

Aldershot & District Lawn Tennis Association

Affiliated to Hants & Isle Of Wight LTA

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 6th November 2024, at AVONDALE LAWN TENNIS CLUB

The Chairman, Keith Morris, opened the meeting.

Present: 45 people attended, representing 17 clubs.

1. Apologies

Brian Greig (committee), Sam Williamson (committee), Sue Osbourne (Worplesdon) and Alec Finnemore (Frimley).

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 1st November 2023, have been circulated. They were accepted.

3. Matters Arising

None.

4. Chairman's Report

Keith read out his report.

The Aldershot and District League is still doing very well with 25 clubs, Summer and Winter leagues totalling 260 senior teams, over 1,000 matches per year. We remain one of the largest local leagues in the Country. We ran junior leagues this Summer, thanks to Brian and Alison. There were 12 clubs involved.

The Aldershot and District League has an excellent committee. My thanks go out to Alison Fortune who is the secretary, Andrew Littlecott, treasurer, Darrell Merrick Willson, men's results secretary, Carole Lee, ladies results secretary, Cath Pearson, mixed results secretary, Brian Greig, junior results secretary, Sam Williamson, pennants and Darren Sharp who maintains the website. My thanks also go to Laura Williams for the work she does regarding promotion and relegation at the beginning of each season, as well as the extra work she and Darren do on the online results system.

As a committee, we have had a number of committee meetings with excellent attendance.

Team players are required to have a British Tennis membership number in order to play in matches.

As usual, there is still confusion with some team captains and members being unaware of some of the match rules. Rules should be displayed in your clubhouse or if you haven't got a clubhouse, please make sure the team captains have them. It would be helpful if when there was a new match secretary or new team captain, they were given some help by the previous match secretary or team captain on what their new role entails and the online system. Please make sure that match secretary changes during the season are communicated via the website or the ADLTA e-mail. You can now submit online Summer and Winter league entries, nominations, club details, Chairman, Match Secretary and Secretary details.

There have been some teething problems with the new system which has meant extra work for many of the committee.

There has been a fair amount of moaning to the league secretaries about penalty points. You must enter your results on time or add a comment, otherwise you will receive penalty points.

Some clubs are very lax in sending their entry fees into the Treasurer. This is very unfair on the treasurer and the secretary giving them more work to do.

I have been on the ADLTA committee for over 36 years and Chairman for 14 years. I am stepping down and we have a volunteer who will be put forward at the Election of the Committee. I will, however, still be on the committee and will remain President of the ADLTA.

I would like to personally thank all the volunteers in your clubs who do so much. My thanks also go to Avondale Tennis Club for hosting the AGM. And don't forget your pennants at the back of the room if you have won anything.

I wish you all success in 2025.

5. **Treasurer's Report**

Copies of the accounts were available for attendees. Andrew noted that late payments and a number of partial payments had made auditing the accounts more difficult and time consuming. In future there may be an option to use a feature of the LTA online system where entries will not be accepted without payment at the time of entry. There may be an extra cost using this feature and fees could go up as a result. It was suggested that if payment for a team had not been received then that team could not be entered in a league.

There were no questions from the floor regarding the accounts.

Andrew thanked Peter Hill for auditing the accounts but noted that Peter would not be continuing as auditor.

6. **Election of the committee**

Keith asked if there were any volunteers from the floor to join the committee. Paul Mortlock volunteered to help with juniors and Darren Sharp agreed to become chairman. Keith reported that the committee were happy to continue.

Keith Morris	President
Darren Sharp	Chairman
Andrew Littlecott	Treasurer
Alison Fortune	Secretary
Carole Lee	Ladies League Secretary
Darrell Merrick-Wilson	Mens League Secretary
Cath Pearson	Mixed League Secretary
Brian Greig	Junior League Secretary
Laura Williams	Online lead
Sam Williamson	Pennants
Paul Mortlock	Junior support

The committee was unanimously voted in, on bloc; including new members.

7. **Election of Auditor**

Stated earlier (5. Treasurer's report) Peter Hill is stepping down as Auditor. As there were no volunteers from the floor a request for an auditor will be circulated to clubs in the New Year.

8. **Presentation of Trophies**

Paul Adlam collected trophies for Brightwell, their Ladies A and Mixed A won the summer 2024 leagues and their Mixed A won the Winter 2023/24 league.

Betsy Jager collected trophies for Camberley whose Mens A and Ladies A won the winter 2023/24 leagues.

Frimley Mens A won the summer 2024 league but did not collect their trophy.

9. Proposals

1 Amendment to rule G2

All clubs affiliated to the Association shall be eligible to enter teams in any competition organised by the Association. An entry fee shall be payable for each team entered and the amount of the fee shall be decided at the Annual General Meeting. In addition, a club must be affiliated to the LTA and be an LTA registered venue. All members who play in our league must be LTA Advantage members.

Last sentence amended to:

All members who play in our league must be LTA Advantage members and that membership must be affiliated to the club(s) for which they are playing league matches.

Proposed by the committee

Keith read out the proposal, which is a slight rewording and is a requirement for using the online planner.

For All
Against none
Abstentions none
Proposal carried.

It was asked if this rule would now apply to the juniors. Alison F stated that as there was no junior league running this winter that it did not apply but the junior rules would be reviewed next year prior to a junior summer league.

2 Amendment to rule G10c

Current rule G10c:

If one nominated player does not play any fixtures for their nominated team for the entire season then that player cannot be nominated for any team for the following season. If two or more nominated players do not play any matches for their nominated team for the entire season then that team will be deducted 5 penalty points for every un-played nominated player at the end of the season and additionally those players cannot be nominated for any team for the following season.

Proposed rule G10c:

If a nominated player does not play any fixtures for their nominated league team (i.e. mens or ladies or mixed) for the entire season then that player cannot be nominated for any team in that league for the following season. Additionally, if two or more nominated players in the same team do not play any matches for that team for the entire season then that team will be deducted 5 penalty points for every un-played nominated player at the end of the season.

Proposed by the committee

Cath Pearson elaborated on this proposed rewording. A nominated player who fails to play for a particular league team cannot be nominated the following season for that team but can be nominated for other league teams. For example, if the nominated player fails to play for a mens team they cannot be nominated in a mens team the following season but they can be nominated in a mixed team

For A Majority
Against 2
Abstentions 2

Proposal carried.

3 Nomination rule change

The nomination rule G10c to be amended to include:

"If a nominated player is unable to play for the entire season for legitimate reasons, i.e. illness, injury or other extenuating circumstances, then the league secretary should be informed who can then exempt that person if appropriate"

Proposed by Eggars Hill

Eggars Hill had put forward this proposal because as a small club they have less people they are able to nominate especially if a nominated player is injured and ends up not playing any matches. Darrell stated that there is no penalty for the first player it is only when a second player does not play that penalty points are awarded. Eggars Hill felt that not being able to nominate a player was, in effect, a penalty and that this was harsh if the player have been injured at the start of the season. Darren said that as a small club he had used the rules to their advantage when it came to nominating players. Darrell stated that since the introduction of the rule the number of nominated players that didn't play matches has drastically reduced, reducing what she saw as cheating. Carole, as ladies results sec, commented that people have abused the system but this rule had reduced this. The question of how this would be policed was raised, the assumption being that it would be at the end of the season when matches were complete, as it is now. Eggars Hill appreciated that it could cause more work for league secretaries and that league secretaries should be informed as soon as possible so they can exempt players if appropriate.

For	21
Against	9
Abstentions	14

Proposal carried.

4 Continuation 2 pair summer trial

Paul Adlam spoke on behalf of Brightwell. Brightwell felt that this format penalises larger clubs because they do not have enough court space to simply enter more teams to allow the same numbers of players to play league tennis, it costs more in terms of floodlight use, new balls for each match and takes more time to manage. There are logistical problems with older players finding it harder to play more sets, and we are all getting older and it's harder for younger players to fit in longer matches with school demands. As a tennis playing community we need to be encouraging the younger players otherwise where will we be in 10/20 years time.

Matches finishing too late for younger players was disputed by Diane Pettitt because with 3 pairs there was often a lot of time spent waiting around for a court if only 2 courts were available as was often the case. Tilford commented that longer matches were fine on lighter evenings. A convert, William, was previously against the change to the 2 pair format but now loves it. Shalford are very much in favour of the new format.

For	A majority
Against	4
Abstentions	2

Proposal carried.

5 Abandonment proposal

If a match has to be abandoned after play has commenced, then the match shall be deemed to have been completed if 2 rubbers and at least one set of the 3rd and 4th rubber has been completed.

Proposed by Eggars Hill, Frimley, Worplesdon & Avondale

This was debated, some were in favour, others not. It was commented that having to complete a set of both of the second rubbers was not necessarily easy and that perhaps it should be 1 set of either the 3rd or 4th rubbers. Completing 1 set of both second rubbers would mean each pair would have to play a minimum of 3

sets or a maximum of 4 sets, for the result to stand. As at previous AGMs the proposal submitted is the proposal that is voted on. To change it at an AGM is not fair to clubs who have considered the circulated proposal and are present to vote on that proposal and not an amended one.

For 27
Against 1
Abstentions 8

Proposal carried.

6a Remove the championship tie-break

Proposed by Eggars Hill & Ash

There was a little debate before a vote.

For 23
Against 12
Abstentions 2

Proposal carried.

6b Remove the championship tie-break for the ladies & mixed leagues

Proposed by Frimley

Given the proposal 6a to remove the tie break was accepted this proposal is not relevant – no vote.

7 Tie break options

- 7a. 3rd set tie break becomes a normal 7 pt tie break
- 7b. 2 normal tie break sets to be played 5-5, 3rd set championship tie break
- 7c. 2 normal tie break sets to be played 5-5, 3rd set normal tie break

Proposed by Worplesdon

Given the proposal 6a to remove the tie break was accepted this proposal is not relevant – no vote.

8 Captains can agree to use a sudden death deuce on the second deuce in a game for final sets where light is fading / time is running out.

Proposed by Ash

There was some debate, it was commented that this was another rule that captains might struggle with.

For 4
Against A majority
Abstentions 2

Proposal not carried.

9 In the summer, the number of teams in a league division should be limited to a maximum of 6 unless the numbers of teams entering makes this impractical.

Proposed by Frimley

Keith stated that in theory the committee were in favour of this and do try to keep to 6 in a division. However, this is not always possible and depends on the number of entries, if there were 38 entries and a maximum of 6 would we have to tell 2 teams they couldn't play? Avondale said they would find it very helpful to have 6 not 7 in a division. Carole commented that it was important to have options depending on the number of entries. Darrell stated that with the new summer format there had been more teams which meant more divisions of 7 teams this summer.

For A majority
Against 1
Abstentions 2

Proposal carried.

- 10** Start the summer season 1 week earlier and end a week later (for example 22nd April to 5th August). This would allow for extra double week periods for fixture scheduling.

Proposed by Frimley

This received positive comments from the floor, Avondale felt it would help fit in all the fixtures. More teams has lead to more fixtures requiring more time, if the summer is wet it's even harder to fit them all in. Cath stated that Bank holidays do not help and having a catch-up week near the second May Bank Holiday, i.e. half term would help.

For A majority

Against 3

Abstentions 2

Proposal carried.

- 11** Introduce a Beginners League - men or ladies in any combination in same league; experienced players not permitted to play. This would allow enthusiastic new starters to get some match experience playing against different people without the normal standard and pressure of match play. Matches could be at any time including weekends. Possibly with no penalties for missing matches. 2 pairs, not 3, as there may be a limited number of beginners per club.

Proposed by Ash

Ash explained that they have new players who are not up to match standard but for whom it would be useful to play against different players. They had not envisaged an official league that ADLTA would be expected to organise & run. Currently ADLTA do not have the capacity to organise more leagues. When it became clear that Ash were effectively looking for some friendly matches it was agreed that Alison would contact clubs and the details of those interested passed to Ash.

No vote required.

10. AOB

Mandy Fitzgerald (from Onslow) asked if there were any rules or penalties relating to late arrival of teams or players for matches. She was directed to our rules which contain details of set & rubber forfeits for late arrivals.

Wrecclesham stated the ADLTA rules say the winter league shall start on the Saturday of the week in which 1st October falls but that this year it had started much earlier which had caused some issues with internal club matches. LW confirmed that the fixture schedule started on Saturday 21st September this year, the rules allow the committee to move the date slightly if necessary. Match secretaries also have flexibility in arranging dates and on this occasion opted for an earlier date too so the season appeared to start much earlier.

Wrecclesham also issued a plea for captains to be reminded to scroll down on the online planner to find the appropriate captains details for matches and not just pick the first contact listed for a club which is often not the correct contact.

Keith thanked Avondale for hosting.