

Pit Farm Tennis Club

Newsletter

October 2025



Thank you Derek Wakeling by Tim Martin, Club President

While away on holiday in September I received news from other committee members of huge significance for Pit Farm Tennis Club. Our amazing club steward Derek had, at the age of 90 and following a recent spell in hospital, decided that now is the right time to step down from his duties at the club and finally retire. I was of course tremendously sad to hear this news but being the positive person I am, rather than dwell on this sadness I would prefer to be happy that we had the privilege of enjoying Derek working in our club since well before I joined in 2009. A longer standing member than myself believes that he first started working at Pit Farm in 1979 but the exact length of his service is not really that important. What is important is that throughout every single one of the succeeding days, months and years, he has remained the same good-natured, cheery, genial, welcoming and friendly person he has always been and the heartbeat of our club.



I remember when I first turned up for the rather intimidating experience of playing in front of committee members on a Saturday afternoon in 2009 and coming off court slightly nervously to find out whether I had made the grade. I was asked almost immediately whether I would be coming to the Sunday session the following day and when I said I was unable to because of a prior commitment a smiling Derek was quick to interrupt and say "well you're welcome to come to any other Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday or Thursday that you would like". This readiness to warmly greet new members to the club was typical of Derek's good nature and continued to be so right up to his retirement. I could not possibly count the number of new members who, when joining the club, immediately commented on how they had been helped to feel more at ease by Derek. Other than being the smiling face of Pit Farm to new members, Derek's skill at running the club sessions was quite extraordinary. Remembering players' names, keeping track of how far advanced the scores were in the sets being played, putting players into balanced fours and asking players who were too strong or too weak for a particular game to wait a while - all done with the minimum of fuss and while still chatting amiably to those who were sitting off.

How on earth did he do it?

If you thought that Derek's work was purely limited to running club sessions, you would be wrong. After initially having some gardening duties, in recent years Derek still helped to keep the clubhouse clean and tidy as well as many unseen jobs like filling and emptying the dishwasher, buying milk and the occasional cake, managing the distribution of the tennis balls and many other tasks which we have all come to take for granted. He deserves our gratitude for all this and the committee hopes, in time, to mark his retirement in a fitting way (if he lets us!).

So as we now have to try to find somebody to fill Derek's giant shoes, one thing is absolutely certain. We may find someone to do what he did but we will never replace him. I can sum it up best like this - Pit Farm has many excellent tennis players but if they were to gradually move away others would replace them. There are several hard working volunteers but others will come along after them. We have two superb coaches but one day they will move on. Only one member of our club is truly irreplaceable- thank you to my friend, the incomparable **Derek Wakeling**.





October is a great time to ...

... up your game. We are delighted to launch our new **Adult Group Coaching Sessions** run by our Senior Adult Coach **Ashley Mount**. Sessions will be run on a pay-per-play basis and the timetable can be viewed online [here](#) or below.

Book directly with Ashley Mount by calling/ messaging **07769 810550** or emailing **ashleymount87@gmail.com**

Fee per 60 min session: £10 members / £15 non-members

Fee per 90 min session: £15 members / £20 non members



First session of the newly-launched timetable!

| | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| MORNING | | | | | |
| 9AM TO 10AM | | BEGINNER /IMPROVER | | WOMENS INTERMEDIATE | |
| 11AM TO 12 NOON | MIXED INTERMEDIATE | | | | |
| AFTERNOON | | | | | |
| 12 NOON TO 1PM | BEGINNER /IMPROVER | | | | |
| 1PM TO 2PM | | | | | MIXED INTERMEDIATE |
| EVENING | | | | | |
| 7PM TO 8PM | | | MENS INTERMEDIATE | BEGINNER /IMPROVER | |
| 8 PM TO 9.30PM | MENS ADVANCED (90 MINS) | | WOMENS ADVANCED (90 MINS) | | |

Are you a **PURPLE**, **RED** or **CYAN**? Or somewhere inbetween? We have coaching sessions to suit all abilities.



BEGINNER/IMPROVER

- new to tennis
- have played but not for a long time

INTERMEDIATE

- can serve and generally play a game
- inconsistent and want to improve

ADVANCED

- experienced player
- looking to improve tactics & technique



The first week of group coaching got off to a fantastic start with lots of our members enjoying the sessions.





I don't know exactly, but this was something like the 120th Weldon Cup. This year the weather was good but not too hot. The format was 7 rounds of mixed doubles (6 rounds played and one rest round) where players pick or are given a number and then refer to the draw sheet which determines the court, partner and opponent: it is different each round.



Fred and Ivan has just finished winning a Men's 1st team must-win Chaucer League match, so rested for the 1st round and then played the next 6. As is normally the case, it came down to the last round to determine the winner with 4 men in the running: Fred, Ed, Ivan and Mark. **Well done to Fred who won every match!**

The Ladies side was exciting too where, at the half-way stage, Bridget, Liz C, Yuri and Liz H-S were all unbeaten. By the final round, it was between Bridget and Yuri whether Yuri had a 4 point lead and finished on a 4-2 win so **congratulations Yuri!**

A special mention goes to Shirley who made herself available in case we were short - and we were - and held her own really well including one 6-0 victory.

What worked very well this year was a feast of goodies provided by the players including cakes, sandwiches, fruit, salad, dips and sausages rolls. These were put out as a steady stream each round and players could keep their energy levels up throughout.

Well done to all and long may this competition last!

And David did an ace job setting up the scoring sheets and keeping a steady flow of food coming!

Karen

Oh captain, my captain...

Our Mixed Vets Team requires a new Captain for summer matches only. The matches are mid-week and there are approx six to organise. Please step forward if you can, as if no captain is found to take on this team it cannot continue.

Practice partners

Please note Court 6 cannot be booked by single players for wall hitting, serving practice or ball machine play on Saturday or Sundays during prime time 10am – 4pm. If you are looking for similar-ability players to play, please contact membership.pitfarm@gmail.com

Finders keepers

Please check the lost property bin (towards back of the clubhouse) if you have lost anything recently at the club - we have quite a collection of clothes, accessories... even the odd racquet. All items will be removed on 19 October and lost forever.



Welcome

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to the 40 new members who joined in September. It's great to see so many families joining and players across all categories, from Minis* to Country Members. For all our new members, please note there is complimentary tea and coffee in the kitchen, free WI-FI (code on noticeboard) and for those attending the Tuesday-night club session often a delicious meal at the end of the night. Please get in touch via membership.pitfarm@gmail.com if you are new to Pit Farm Tennis Club and have any questions about your membership.

*We are now full in our Minis / Junior membership categories but have a waiting list for our 2026 intake, should you know anyone interested in joining.



Box League

Looking for more match play? The Box League is a mixed-gender, singles league available to club members and a great way to meet new playing partners and improve your game. Players compete within their box over a calendar quarter after which the boxes are adjusted by promotion and demotion to a different box depending on points accumulated. There are currently six boxes in the league (A-F), each with 8-12 players. New players typically start in the lowest box. **The current box league starts today 1 October.** Any new players wishing to join the Box League for the next session should contact Thom Van Every (07973 291133) or Karen Smith (07790722062).



We need you!

Follow us on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#) for all the latest news and updates from the club. If you're a team club captain, please send us match results and photos. Or if you would like to rub in a recent Box League win, share your scores and we'll post these too.

Tag @pitfarmtennis or email membership.pitfarm@gmail.com

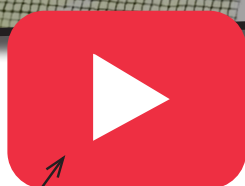
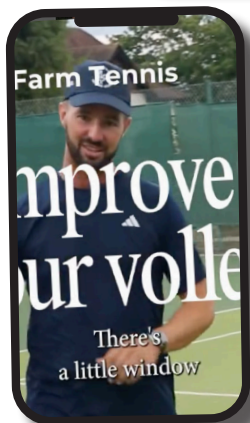
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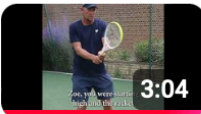
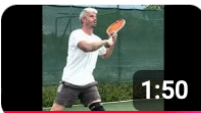
Watch us on YouTube



Our online coaching videos continue to entertain and educate our members and YouTube viewers further afield. Ashley's 'How to Return a Serve' video had over 1k views in just a few days, and Paul's masterclass in serving is continuing to be watched, with over 2.3k views and counting. If you haven't checked them out yet, be sure to head on over to our YouTube channel where you'll find short but effective lessons on winning shots and strategies. Click [here](#) to watch and follow our social channels for more Pit Farm Tennis coaching videos over the coming months.



Click to watch.

-  **Pit Farm Tennis Coaching - How to Return a Serve**
Pit Farm Tennis Club 1:49
-  **Pit Farm Tennis Coaching - How to Volley**
Pit Farm Tennis Club 1:43
-  **Pit Farm Tennis Coaching - Improve your Serve**
Pit Farm Tennis Club 2:15
-  **Pit Farm Tennis Coaching - The Backhand Path**
Pit Farm Tennis Club 3:04
-  **Pit Farm Tennis Coaching - The Split Step**
Pit Farm Tennis Club 1:50

Vets Tournament Dates

Over 50? Bring you A-game to this fun tournament. Entries are now open for the Mixed and Women's. Enter for the Mixed by contacting timjim.martin@googlemail.com or for the Women's by adding your name to the sign-up sheet in the clubhouse.

Mixed Vets Tournament: 5 October
Women's Vets Tournament: 28 October





Don't Forget

Floodlights

The auto switch off is at 9.30pm Mon - Sat and at 6pm on Sunday. If the floodlights auto switch is off, please make sure you also turn off at the switch box before you leave the site, otherwise the floodlights will auto turn on during the night and annoy our neighbours.

Access gate - for security/safety please can you shut the access gate after entry/exit as a mag lock is now in place. A code is required for entry and there is a push button located on the wall by the gate for exit.

Cushions - if you are the last one to use them, please ensure outside cushions are put away in the store box located on the patio.

Dates for your diary

Mixed Vets Tournament:
5 October

Women's Vets Tournament:
26 October

Christmas Party:
13 December



Be sure to save the date for our Christmas Party - there will be food, drinks and dancing – **13 December.**

Guests at Pit Farm Tennis

Please note, as a member, you may bring a guest to play with you, but please adhere to the club rules:

- Only one guest per member is permitted at a time.
- Each guest is allowed a maximum of 6 visits a year.
- **The guest's name must be included in the court booking.**
- Please add your guest's name to the visitor book in the clubhouse.
- You will need to pay the guest fee before playing. This can be paid in two ways:

Online:

Bank: Lloyds

Name: Pit Farm (Guildford) Hard Court Tennis

Sort Code: 30-93-74

Account number: 00171127

In person:

Put the cash in an envelope clearly labelled with your name, your guest's name and the date. Put this in the guest fee box in the clubhouse.

- The cost is £5.00 for seniors and £2.50 for juniors.
- Members may bring their children for £2.50 per visit, with no limit on the number of visits.

Thanks for making it to the end... and see you on court!

Your Committee 2025-26

Tim Martin – President • Gary Wicks – Vice President • Ian Kenyon – Treasurer

• Dawn Davies – Secretary • Cephas Vazquez-Howard / Alex Orr Co Chair • Bridget Parker – Club Captain

Committee: Barney Whiteman, Jim Holloway, Jonathan Freeston, Jackie Shaw, Laurence Fletcher, Matt Jones, Paul Taylor, Phil Rowlands, Ruth Iles, Thom Van Every.

Non-Committee: Liz Hill-Smith – Welfare Officer, Caroline Rowlands – Membership Secretary, Richard Morris – Examiner

Contact pitfarmsec@gmail.com

Next issue... Vets Tournament Report