

Youth and Experience both triumph at Tennis Club Finals

On a beautiful early September day in sylvan surroundings at Balksbury, Andover Lawn Tennis Club held their Championship Finals. A good crowd gathered for a barbeque and the first matches took to the courts.

The Men's Singles Final saw two of the club's best young players, Gregor Corcoran and Kyrill Kennett, meet for the first time at this level.

Onlookers were treated to a high quality match with both players hitting shots of explosive power and controlled accuracy that exploited the whole of the court deep to the baseline but also short angles and drop shots.



The first set was close but Kyrill used his power serve well and broke one more time to win 6-3. He was playing confidently, 4-1 ahead in the second set but then suffered a difficult service game with broken strings and Gregor took his chance to win five games in a row and take the set, playing strong, accurate, determined tennis.

A championship tie break decider was played and this went Kyrill's way, leading 5-1 and then 9-2 and finally 10-5, giving him the Men's Singles Title for the first time.

Guest of Honour for the day was Bash Kara, Supercoach at Andover, winner of the LTA Lifetime Achievement Award and Royal Box Guest at Wimbledon this year, where he sat close to David Beckham and Tim Peake and some Royals.

After his exertions and ultimate disappointment, Gregor exemplified the Wimbledon quote from Kipling...meeting Triumph and disaster and treating them both the same...and cheerfully volunteered for the umpire's Chair to oversee the Mixed Final .



Kyrill was busy...he was playing, with his partner Ros Hursell against Claire Coomer and Andrew Winnett . This proved fascinating as Claire and Andrew have won the title many times and Ros and Kyrill are a new partnership, exemplifying youth and experience.

There were many long rallies usually between Ros and Claire with the men looking to intercept. Andrew showed the value of experience and long arms, winning more of these interceptions and allowing Claire and himself to win 6-1, 6-2.

Claire has now won this trophy 22 times and Andrew 21.

Andrew and his partner Anthony Brown had played an excellent Men's Doubles Final against Al Williams and Shaun McDonald.

Both pairs aimed to dominate the net and with all four players having very good volleys, there were many sharp exchanges. At crucial points it was Andrew who often drove the winning shot as he and Ant got ahead in the first set to take it 7-5 and then the second 6-1.

In the Ladies Doubles, Claire Coomer teamed up with Hampshire Junior, Flavia Zamfir to play previous winners Ros Hursell and Jennie Pope.

Jennie is an experienced match player and Claire and Ros both play for County teams as well and they exchanged accurate, cleverly placed shots. Flavia has great groundstrokes and had to reach drop shots and lobs as she and Claire made their way to a win, 6-2, 6-1.

The Ladies Vets Singles was a close match of long rallies and it was Claire Reid who came out on top against Clare Thain, 6-4, 6-2.

The Men's Plate Singles was a very closely contested match, again with Youth against experience. Youth in the form of Alex Boldis came out on top against Mike Cash, but Mike made him work very hard for it.

With the blessing of good weather everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day normality after missing out on a tournament last year.

Those who won went home happy, and those who didn't with a resolve to turn it around next year.

Later that evening at the US Open, Emma Raducanu made history as an 18 year old.

Tennis accommodates all ages all levels.

Trevor Blake September 12 2021 ALTC



