

January  
2021

Radley College  
Tennis Court

'Better Than the Last' - The Club Newsletter

### Happy New Year!

We hope that you and your family had as splendid a break over the festive season and as enjoyable an end to the year as could be managed in the circumstances.

Farewell to 2020 (and good riddance, for so many reasons) and welcome to a bright-eyed and bushy-tailed 2021, full of hope, optimism and good resolutions.

Well, that is how we planned to begin the first RCTC newsletter of 2021. But as we know, all too well, Lockdown 3 is in place and will last a good while. We now know that anything could happen at any time and might be totally contrary to what we were told 5 mins beforehand. So, we must make the best of it and remain 'Relentlessly Positive'!



Happy New Year

In that spirit, it has been determined that this newsletter needs a new name; one that is appropriate to the times in which we live, to our uncrushable optimism and to the constant punning that seem to infect the world of Real Tennis.

From this time forward, in sickness and in health, the RCTC newsletter shall be known as;

'Better Than The Last'

and let us hope that it will be as true of the year 2021 as it will be of the newsletter itself.



**RADLEY**  
REAL TENNIS

Relentlessly Positive  
Positively Relentless

## Tennis in 2021

Looking ahead (as far as one can these days, which is not far), no tennis will be possible for our members or for College boys until the Lockdown is lifted and the Tiering of Radley is reduced.

Assuming the definitions of the tiers remain as there are now, moving to Tier 3 will make lessons, individual practice or same household play possible; and indoor sport will be able to go ahead as part of education and for U18s. When we return to Tier 2, singles can start again.

We are pleased to note that our considered and pragmatic approach to the rules under which the club operated was rewarded by no case of Covid among our members as a result of any mixing at the club. The approach we took last year will be repeated when play re-commences, unless there is a jolly good reason not to do so at the time.

Although paying court fees is, regrettably, currently unnecessary, please can you make sure that the following payment details are noted:

### **Nota Bene**

***The club's bank account for COURT FEES has changed, with immediate effect. From today, please can all your RCTC payments be made to the following payee:***

***Radley College Leisure Ltd.  
Sort code: 60-01-01  
Account number: 46625836.***

***The bank account details for subscription remains unchanged.***

## Club News

One of our Honorary Members club has recently receiving the Covid vaccine.

We are delighted to report that Mary Ronaldson, the sprightly 95-year-old matriarch of the Ronaldson clan and who is the embodiment of the RCTC motto, has received the first dose of the vaccine, as part of the national immunisation programme. The second and final dose has, however, been postponed.

Much hope rests on the efficacy of the vaccine and the efficiency of its roll-out across the country and through the population.

## Junior Tennis

### **National Schoolgirls U15 and U19 Championships**

These two tournaments, due to be held over the weekend of 9 and 10 January at Wellington, and sponsored by the hosting club and The Dedanists, have fallen casualty to the national Lockdown. Our commiserations to all those who had entered and were about to play.



**THE DEDANISTS' FOUNDATION**  
**RE-GENERATING REAL TENNIS**

## Thank you to The Dedanists

In the Christmas edition of this newsletter, we featured the great work that the Dedanists do to support Junior tennis. Their principal focus is on the game in the UK, but over the years they have extended generous support to overseas juniors of great promise, including Camden Riviere, the current World Number One,

We are delighted to report that, in addition to the support they are offering to several junior members of the Radley club, the Dedanists have announced that they will be giving help to our Radley protégé, Florent Brethon.



Florent is absolutely delighted and thanks the Dedanists and Radley CTC for their help and encouragement of his tennis ambitions.

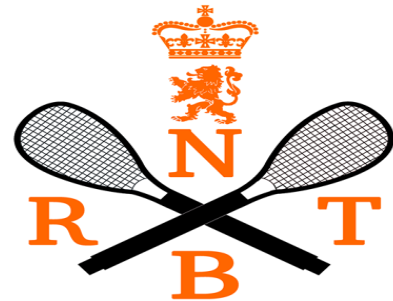
He looks forward to meeting Radley club members in the summer, as he hopes to be working at the club during his university vacation, pandemic permitting.

### **New Courts – Latest updates**

There is not a great deal to report, as developments have inevitably slowed down over the festive period, but there are updates about two projected courts recently mentioned.

## Holland

The Dutch Real Tennis Association reports that they have been shown the first architectural drawings of 'The Strip', the municipal sports centre in The Hague that will include a real tennis court. It is extremely exciting to see the large footprint of the tennis court on the plans and, when it is permissible, we will share these with our members



The court will be a major part of a complex that will include a large multi-sport hall, changing rooms and other leisure facilities, including a *jeu de boules* and terrace cafeteria. From that terrace there will be a view of the sand dunes and the beach. How delightful!

## Virginia, USA

The President of Prince's Court, Washington, Vern Cassin III, has sent a letter to the international tennis community about the agreement to build a new court at Westwood Country Club, located in Vienna, Virginia.

Click on this link to read the whole announcement:

<https://www.tennisandrackets.com/news/washington-court-tennis-fundraising-announcement>.

This move will secure the long-term future of court tennis in the Washington D.C. area and prevent the loss of one of 10 active tennis courts in the United States.

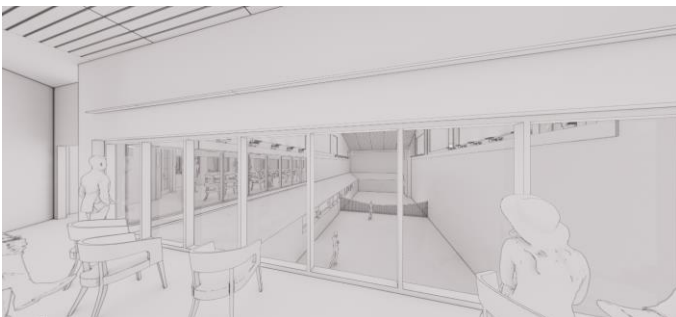
Due to Westwood’s schedule for other capital improvements, there has only been five months—until February 2021—to raise a total of \$3.4 million. There has been full participation from the D.C. membership, and significant support from the Grassi, Martin, and Prince families to the project. Further funds raised will enable the elaboration of the facilities outside the playing area of the court.

Tennis court panorama:



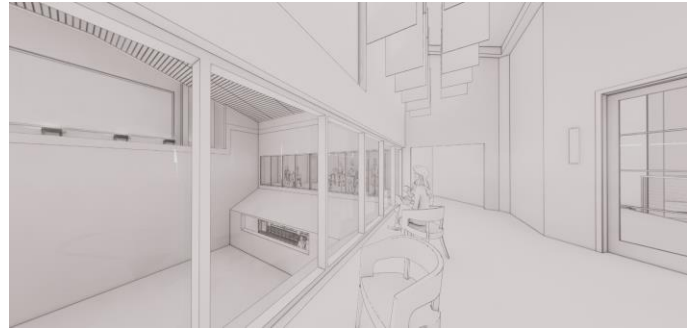
<https://api2.enscape3d.com/v3/view/b5dae115-e17a-49e5-9f66-0b91dce37bb8>.

Above the dedans:



<https://api2.enscape3d.com/v3/view/b5dae115-e17a-49e5-9f66-0b91dce37bb8>.

Upper galleries:



<https://api2.enscape3d.com/v3/view/724bb7ca-cf59-4077-a298-ad66ca48f244>.

### **Lockdown Three**

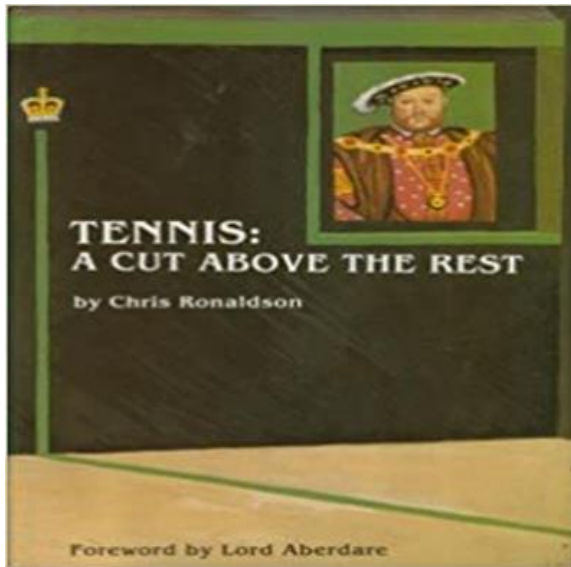
Here are three ideas to keep yourself entertained and thinking about tennis.

#### **1. Reading about Tennis**

As you may know, Ronaldson Publications (a.k.a. ‘RonPubs’), was set up by CJR and his father, Bruce, to publish *A Cut Above the Rest* in 1985, when it proved difficult to find a publishing house prepared to take it on.

Spotting a gap in the market for reprints of classic tennis titles and for new books on the game, RonPubs has been busy over the past 36 years and has now published about 30 titles. The business has been most ably run for the past decade by Kathryn McNicoll.

As you may have a bit more time for reading, perhaps it is timely to offer a book bundle so that you can start or augment a real tennis library. For the lockdown, special, once in a lifetime and January Sale price of £30, we can offer you a bundle comprising all seven of the titles below:



(but this one has sold out)

A special feature of this time-limited offer is that we will provide a **free** delivery service (N.B. not a hand delivery, in these Covid times, as we will be packing the order and delivering it wearing gloves). Order before the end of January 2021.

CJR and MHT commit to delivering all orders by bike or on foot (weather and injuries permitting). This will give their daily exercise a greater-than-usual sense of purpose. They will do their best, but if you live over 25 miles away, they may have to draw the line and think of another solution!

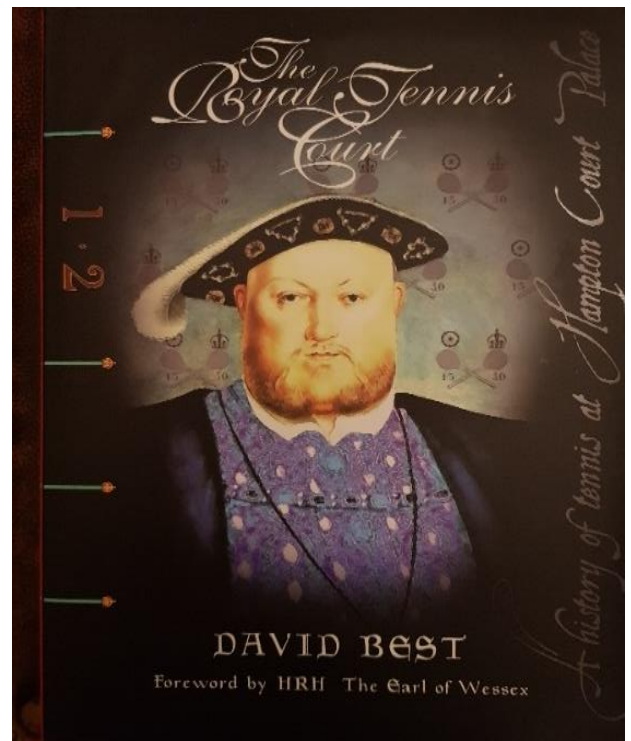
Stocks of some books are small, so please understand that we must work on a first-come, first-served basis for the following lavishly illustrated books, all of which are hardbacked, except for the booklet.

Every bundle will comprise the following seven books:

*The Bandies of Fortune*, by Geoff Hiller (a fascinating compendium of references to tennis in literature and the arts over the centuries).

*The First and The Foremost*, by Kathryn McNicoll (a history of the male and female champions of tennis);

*The Royal Tennis Court*, by David Best (this is a meticulous history of tennis at Hampton Court Palace);



*The Rules and Principles of Tennis*, written in 1800 by Pierre Barcellon, translated by Sir Richard Hamilton;

*Real Tennis*, by Kathryn McNicoll (introductory booklet);

*Hazard a Guess*, (a real tennis-themed 'whodunnit' by Edward Hughes);

*Disturb'd with Chaces*, by David Best and Brian Rich (tennis courts, celebrities, and scandals of yesteryear).

## 2. Watching Tennis

World Number One, Camden Riviere, continues to produce excellent and regular YouTube videos, in the series of 'Cam's Corner'.

We recommend all of them but have selected three this week.

The first was recorded at Radley a year ago (how long ago it seems) and it is a special edition to celebrate the 100th edition of the USCTA magazine 'Chase The First'.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ELaVZQ\\_YTbc&list=PLzAa4D2Mp3qDyJrPnFQq\\_mOZi63ATOebT&index=4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ELaVZQ_YTbc&list=PLzAa4D2Mp3qDyJrPnFQq_mOZi63ATOebT&index=4).

The second is the first of Cam's new style video's, recorded in the Autumn of 2020.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v64J31BNDyl&list=PLzAa4D2Mp3qDyJrPnFQq\\_mOZi63ATOebT&index=3](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v64J31BNDyl&list=PLzAa4D2Mp3qDyJrPnFQq_mOZi63ATOebT&index=3).

If you may need some new ideas for your home fitness routine, here is a training suggestion from Camden that is perfect for Lockdown.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RaAlrPZRtGs>.

...and here is a novelty bonus; spelling your name in exercises.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZUFdCuT8-Qs>.

## 3. Quizzes about tennis

Just when we were starting to worry about a lack of ideas for this edition's competition, one of our members, Tim Harper, charged to the rescue. Tim has come up with the splendid idea of a limerick competition.

The rules for the competition are that each limerick must be themed on Real Tennis clubs, Real Tennis terms or Real Tennis pros and personalities. Judgements will be based on the wit, rhythm, and durability of the verse. No indecent/crude ones, please!

Use the hyperlink below to submit your entry via the T&RA website:

[CLICK HERE TO ENTER](#)

We look forward to printing the winning limerick after it is announced on 26 February.

'Better Than The Last' would not be the same without a photo competition, would it?



Who is this?

## One from the archives

It is not far from Wimbledon to Hampton Court and top lawn tennis players have regularly visited RTC to have a look and to try their hand.

In 1996, a group of superstars descended upon The Royal Tennis Court, and what a constellation of tennis talent was gathered there on that day.

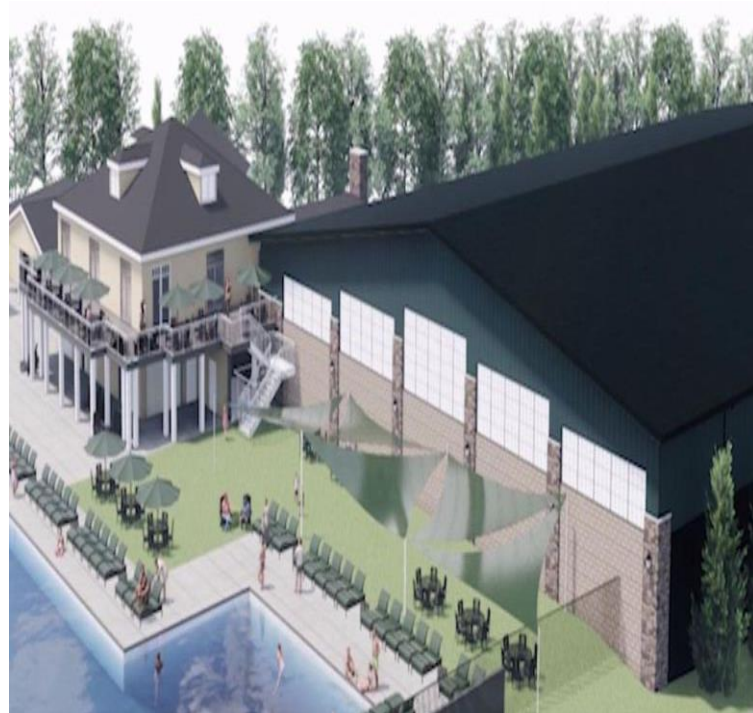


From the left of the photo above, there is a quartet comprising former British Number One, John Lloyd, and multiple Grand Slam event winners Ken Rosewall, Kevin Curran and Stan Smith.

They joined four real tennis players; HRH Prince Edward, Sue Haswell, who was three times a finalist in the ladies' singles World Championship, and professionals Jonathan Howell and CJR.

You will note, I am sure, that the lawn tennis players were dressed in 'mainly white' kit, while the real tennis players were upholding tradition in their impeccable 'all-white' kit.

It is rather the same in the picture below, in which the traditional and the modern stand side by side, except in this case, it is the real tennis court that looks to the future, while the clubhouse of the Westwood Country Club in Vienna, VA, USA is traditionally styled. Both look splendid.



The Radley Professionals have again been furloughed, the tennis court is closed and Radley College has gone online.

Until we meet again, stay safe, fit and well.

*This Newsletter, the first of 2021, was compiled by  
Maggie Henderson-Tew*