



RFA President's Newsletter

July 2023



July 2023 greetings from Julie McIntyre, RFA President

Now that the season is over, we should reflect on some of the successes from the last few months, and also some important events on the horizon.

A brief overview of the last board meeting (08/06)

A short online survey of the status and use of the courts has been sent to the relevant contacts at Schools and clubs. The idea is to update our knowledge of what the organisations need from us. This is relevant to the future strategy for supporting the critical infrastructure for Fives.

The sub-Committees mentioned in the last Newsletter have been established. Visit the website for more information and how to contact the relevant Committee Leaders with ideas and questions.

We continue to support Stoke Newington School and look for ways to extend the numbers playing. We will be advertising the evening community club (Stoke Newington Swifts) in the neighbourhood in time for the new season.

The RFA contracted a professional photographer to make videos at the inaugural Mixed Doubles Open, held in Cambridge on 17th June (see report below). This will provide footage for multiple uses to promote the sport.

Durham University has now requested the Durham Club pay a regular annual fee for the use of the courts. These costs have been calculated for the next three years, suggesting that the immediate threat to the Durham courts has been lifted, but we will keep monitoring the situation and examine other potential options for the future. I must thank you all profusely for your support of Fives in Durham. The entire community pulled together to help us to continue to bring the game to the region.



The Future of Fives

As previously announced by the General Secretary, the next Board Meeting will be extended to a full day, face to face meeting with approximately 20 attendees to discuss how we can break the circle of decline in Fives at many of the locations with courts. These courts are our vital infrastructure, and we need to be able to support the game there, whether through renovations, coaching, increasing the understanding of the benefits of the game, or helping to make these courts an asset for the schools. All ideas are welcome, and if you wish to contribute your thoughts, please pass them to the General Secretary.

Recording the new Open Mixed Doubles

The inaugural Open Mixed Doubles was held at the Cambridge courts on 17th June. This tournament differs from previous mixed doubles in that entry is by pair rather than as an individual. It was inspired and organised by Helena Tunks and Savanna Leboff, and attracted a high-quality field. The players kindly cooperated to provide footage of men's and women's singles and doubles, as well as the mixed doubles matches. Thanks to the work of the photographer, Phil Beattie, we have a much greater variety of views with cameras at the front of the court and a 360-degree camera above the players. Lewis Keates also brought a chest-mounted camera. The early "rushes" look great and we'll be circulating information about where the videos can be viewed once the editing is complete.

Notable results from other competitions

You can find more detailed reports on all our competitions on our website therfa.uk.

Dave Fox has achieved a rare double, winning both the Veterans and the Vintage in the same year. This has only been done once before (by David Hebden in 2005, when he also won the doubles of both events with Keith Puckle). Spencer Beal and Tony Hamilton have won their fifth consecutive Masters title.

Ollie Arnold and Louise Mathias have enjoyed more successes this season, defending their title at the Winchester Fives Mixed Doubles at Malvern, as well as winning the Inaugural Open Mixed Doubles. Louise, our Ladies National Champion, also won the Ladies Winchester Fives singles and doubles (with Savanna Leboff) titles at Bradfield. Richie Murby won his first Scottish open title, and then also triumphed (with myself) in the doubles.

Shiloh Wu confirmed his position as the School's singles champion, winning a second title. The St Olave's pair of Boy and Nsenga taking the double title. Champion Durham Club player Camille Beattie (the National #2), remains the dominant school girl winning both singles and doubles (with her regular Durham partner Imogen Wright) U18 titles at the National School Girls. Another first this season has been the new Schools Mixed Doubles which attracted an entry of 19 pairs from 5 schools. Congratulations to the organiser, Alex Smith, for this additional promotion of school's Fives and to the Allyn's pairs, winners in both U18 and U15 categories.



And finally...

I'd like to thank all who work diligently in the background to keep Fives alive, documenting, archiving, updating the website, feeding social media, producing rankings, organising tournaments, trophies, etc. Also, all our board members, and our fantastic General Secretary who keeps the operation running so smoothly.

Cheers,

Julie McIntyre

PS.

I hope you're enjoying the versions of the logo which we're now using on RFA merchandise going forward.

In the meantime, there's a link to the RFA shop from our website where you can have your own goodies printed and customised: [The RFA Shop](#)

PPS.

Do follow us on social media for all the latest news, photos and video.

