

HAMPDEN PARK TENNIS TOURNAMENT 2015

With many close matches being played throughout the summer in the qualifying rounds those lucky and skilful enough to win made it through to earn their place on finals day.

The fun and family atmosphere was promoted as the junior event ran alongside the adult competition with spectators spoilt for choice with entertaining tennis on all 5 courts. The players umpired their own games and the true values of sportsmanship and fair play were in evidence throughout all day.

This year the Women's singles final proved to be a tense and tight affair as experienced previous winner Kathleen Jones took on the youthful new member Chloe Allistone. In a nervy first set Kathleen settled in quicker and made fewer errors winning the set 6-3. Chloe overcame her nerves and started rallying more consistently and was rewarded by taking the second set 6-3. The main feature of deciding third set was the baseline battle. Both players covered the court well and rallies were being extended as the nerves had disappeared and flowing ground strokes had taken control. The outcome was determined by a string of strong forehands from Kathleen who took the set and match 6-3 in an exhausting two and a quarter hours of quality tennis.

The Men's singles final was between number one seed and Eastbourne College tennis Coach Simon Gent and Hampden Park stalwart Richard Ellis. The first set was characterised by many long exhausting rallies with Gent gaining the upper hand with his more powerful and consistent ground strokes. Many of the games were closely contested but Gent had all the answers and took the set 6-1. In the second set Ellis worked hard to get Gent out of his comfort zone and many games went to deuce. Although many games were close the set score doesn't reflect this and the 6-3 score line to Gent gave him a well deserved victory. These two players are due to meet again in the Silver Fox Singles with Ellis planning a reversal of fortunes.

The men's doubles final was between the 2013 championship winners of Jez Bennett and Jeremy Dewing and the new pairing of Simon Gent and Mike Usher. Everyone anticipated a close match and they were not disappointed when the first set went to 6 all, a tie break was needed to split the teams. The tie break was as close as the preceding set. The turning point was when Usher hit a top spin lob using his trademark graphite rather than string striking technique which totally

foxed the opponents and won the crucial point. First set to Gent and Usher 7-6. The second set saw Dewing hitting with more power and Bennett causing problems for the opposition by becoming more active at the net. These changes were managed well by Gent and Usher who pulled through 6-4 to take the trophy.

The Mixed doubles brought together the husband and wife team of Teresa and Jez Bennett against Daniel Banks and Sue Bruce. In this match the married pair had too much guile and touch and romped to a comfortable 6-2 6-2 victory.

The Men's B singles final for players playing below 1st or 2nd team level was between the powerful serving Gary Francis and young improving player Josh Zahangir. Both players returned served well and many long baseline rallies developed where the heavy topspin of the Francis forehand was matched by the strong Zahangir backhand. The match was very even and could have gone either way but Zahangir eventually played fewer errors and went on to win 6-4 6-3.

The final adult match of the busy day was the Men's B Doubles. Each pair consisted of an experienced player partnering a youngster. Hugh Ball partnered the young improving left hander Luke Tilleard whilst Andrew Lloyd was the senior team member alongside Jake Mills. Ball and Tilleard made fewer errors and their general play was more consistent leading to a well earned 6-3 6-2 victory.

In the Junior Club Championships 8 junior singles & doubles events were staged for all different ages!

Notable performances were Aaron Brown who won a hat trick of events. He beat Rhys Merritt 6-4, 6-0 in the 18 & U singles then beat his younger Brother, Aidan Brown, in the 16 & U singles 6-1, 6-1 & then partnered Harrison Alvey in the 18 & U doubles to beat Matt Spiers & Rhys Merritt 6-1, 7-5!

For the second year running the Girls singles saw a battle of the 'Hannah's'. Hannah Fisk managed to defend her title by beating Hannah Warner-Swann 6-4. 6-2.

The 12 & U Boys singles winner was Tom Tyrwhitt-Walker in his first final against Charlie Moon 6-4, 6-4.

The closest match of the day was the Orange ball 10 & U final playing short sets to 4 games between James Miskin & Will Swinger. James took the 1st set 4-0,

Will levelled it by taking the 2nd set 4-2 & then the deciding set saw a great comeback from Will after being 3-1 down he then won it 5-3!

The Red ball 8 & U singles final was the best of 3 tiebreak sets to 10 points & Raphael Badawi beat Joshua Tremplin 10-5, 10-3.

The final junior match of the day saw Aidan Brown back on court partnering Luca Godding in the 14 & U doubles. They went on to beat Charlie Moon, also in his second final of the day, & Theo Lloyd 6-0, 6-1.

Any child or adult interested in learning or returning to tennis should contact the Club Coach, Jenny Hughes 07831097864

With trial membership at £12 a month for adults and only £5 for children why not make a racket and join the fun at Hampden Park?