

# Fives Newsletter 2011

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## The Fives Federation



In politics, the idea of a Coalition is still very much in its infancy and something of a novelty; perhaps our politicians could learn a thing or two from the Fives Federation, now well-established and going from strength to strength as the various different codes of Fives continue to share ideas and work together to improve and expand the game.

There are many issues of joint interest: 2010 has seen the RFA obtain charitable status and they will be helping the EFA follow suit this year. The EFA has been taking the lead in the coaching sphere, developing officially accredited courses to produce fully qualified Fives coaches and hopefully open up new ways of bringing external funding into the sport.

On court, too, the codes continue to come closer together: James Toop is again national champion at both Rugby and Eton Fives, and more players than ever before are playing in tournaments across the codes. The growth of 1-Wall Handball and the success of the England teams have also contributed as Rugby and Eton players compete together on a level playing field.

We hope that you will enjoy reading about the results of this joint effort here as well as on Fives courts around the country in the months to come.

**Peter Worth, Chairman EFA**  
**Frank Akerman, President RFA**

# Taking the world by storm

## Team England celebrate more success in 2010

After a landmark year in 2009, England Handball's achievements in the last 12 months have exceeded all expectations, crowned by becoming European 1-Wall handball champions.

That performance came on the back of strong showings earlier in the season, including the regular trip to the Irish 1-Wall championships. Here, there were several stand-out performances and a number of appearances in finals, while the UK Singles & Doubles competitions – which again attracted a field of international entrants – also saw excellent performances from English players. Pete Cohen beat Ady Lee in an exciting all-English singles final, while the untried pairing of Ady and Pete White were runners-up to a Belgian pair in the doubles.

That success, however, was merely a foretaste of the highlight of the year – the CIJB European Championships in Valencia. Here the team played two local games and the International Game (a field game created in an attempt to unify each nation's handball code), as well as 1-Wall handball.

The men's team (Ady Lee, Pete Cohen and Dan Grant) were seeded second for the 1-Wall competition, and after comfortably beating Belgium, Italy and the Netherlands, they reached the final. This was played in front of 800 spectators as well as live on terrestrial TV in a number of countries.

After Ady was forced out with an injury, Pete and Dan showed all their tactical nous, power and skill to come back from losing the first set to win the second set from match-point down, before easily winning the tiebreak. England's ladies, meanwhile, battled to take third place in their competition.

With this tournament over, Team England next turned its attention to the



**Champions:** England's men celebrate their title

Federation Cup in Italy, effectively the equivalent of tennis's Davis Cup. Again, both the men's and women's teams put in superb performances, and qualified for the semi-finals: the first time England would have both their men and women competing for the top prize in team handball.

In the semis, both teams faced Puerto Rico, and while the resulting defeats may look like one-way traffic on paper, much was learnt by the players, for whom it's rare to face such talented athletes. Overall, the men and women finished fourth in the Cup, but that meant they finished the year fourth in the world rankings – their highest position ever.

Plans are now in place to reach even higher in 2011. Team captain Ady Lee said, "We may not yet have the talent on court that the Americans and Puerto Ricans display, but you'd struggle to find a group of players who crave success more than us. Many thanks to all of those that have helped us get as far as we have. I'm very excited about what 2011 holds for us and I'd encourage any new players to join us on our handballing journey."



**Flying the flag:** Fed Cup squad (L to R: Grant, White, Lee, Rees, White, Cohen); the final in Valencia

## Rugby Fives Association President's Report



**At the halfway point of a season, it would be easy to concentrate on the raw statistics of the game – things like the remarkable victory of Will Ellison over James**

Toop in the final of the West of England tournament and then, within just a few weeks, a reversal of this result at St Paul's in the final of the Amateur Singles, where the reigning champion regained his form and played superbly to win in two hard-fought games. But these events, while emphasising the more newsworthy aspects of the game, which is being played to such a high standard, will be covered elsewhere and it therefore gives me the opportunity to mention aspects of the management of the RFA about which I was only dimly aware before taking on the Presidential duties!

Tournaments come and go, but the RFA has been so fortunate with the volunteers who organise these events year after year. Without their meticulous planning and attention to detail, coupled with an ability to cope with numerous last-minute 'rearrangements', the tournaments would quickly lose the friendly and efficient atmosphere that is such a feature of the events I have attended in the last three years. But eventually even the most long-standing stalwarts feel it is time to stop, and Peter Dunscombe, after 35 years at the helm of the West of England tournament, is handing over to Simon Werkshagen. Perhaps Peter will write a review of his time in association with this tournament, as in many ways it mirrors the changing fortunes of Rugby Fives. Many courts in Bristol have disappeared, but on a positive note the four old courts at Clifton have been refurbished and this season's tournament attracted a healthy entry. Another outstanding RFA supporter, David Goodwin, is also relinquishing his connection with the National Schools competitions, which started in 1977 and now involve three separate draws, all immaculately produced. Peter King, who himself has already been involved for many years, is taking on this task.

The RFA supports some 26 competitive events during a season and nobody is likely to start to approach the number of years that David Gardner has presided over the British Universities tournament, this year's highly successful tournament at Oundle being the fifty first. One of the secrets of any successful tournament, so amply demonstrated at Oundle, is the opportunity for plenty of Fives for all entrants and not just for the better players.

Many of the these 26 tournaments also have organisers who have been involved for one or even two decades and, together with the other members who so willingly turn out to help them at these events, this represents an incalculable asset for the Association.

These tournaments, together with an active fixture list, are the backbone of the RFA Club. While the tournaments flourish, Hamish Buchanan and Ed Hatton are taking a careful look at the RFA Club's fixture list. The Association has drifted a long way from the aim of previous Club secretary, Tom Wood, which remains viable today and involves taking a 'team' to all schools with courts, especially those that are underused. By volunteering to raise a team for this purpose, just once a year, members of the RFA should surely be able to do something to help bring Fives back to these centres?

There must be a curious lapse in a school's logic when it is prepared to use a valuable capital asset for storage while other schools raise large funds to build new courts or refurbish old ones.

**Frank Akerman**

# New chairman for the EFA

**Peter Worth succeeded Richard Barber in October 2010, and here the outgoing chairman outlines his successor's career**

**Peter was at Shrewsbury School from 1965-70, where he was Head of School and captain of both Fives and Football. He also won the National Schools' Eton Fives Championship in 1970 playing with Nick Pocock.**

After leaving Shrewsbury, Peter qualified as an accountant with Peat Marwick, from where he joined the Mark McCormack organisation for ten years as one of the early members of their European operation. During this time he managed the business affairs of many leading sportsmen, including Bjorn Borg, and was also responsible for developing many major events such as the World Ski Championships and the World Gymnastic Championships.

In 1991 he left IMG and set up his own events management company, Quintus, through which he went on to build up and manage a diverse portfolio of events. In 1996, Quintus was the first company in Europe to place a sponsor's logo in the field of play in 3D so that it looked on television as if the logo was actually 'standing up'. Among his

key achievements was the launch in 1997 of the annual Masters Tennis tournament at London's Royal Albert Hall, now the crowning glory of the ATP Tour of Champions. In 2003, Quintus brought HSBC into the World Match Play at Wentworth, the biggest single prize in golf.

Peter sold the Quintus business to his former employer IMG in 2007, since when he has been busy in charitable activity, in particular Help for Heroes.

Peter is passionate about Eton Fives, having played the game at the highest level, and he is the current holder with his son Rex (himself a recent winner of the Schools' Nationals) of the EFA's Aberconway Cup for Fathers and Sons. He has also been the major donor to the refurbishment of the Fives courts at Shrewsbury, which are now appropriately named "the Worth Courts".

I have no doubt that Peter's personal drive, and his lifetime of management and sporting experience, will be invaluable as he takes the EFA's agenda forward into a new era of vitality and expansion.

## Girl power

**The RFA's first ever National School Girls' Championships were an undoubted success, and are now an established feature in the Fives calendar.**



**Girls from four schools played**

Girls from Christ's Hospital, Eastbourne, Sutton Valence and Malvern played in the event, and every school won some silverware.

The event was run by Eastbourne College teacher (and RFA board member) Alex Smith, who remarked on the fact that, in the top three singles tournaments, the eventual winners had a very powerful march to the Final, all conceding no more than three points before their Finals. At U14 level, Royer conceded just 3 points overall, as did Dodds at U16, while in the Seniors Mills dropped just 6 points.

Throughout the day, it was clear that all the girls were playing with as much enthusiasm, skill and athleticism as their male counterparts. The on-court behaviour was exemplary and the RFA General Secretary remarked that he had never seen so many players congratulate their opponents on good shots as he had in this tournament.

The next event is scheduled to take place at Marlborough College on the first Sunday in May this year.



Rugby's new courts in use

### RUGBY FIVES

The undoubted highlight of the last 12 months has been the official opening of the two courts at Rugby School.

After two exhibition matches – one involving four Old Rugbeians – the courts were officially declared open by John Evans, former master in charge of Fives. Afterwards, several current schoolboys and -girls tried their hand at the game, and members of the RFA took the chance to try the new courts.

A month or so later, Oswestry School celebrated the reopening of its recently refurbished court. Built in the

1880s, and refurbished thanks to a donation from an Old Oswestrian, the court was declared open by Dr John Taylor, the oldest winner of a Fives Tournament in the OO records who was able to attend the school's Founder's Day celebration.

Lastly, the refurbishment work on the four courts at Alleyn's School has also been completed. The area behind the courts has now been enclosed and heated, which creates a more comfortable viewing gallery, as well as making it more pleasant for players who are waiting between games.

# Courting success

All too often, the only stories we hear are of courts being lost or converted, but the last year has been a tremendous one for Fives courts. From the refurbishment work at Alleyns, Shrewsbury and High Wycombe to the new courts at Rugby, Merchant Taylors and Greenwich, there is good news for Eton Fives, Rugby Fives and 1-Wall Handball.

### ETON FIVES

The project to refurbish Shrewsbury School's 14 courts started in 2003, and everything came together last October at the grand opening. The funds were hugely supported by Peter Worth, as well as by many other Salopians, and the names of the most generous are inscribed on the courts.

At the opening, Peter spoke of his family's passion for Eton Fives, before cutting the ribbon to open "The Worth Courts", formally named to mark the three generations of Worths who have represented Shrewsbury.

Meanwhile, Fives has also been flourishing again since September at the Royal Grammar School in High Wycombe, following the repair and roofing of the courts. Work was carried out during the summer of 2010, and the courts were officially opened by Richard Barber.

The initial enthusiasm has been maintained during the first term, with dedicated support from the Master in Charge, Richard Shreeve, and tuition from coach David Mew.

In addition, Richard Black has worked hard to start informal club sessions for Old Boys, current pupils and anybody living locally. These sessions have so far been on Thursday evenings and on alternate Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons; this pattern is likely to continue in the New Year.



Richard Barber (l) opens RGS courts

### 1-WALL

These are still early days for the 1-Wall game in the UK, but the game is now finding a foothold, and the hope is that, as more courts are set up, the process will snowball.

Two new sets of courts have been opened in the last year, at Merchant Taylors School (already an established Rugby Fives school) and at St Paul's Academy in Greenwich. England players have already used both sets of courts in training, and they graced the courts at Greenwich alongside 4-Wall world champion Paul Brady when the courts were officially opened.

In addition, as you can read in James Toop's report on page 6, more schools in and around London are already putting up courts. These include Globe Academy (Elephant & Castle), Burlington Danes (White City), Oaklands (Bethnal Green) and Berkhamsted, where Eton Fives has been played for many years.



St Paul's new court

## Pulling rank

**There was a momentous change in the RFA's official doubles rankings last October:** for the first time since the end of the 2003/04 season, Hamish Buchanan was not in first place. Instead, after wins in the South West and London Opens, Will

Ellison took over as the country's top-ranked doubles player.

However, despite taking the South West and London singles titles as well, Will couldn't top the singles rankings as well. Instead, following his win in the National Singles Championship, James Toop remains in that spot.

That win, too, is worthy of note, though, as it means James is the

first person since Wayne Enstone to win three successive titles; and, in securing the title for the fourth time, he moved to second equal in the list of all-time winners, level with Eric Marsh and John Pretlove. Only Wayne has won the title more often.

The rankings are prepared by Dave Hebden and listed in full on the RFA website.



**Winning smile:** Will Ellison tops the doubles rankings

## Eton Fives Association Chairman's Report



It is some three months into my tenure as Chairman that I write my first report.

Before going any further I want to thank

Richard Barber for his outstanding work over the last seven years. He hands on a game in much ruder health than when he took over, and I am delighted that he will continue his involvement, both as chair of the Westway Fives initiative and on the finance committee, leading the EFA's attempt to gain charitable status (see below). As EFA President, he will also chair the nominations committee.

In the last year, Ronald Pattison and Gareth Hoskins, with Seb Cooley, have begun the drive to encourage new members into the EFA. There is still some way to go, but the new policy of restricting non-members to two league matches before a club is sanctioned, with higher entry fees for non-members in EFA events, is paying dividends. Club secretaries have been particularly helpful, for which we are very grateful. Despite the first increase in subscriptions for many years, I am delighted that we have had no resignations, which augurs well as we seek to raise revenues to develop Fives. Our immediate challenge is to keep school-leavers playing through tertiary education before joining clubs and becoming full members. With the support of the Jesters, 17 universities competed in this year's University Championships – a tremendous achievement given that only four competed five years ago. I suspect the increase stems in part from the increasing popularity of the National Schools' Championships which attracted a record 900+ players in 2010.

At the same time, we continue to invest, with the EFA Charitable Trust, in refurbishing courts; we have limited funds, but will seek to raise more and welcome all approaches for help. As many of you are aware, Nigel Cox, Jeff Green and John Reynolds are making progress as they develop a cost-effective new build solution. We support their aims as we are aware of a number of schools and clubs who can't introduce Fives due to the cost of traditionally built courts. I have already alluded to our wish to raise more funds from Fives supporters, but we cannot yet access lottery funding, as we have no approved coaching scheme. So, I am delighted that we have reached agreement with 1st4sport to provide the assistance and approvals to coaching Levels 1 and 2. With this developed, we can produce fully qualified coaches and apply for lottery funding. We are grateful to Jeff Green and Mark Yates, who lead this project, as well as to the John Lyons Trust, who contributed to the cost.

We hope to raise our resources further by following the RFA's lead in obtaining charitable status. If we do so, we will be able to reclaim gift aid, lifting our subscription income by about one third. We will also be able to claim gift aid on subs paid in the last three years.

Westway has had a much better year despite some disappointing occupancy levels in the early summer, and I hope my next report will include plans to improve the amount of Fives there. The John Lyons Trust have agreed to fund an outreach 1-Wall Fives initiative as well as helping to fund the coaching of Eton and 1-Wall Fives. A number of schools are using the facilities, but we are a long way from being self-financing – a target we hope to achieve by April 2012.

Finally, I congratulate our 1-Wall Handball teams in coming fourth in the Federation Cup. Dick Warner and I spent a lovely weekend supporting the teams and learning how the game should be played.

Peter Worth

# 1-Wall takes hold in Westminster

Success in one borough will hopefully lead to game's adoption across London

**1-Wall Handball has confirmed its credentials as the perfect inner-city sport with an explosion in its popularity in schools in the borough of Westminster, the heart of London.**

The Autumn term saw 15 schools run a series of breakfast, lunchtime and after-school handball clubs for over 200 children aged between 8 and 12, all of whom quickly learned right- and left-handed shots, serves, returns and tactical matchplay.

Feedback from teachers and sports professionals was excellent, with handball ticking boxes in terms of athletic development and on-site convenience, while being a fun and inspirational sports option for pupils. This initial success prompted Westminster Council to request a borough-wide staff education and training session, which was delivered by Peter Cohen to 30 teaching staff. Borough competitions, court construction and further intensive teacher training are now also



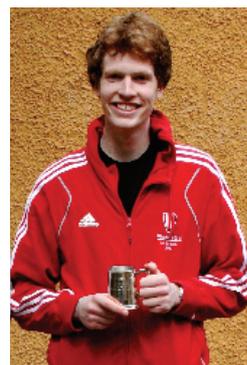
**Child's play:** more than 200 kids have enjoyed Handball

planned for 2011, and it is hoped that these new initiatives will see 1-Wall Handball become a sustainable and integral part of the Westminster sports curriculum, while looking to expand across the city.

## RFA takes initiative on school coaching

**After a successful pilot scheme in Scotland, the RFA is looking to supply more schools with coaches in the coming years. The intention is to encourage the game at schools where the sport has been in decline, as well as to introduce the game to children who might otherwise not have the chance to play.**

The scheme was pioneered by RFA President Frank Akerman, and allowed, first, Richie Murby and, subsequently, current Edinburgh



**Backed:** Academy coach Ed Cumberlege

University captain Ed Cumberlege to go and coach at Edinburgh Academy, where they have no Fives-playing master. It has led to a resurgence of interest in the game – and a rise in the number of children playing it – at the school.

As a result, the RFA has decided to continue the project, and is now funding a coach to work at St Paul's School in Barnes, London. This is allowing children from the non-Fives-playing Richmond Park Academy to come and play on the St Paul's courts, introducing them to the game and encouraging them to join clubs and go on and take part in competitions.



**Crowd-puller:** almost 100 members and guests attended the 2007 RFA Dinner

# Queen's Club to host the 2011 RFA Dinner

Cheaper tickets available for limited time

**Following the success of its last Dinner in 2007, the RFA will again be hosting a dinner in 2011.**

Timed to coincide with the final rounds of the National Club Championship, specifically to encourage many of the competitors and spectators to attend, it will take place in London on the evening of Saturday April 16th.

It will be a chance for past and present players of the game – along with

their guests – to drink, eat, relax and meet up with old friends – and hopefully make some new ones.

The thoroughly informal evening will include no official speeches, and non-RFA members are very welcome to attend.

As before, the venue will be the Queen's Club in west London, with single and double tickets costing £60 and £115 respectively. However, thanks to a special 'early bird' offer,

the tickets are available before February 28th at the special price of £50 and £95 respectively.

There will also be a limited number of £30 single tickets for guests under 30 years of age, allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

Full details of how to apply for tickets have already been sent out to RFA members, and are also available on the Association's website.

## EFA/Jesters report

**By the turn of the New Year, we had managed to play four fixtures – against Uppingham, Harrow, Oakham and Aldenham – reports Martin Samuel. Sadly, our fixture against Bryanston fell foul of the weather, but we are looking to re-arrange it before the end of this current term.**

For those of you unaware of what these fixtures are all about, as well as providing a limited amount of coaching, we try to teach the boys and girls of these Schools that our glorious game is extremely active well past their own school days. The scorelines are pretty much irrelevant and, in many cases, we end up splitting the pupils up so that we have adult & boy/girl against adult & boy/girl.

As ever, our thanks go to both Martin Lindsay –

for organising the Harrow match – and to Graham Pulsford for organising the fixture against Aldenham.

By the same token, we pass on our thanks to all the Schools for their hospitality.

This term, besides the Bryanston fixture, we are due to visit Marlborough College (23rd January at 11.00am), St. John's School, Leatherhead (6th February at 2.30pm), Queen Elizabeth Barnet (20th February at 11.00am) and Stowe School (20th March at 11.00am). If anyone would like to play, please contact me by telephone (020 8942 9845) or email (martin.samuel@talktalk.net).

Finally, I am also pleased to be able to report that Julian Black will be taking over the role of EFA/Jesters match manager for the 2011/12 season.



**Jesters:** their matches coach and promote the game

## EFA Charitable Trust chairman looks to the future

**The last months of 2010 were a time of sadness, writes Richard Black, as John Rimer, our Treasurer since the Trust's inception in 1993, died after a long illness. His contribution was enormous, ranging from all the detailed accounting/gift aid work to supervising the investment aspects of the funds.**

In addition, our chairman, Rodney Knight, retired in November. In his



**Retired: Rodney Knight (l)**

nine years as chairman Rodney piloted the Trust through a very successful period. The second appeal in 2006 raised the funds that were necessary to allow the Trust to respond

to the immediate financial needs of the Eton Fives community. Rodney maintained a great team spirit among the Trustees, and he will continue to advise the Trust and the EFA on the enduring problem of the Cambridge Eton Fives courts.

I was honoured to be asked to become the new Chairman and am looking forward to the challenges ahead as we seek to raise

the funds to preserve and expand the game. In the last 18 years we have raised over £120,000, well over half of which has already been spent.

We are deeply indebted to our donors who have supported us either by one-off donations or by regular payments. I am sure that the demands on the Trust will increase further, so we have to anticipate this demand

and are looking forward to working with the new EFA chairman, Peter Worth.

Our principal fund-raising plan over the next few months is to run a Legacy Campaign asking supporters to remember the Trust in their will. In this, we are encouraged by the fact that, even before this campaign, a number of generous benefactors have already pledged a legacy.

## News in brief

■ The Fives Federation has a Twitter feed (@fivesfederation), where followers can receive the latest news and updates.

■ The new EFA Ladies team played its first match in November and will be playing fixtures throughout the season to provide increased playing opportunities for all those involved in Ladies Fives.

■ The date of the RFA's AGM has been changed, and the meeting will now be held on September 8th.

■ In August, EFA patron Lord Kingsdown hosted the annual Fives day on his court at Torry Hill in Kent. It was the first chance to see the superb refurbishment that had taken place over the winter.

■ The RFA General Secretary is calling on any members who have not yet returned the Gift Aid form distributed with the Annual Review to do so as soon as possible.

■ The final of the EFA County Championship saw current champions Hertfordshire face challengers Warwickshire. In the end, Hertfordshire won 3-0, taking the title for the fourth year in succession.

■ At the EFA AGM in October, Martin Samuel stood down as a Director and Annabel Griffiths was elected to the Board in his place.

■ As we closed for press, we heard of the untimely death of RFA board member Ian Roberts. His work was key to the RFA's charitable status, and he ran the White Rose Club and edited the Annual Review. A full tribute will run in a future publication.



**Ian Roberts: a sad loss to Fives**

## ENGLAND HANDBALL REPORT

By James Toop



**2010 has been another busy year for England Handball, and I can report that we have had some big breakthroughs both at home and abroad:**

### Number 1 in Europe

The adult team firmly cemented their position as the Number 1 team in Europe. Not only is this a fantastic achievement, but it is crucial for bringing increased recognition and sponsorship (such as kit from Ektelon) to the sport, as well as creating a platform to which young players can aspire. Well done to captains Ady Lee and Kerry White.

### New Courts

The first wave of schools in

London has started to put up courts. They represent a diverse mix of new Academies - Globe Academy (Elephant & Castle), Burlington Danes (White City), St Paul's (Greenwich) - along with traditional secondaries (such as Oaklands in Bethnal Green) and traditional Fives hubs (Merchant Taylors and Berkhamsted).

### Youth Programme and Handball In A Box

1-Wall forms the heart of the Fives outreach programme at Westway and this year, with support from the John Lyons Trust and the sterling efforts of Pete Cohen, we have made major inroads into the boroughs of Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea. The first

Handball In A Box starter packs have also been sold and are available for £40.

### Challenges for the Year Ahead

We enter 2011 with a wide range of opportunities. Congratulations to everyone involved. The sport is at a tipping point and we need to ensure we have the funding and expertise in the right areas to take advantage of this. This will involve court-building expertise, coaching and training qualifications and fund-raising. If anyone would like to get involved, please visit our website [www.englishandball.co.uk](http://www.englishandball.co.uk).

# Westway hosts a summer sizzler

**Summer, traditionally a downtime for Fives, saw some of the most exciting action of 2010 as Westway hosted the inaugural Summer Superleague.**

The format was straightforward, writes Peter Cohen: seven teams playing each other, with the top four going to semi-finals and a final. Each team consisted of four players on match day, picked from a squad by their captain.

They were ranked from 1-4 before partnering each of the other three members of their team in turn, in a single game to 15 against their opposite numbers. There was one point for each of the six games in each fixture, and individual points scored were also recorded for the MVP (Most Valuable Player) Race.

Qualification for the playoffs was undecided until the final week of the league, but in the end the Aston House Studs (captain Spencer Chapman) qualified first to set up a semi-final against One Love (captain Alun Meredith), and Katona (captain Kerry White) took on WHOREFC (under Will Skjott).

The Studs against One Love was one of the matches of the



**Final countdown: Players and supporters ahead of the last match**

year, the Oxford-based Studs squeezing past the students 4-2, while WHOREFC defeated their arch-rivals by the same score.

The final was a fantastic occasion with family, friends, squad members and the wider Fives community all turning up to ensure a brilliant atmosphere. With the match tied at 3-3 after three rotations, the Studs' overall points scored clinched them the trophy - 81 to 76.

Gareth Hoskins did superbly to finish first in the MVP Race, and a special mention must go to Mike Skjott and Simon Baring of WHOREFC, who went on 15- and 12-match unbeaten runs respectively. Many thanks also



**Champs: Aston House Studs**

to all the captains who fielded their teams, and for providing the inspiration and desire that made the tournament so good to watch.

We expect the 2011 Superleague to be bigger and even better, and it is a must-enter for any Fives player. Look out for more information in April.

# John Rimer - an obituary

*Rodney Knight pays tribute to John Rimer, who died after a long illness last year. He was a well-known figure on Eton Fives courts for 25 years or more, as well as Secretary of the Old Aldenhamian Fives Club for much of that time.*

Easily distinguished by his trailing bandana, which kept his hair out of his eyes and his glasses on, John was a street-fighting gentleman on court and a great companion for the post-match tea and drinking session. All of those playing with John liked him enormously and much enjoyed his friendship.

As he became a less regular player, he entered an equally enjoyable and valued phase of his association with Fives. As

the Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer of the newly formed Eton Fives Charitable Trust, John was the mainstay of that organisation for all 17 years of its existence. Always a great team player, here he showed his own brilliance as an accountant and helped the Trust raise substantial funds to ensure the future of the game.

Despite his very active business life and many other interests, John was always available to us, attending practically every single Trustee meeting, including the 50th, held at the Hawks' Club in Cambridge last November. He and his wife Anne even opened their home to us for meetings and hospitality. Always ready to offer his professional advice and



Rimer: A 'street-fighting gent'

skills, he never once accepted any payment.

The Fives world has sadly lost a devoted enthusiast, and Fives players a wonderful friend.

## New policy increasing the EFA's membership

**The new EFA membership policy introduced last July – which provides that everyone playing Eton Fives should be an EFA member – is proving to be a success, reports Ronald Pattison. More than 50 players have become new members of the Association since the beginning of this season.**

The EFA is a non-profit-making Association, but nevertheless one of its driving motivations is to increase the raising of funds,

which can then be reinvested back into the game in the form of coaching, the building and repair of courts, and communications. Membership subscriptions are one of the ways of achieving this, so all the money is going to a good cause.

The new membership policy is linked closely to the various pull-through initiatives that have been created in recent years to ensure that as many players as possible maintain their enthusiasm for the

game whilst at school, as well as afterwards at university and beyond into adult life.

The growth in the number of players participating in the U25, U21 and University competitions shows the EFA's commitment to this, while the hard work of our Secretary Gareth Hoskins, along with that of Seb Cooley, Annabel Griffiths and Will Skjott – who are all involved in implementing the new policy – is much appreciated. Watch this space!

## RFA Club Manager's report

New manager Hamish Buchanan reports on the 2010/11 season



In charge: Hamish Buchanan

**The Club has had a disjointed first half of the season with a record of three wins, two ties, two losses and six postponed matches; some due to the vagaries of the weather and some due to awkward fixture clashes.**

The Club scored a narrow victory over Cambridge University on the new Oundle courts, but suffered a loss to Oxford at St Paul's, with Ed Hatton playing number one for the RFA in both matches. No one doubts Ed's effort and desire to win every match, and his role as manager

for the Oxford fixture has the 'full backing' of the Board.

The Club's biggest win was against the Bedford Modernians, 102-54, with true commitment to the Club being shown by Bhaswar Baral, who emailed his confirmation from India a day or two before the match, and from Jeremy Schroeter, who had a two-and-a-half hour drive from home to play in the match!

I look forward to a busy second half of the season and, as Club manager, I hope that I too have the 'full backing' of the Board.

## News in brief

■ 22 players took part in last year's Northern Amateurs December Fives tournament at Repton, with John Holberry and Paul Dean the winners.

■ The RFA National Doubles Championship will now take place on April 2nd/3rd.

■ A brand new Rugby Fives tournament started in 2010 – the Deaver Cup, played at Groton School in America, between alumni of Groton and St Mark's Schools. It is hoped it will become an annual event.

■ The EFA competition to win an hour's coaching from John Reynolds was won by young Aldenhamian Carl Rennie.

■ England's handball players may have invented a new type of Fives. Finding some suitable



All-new: 'Imperia Fives' is born

buttresses on Italy's Imperia cathedral, they staged an impromptu game on the 'court'. Imperia Fives, anyone?

■ Boston's Union Boat Club hosted a few UK Fives players and played its fourth annual Turner-Devens Cup in 2010. The club has a core of 15-20 active players, and 24 played in the club championship.

■ Dale Vargas and Peter Knowles hope to produce a history of Eton Fives, and want photos, cuttings, memorabilia, memories and anecdotes. These should be sent to Dale at 3 Meadow View, Harrow on the Hill HA1 3DN or hadirector@harrowschool.org.uk

■ Angus Hanton's new Swiss Rugby Fives court has hosted players from the Geneva Eton Fives club. They enjoyed it, but said it was 'more exhausting'.

Mix and match: Eton and Rugby players at Marlborough



## Crossing the great divide

Fives history was made on Jan 2nd 2011, as North Oxford Eton Fives Club took on Marlborough Town Rugby Fives Club in a cross-code Fives challenge.

Marlborough has four Rugby Fives courts and two Eton Fives courts, and ten players from each club enjoyed an evening of doubles matches, switching effortlessly (in some cases anyway) between the codes.

Marlborough produced a strong team, organised by Marlborough Master in Charge Tom Kiggell,

while the North Oxford team featured 11-times Kinnaid Cup winner John Reynolds, as well as the secretaries of the EFA and RFA (Gareth Hoskins and Andy Pringle), with Karen Hird and Mandie Clemmett showing the men how it should be done.

The event's success is perhaps best shown by the fact that Andy won all of his Eton matches, but lost his Rugby games, with the reverse true for Gareth.

A return match is planned for May at Iffley Road, Oxford.

### RFA Tournament Results Round-up

#### RFA Club President's Cup

Winners: John Minta & Clive Butler  
Mate's Plate: Chris Burrows & Theo Parker

T-Pot: Ady Lee & Stuart Kirby  
Love Mug: Gareth Price & Sam Russell

#### National Open Singles

Champion: James Toop

#### National Student & BUCS Championships

Singles: Dan Grant (UCL)  
Doubles: Ed Kay & Tom Chase (Cambridge)

#### Schools Winchester Fives Championship

Champions: Winchester 1 (J Kennedy & N Baines)

#### Winchester Fives Northern Doubles Tournament

Champions: John Minta & Bob Sandie

#### West of England Championships

Singles: Will Ellison  
Doubles: Will Ellison & Hal Mohammed

#### Yorkshire Open Doubles

Champions: Hamish Buchanan & Will Ellison

#### Owers Trophy

Champions: Old Paulines

#### London Open Championships

Singles: Will Ellison  
Doubles: Will Ellison & Hal Mohammed

### EFA Mid-Term Tournament Round-up

#### Under 25 Championships:

Men's final: Andrew Joyce & Ryan Perrie beat Rory Griffiths & Matt McKeever  
Ladies final: Charlotta Cooley & Anita Ganguly beat Dominique Redmond & Emily Scoones

#### Midland Tournament:

Final: Ant Theodossi & Ryan Perrie beat Mark Yates & Sid Simmons  
Ladies tournament: winners Kerry White & Dominique Redmond

#### London Tournament:

James Toop & Matthew Wiseman beat Seb Cooley & Peter Cohen

#### Universities Championships:

Men's final: Laurie Brock & Rory Griffiths (Cambridge) beat Will Betts & Andrew Joyce (Durham)  
Ladies final: Juliet Browning & Michaela Galperti (London) beat Constance Mantle & Hannah Cutmore-Scott (Oxford)

#### Alan Barber Cup:

Semi-finalists: Lancing Old Boys vs Salopians, Edwardians vs Olavians or Millhillians

#### EFA League (current leaders)

Division 1 – Olavians 2  
Division 2 – North Oxford  
Division 3 – Lancing Old Boys

#### Turnbull Trophy:

Final: Seb Cooley & Chris Self beat Ant Theodossi & Steve Wiggill

## Forthcoming events

### Eton Fives

January		
Sun 30th	Alan Barber Cup – Semi-Finals	Eton
	EFA Trophy Qualifying Round	Eton
February		
Sat/Sun 5th/6th	Northern Championships	Shrewsbury
Sun 13th	Under 21s Championships	Eton
Sun 20th	Alan Barber Cup – Final	Eton
	EFA Trophy – Semi-finals and Final	Eton
	Ladies Championships	Eton
Sat/Sun 26th/27th	Kinnaid Preliminary Rounds & Festival	Eton
March		
Sat 5th	Varsity Match	Eton
Sun 6th	Williams School Cup	Eton
Sun 13th	Kinnaid Cup – Semi-Finals	Eton
	Schools' Mixed Tournament	Eton
Thurs 17th	Preparatory Schools' Championships	Eton
Sun 20th	Old Boy/Schoolboy Team Competition	Eton
Tues 22nd	National Schools' Under 12s	Eton
Sat 26th	Universities Mixed Championships	Highgate
Sun 27th/Sat 2nd	National Schools' Championships	Eton
April		
Sun 3rd	Richard Black Cup	Eton
Sun 3rd	Kinnaid Cup – Final	Eton
Sun 10th	Aberconway Cup (Fathers & Sons)	Eton
	Ladies Championship Final	Eton
Sun 17th	Mixed Championships	Eton
May		
Sun 1st	MJS-J Cup (Veterans)	Eton

### Rugby & Winchester Fives

February		
Sat/Sun 5th/6th	National Under 25s Championships	Northwood
Sat 19th	Oxford v Cambridge	St Paul's
Sat/Sun 26th/27th	North of England Open Championships	Durham
March		
Sat 12th	Ladies Winchester Fives Championships	Winchester
Sun 13th	Winchester Fives Doubles Championship	Winchester
	National Under 13 Championships	St Paul's
Sun 20th	National Vintage Championships	Oundle
	Colquhoun Trophy	Sherborne
Mon/Thurs 28th/31st	National Schools' Championships	St Paul's
April		
Sat/Sun 2nd/3rd	National Open Doubles	Alleyn's
Sat/Sun 9th/10th	National Veterans & Masters Championships	Christ's Hospital
Sat/Sun 16th/17th	National Club Championship (final rounds)	St Paul's
Sat 16th	RFA Dinner	London
Sat/Sun 30th/1st	Scottish Open Championships	Loretto
May		
Sun 1st	National Schoolgirls Championships	Marlborough
Sun 8th	Winchester Fives Mixed Doubles	Bradfield
July		
Sat/Sun 9th/10th	South West Championships	Blundell's

### 1-Wall Handball

March		
Fri 25th	England Handball start of season social	London
May		
Sat 14th	England Handball Singles competition	TBC
June/July		
Thurs/Sun 30th/3rd	1-Wall Doubles event & Irish Nationals	Castlebar
October		
Sat/Sun 8th/9th	England Handball Doubles tournament	TBC

Full details on [www.rfa.org.uk](http://www.rfa.org.uk) and [www.fivesonline.net](http://www.fivesonline.net)