account in conjunction with the documents relating to them. It is my opinion that they represent a true and fair view of the Rugby Fives Association's finances.

F W P de Winton
May 2005

THE RUGBY FIVES ASSOCIATION
INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT Year to 30th April 2005

		2005	8 March 2003 to 30 April 2004
GENERAL FUND			
Income			
Subscriptions & donations: Clubs		£513	
Schools		£744	£474
Individuals		£7,973	£694
Profit from championships		£667	£8,489
Profit from clothing & glove sales		-	£2,067
Video sales		-	£803
Advertising revenue		£385	£60
Interest		£717	£525
Tax refunds			£538
Miscellaneous		£184	£87
		-	£23
Expenditure		£11,183	£13,760
Secretarial fees			
Printing	£4,400		£5,200
Postage, stationery etc	£4,992		£5,021
Website expenses	£1,492		£1,249
Insurance	£3,843		£152
Tax	£650		£575
Vouchers to champ organisers	£53		£77
Miscellaneous	£390		-
Bank charges	£80		£53
			-
	£37		
		£15,937	£12,327
Surplus/(Loss) for the year		(£4,754)	£1,433
100 CLUB FUND			
Income			
Subscriptions		£688	£713
Interest		£36	£10
Expenditure			
Draw prizes			
Grants			£320
Miscellaneous	£320		£790
Bank charges	£64		£23
	-		-
	£7	£391	£1,133
Surplus/(Loss) for the year		£333	(£410)

THE RUGBY FIVES ASSOCIATION
BALANCE SHEET
As at 30th April 2005

		2005	2004
GENERAL FUND			
Opening balance	£31,822	£30,389	
Surplus/(Loss)	(£4,754)	£1,433	
Closing balance		£27,068	£31,822
100 CLUB FUND			
Opening balance	£2,553	£2,963	
Surplus (deficit)	£333	(£410)	
Closing balance		£2,886	£2,553
MARCHANT CUP FUND			
Opening & closing balance		£225	£225
TRAVEL FUND			
Opening & closing balance		£869	£869
TROPHY FUND			
Opening & closing balance		£500	£500
		<u>£31,548</u>	<u>£35,969</u>
Represented by:			
Cash at bank			
	£28,586	£33,191	
General Fund	£2,886	£2,553	
100 Club Fund	£225	£225	
Marchant Cup Fund	(£149)	-	
Creditors			
TOTAL		<u>£31,548</u>	<u>£35,969</u>

For the year ended 30th April 2005 the company was entitled to exemption under section 249A (1) of the Companies Act 1985. No members have required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 249B (2). The directors acknowledge their responsibility for:

i) Ensuring the company keeps accounting records which comply with section 221; and ii) Preparing accounts which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of its profit and loss for the financial year in accordance with section 226, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act relating to accounts, so far as applicable to the company.

G Sherratt – President

I P Fuller – General Secretary

I have examined the above Balance Sheet and the attached Income & Expenditure Account in conjunction with the documents relating to them. It is my opinion that they represent a true and fair view of the Rugby Fives Association's finances.

F W P de Winton – Hon Auditor

**THE RUGBY FIVES ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEEETING**

Agenda Item 4 – General Secretary's Report 2004/5

Whilst the emphasis last year was on administrative matters following our incorporation, the Board this year was able to devote more of its time to marketing and development issues. Many of you will have read in the mid-season review that, after extensive discussions with the Eton Fives Association, we formed a joint Federation with them with the principal objective of promoting and developing the game of Fives in all its versions, both in the UK and overseas. The respective Boards will retain full control of such issues as strategy, rules, championships/matches, quality of courts etc but we considered that the combined membership of both sports would be more attractive to potential sponsors, advertisers and National bodies. One of the main issues currently under discussion at the Federation is the creation of a cohesive PR strategy which is fundamental to heightening the profile of the game of Fives. As also mentioned in the review, we are still in discussion with our potential publishers for a book on the history of Fives with the intended publication date of 2007 to coincide with our 80th Anniversary. Much work will need to be done in the early stages to create a viable and extensive database to which we can market the proposed book and to gauge whether there is indeed a sufficient market for the book before we commit significant funds to the project.

Following much work by Paddy d'Ancona and his sub-committee, together with professional support from an external design company, our 'new' website was launched in March with much positive feedback from our users. The Board considered that the cost of this exercise was money well spent and that the previous site was not sustainable, particularly as we seek to heighten the profile of our game.

Following on from the assistance provided by the Charitable Trust to both Denstone School and Derby Moor last season, the Board was delighted that the Trust was able to assist Clifton College with the renovation of two of their courts at the Music School site, thereby creating an excellent centre of four courts. Not only has this provided improved facilities for the College, it has also facilitated the regeneration of the West of England Club which is now a thriving entity. Some smaller projects are currently in the early stages of consideration and we watch with interest the potential developments at both Oundle and Christ's Hospital, whilst continuing to monitor the situation at Sutton Valence.

In terms of publications, the Handbook and mid-season review continue to be well received by members and this year we produced an up-dated version of the Record book.

Competitions continue to be very well attended and this season we had record entries for the British Universities Championships and the highest number of participants in the National Singles since 1991. The latter produced a new champion in Matt Cavanagh and overall it is extremely encouraging to see such a good number of younger players coming through at such a high standard. This was equally true of the Schools Championships this year with the Singles being won by Jamie Prendergrass from Loretto, who looks a very exciting prospect for the future.

On the administrative side, approximately 75% of the letters of guarantee have now been returned and the Board was pleased with the response to the revised standing order mandate exercise with approximately 80% being returned so far by members who pay in this way.

Finally, we say 'Farewell' to three Board members this year – Geoff Sherratt , Bob Dolby and Johnny Nelmes and the Board wishes to record its thanks to all three individuals for their contributions over the last few years.

Ian Fuller
May 2005

RFA CLUB REPORT

April is an anxious time for the Club Manager. The match result cards have stopped dropping through the letter box and there are lots of matches unaccounted for. E-mails seem to have done little to help - perhaps they have even contributed to the problem! But at last, after much communicating, an acceptable number of matches have been completed and reported on.

While in no way approaching the late Tom Wood's persuasive skills, as in the 1988/9 season when 75 matches were played, the current manager squeezes a respectable average of about 35 matches per season. This time the Club has so far played 37 fixtures (27 wins, 10 losses); 5 matches are known to have been cancelled, one of them because the match manager had been called up to serve in Iraq; and there are a further 7 unknown results - watch this space!

There were more frivolous incidents reported this year than previously. Bob Dolby experienced modern technology when after his match v Cambridge a mobile phone was used to add up the score; later, at a highly non-recommended pub round the corner from the Bedford Modern courts, Stuart Kirby asked for 'a large red wine' and was given a half-pint glassful! Andy Pringle reported on the other Cambridge match as being so close that the result was in doubt until the end. Alas, the Club team lost, and then, to add insult to injury, there wasn't even time for a beer.

Match manager Fuller (Ian) was away in Spain while his son was valiantly, but unsuccessfully, defending the Club's honour against the Alleyn Old Boys - we lost by a mere two points. Phil Atkinson contributed to the Club's victory over the Old Bedford Modernians by playing for the opposition. Tom Maconie and Jesters' match manager Nick Geere decided to trim their teams down to 3 players and play short games in order to attend the Strawson Dinner in good order (Result: RFAC 45, Jesters 39). Colours are awarded to Bill Gunyon for having managed not only his appointed match v Old Blundellians before Christmas but also Charles Hattersley's match against the same opposition in January.

On a more serious note, Tonbridge - a good side this year - inflicted the first defeat on the Club for 16 years, despite Tony Hamilton's effort to provide an appropriately balanced four. Iain de Weymarn enjoyed managing the match against his old school, Bloxham, where 'a great time was had by all', and Keith Love's side earned their 'lavish lunch' at Eastbourne by playing good fives, as usual. All match managers have already unwittingly agreed to do it all again next year.

The President's Cup, immaculately run as ever by Bhaswar Baral with help from his family and friends, was won by Prashant Chopra and Ed Hatton, beating Ben Brookes and Ed M-M-Crichton in a hard-hitting final. The RFA Club side, run by Ed Fuller (taking over from his long-serving Dad) reached the semi-finals of the National Club Championship (Wood Cup).

Denise Hall-Wilton
April 2005