

# Banbury Tennis Leagues

Secretary's Mid-Year Report

25th October 2014

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The 2014 Summer League is now complete.

The reasonable weather enabled the League to finish on time so no extension was needed.

Only 13 matches were postponed because of bad weather; just 1 was postponed twice.

Banbury A retained their League Title for the second successive year and Hook Norton had a successful season, winning Divisions 2 and 3.

## **1. Change from 5 Divisions to 6**

This appears to have been well accepted by the clubs. It certainly made fixture arranging easier!

Unfortunately two teams withdrew their entries after the fixtures were announced so the Leagues could not be rearranged which meant that teams in divisions 4 and 6 played less tennis.

## **2. Rule change proposal format at AGM**

Proposers were asked to identify and state the problem that their proposal was intended to solve and the impact the proposal would have if carried. I feel that this resulted in better structured discussions and intend to continue this format in future AGMs.

## **3. Impact of rule changes**

A number of rule changes were discussed and agreed at the February AGM. The revised rules were posted on the website soon after the AGM and the changes were indicated in red so players could spot them easily. Here is my summary of subsequent events.

### *Rule 2 - one allowed rearrangement instead of two*

This appears to have been universally accepted as an improvement. Team Captains were generally reasonable in its interpretation. No team incurred a rule 8 penalty of having 9 points deducted.

### *Rules 3 and 5 - protocol for rearranging matches*

Whilst I don't know whether or not this improved matters, I am still aware of some background discontent. Certain Team Captains seem to be more flexible and reasonable than others.

### *Rule 8 - deduction of 9 points as a result of conceding, cancelling in less than 48 hours or disallowed/second rearrangement*

No instances occurred so either the prospect of incurring this penalty deterred teams (or maybe we were just fortunate). However, a team playing in the Floodlit League has already incurred maximum penalty by being unable to field a team for their first match of the season.

I urge Match Secretaries and Team Captains to read the rules carefully before their season starts to make sure that they understand rule changes.

### *Rule 9 – illness or injury during a match*

This was really just a clarification of existing practice and I have not received any feedback.

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*Rule 12 – players who play up should not necessarily be tied to the higher team*

I am not aware of any specific instances so can't comment.

## **4. Survey to gauge interest in other competition formats**

Following comments at the AGM regarding concerns from members about reduced entries and team membership it was decided to conduct an open survey for any club member to suggest new or changed competition formats.

This survey was carried out over a 6 week period in May/June. There were 17 responses which will be consolidated and categorised before being circulated in good time for discussion at the next AGM in February 2015.

## **5. Rule 14**

A rule was in place for the Winter and Floodlit Leagues stating that "No player who has played in senior county matches in the previous three years will be eligible to play in the Banbury Town Leagues. (A Senior County Player is one who has played in the hardcourt singles or taken part in County Week.)"

However, this rule did not exist for the Summer League.

In 2012 I attempted to harmonise rules across all three Leagues so (without discussion at the AGM) I just added it to the Summer Rules.

Regrettably this led to (reasonable) complaints from a couple of clubs. Furthermore, the rule was considered to be ambiguously worded so it was agreed to suspend it until the next AGM. It's probably intended to not apply to Juniors and over 35's but doesn't explicitly say so.

I've apologised to the clubs and players who were affected. It will get fixed.

## **6. Playing down**

It's been mentioned to me a couple of times that clubs are manipulating the Playing Down rule by deliberately playing higher team players in lower teams early in the season before they become tied. In some cases playing more than two teams down.

This practice does need scrutiny and I welcome proposals to fix it. If none are received than I will raise it at the next AGM.

## **7. Interactive forms**

As highlighted in my February report, tablets are fast becoming the primary means of accessing the internet so it is important that all forms on the website are tablet friendly, particularly scorecards. I'm pleased to say that after quite a lot of experimentation this has now been achieved. Team Captains can now submit scorecards by iPhone immediately after a match if they wanted.

Some users still have finger trouble but support is always available.

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## 8. AGM

A reminder that the AGM will be held on Thursday the 5th of February 2015 at Souldern Village Hall. Each Club can send two members to represent them and both will have full voting rights

## 9. Thanks

Thanks once again to League Chairman, Colin Mercer of Harbury and League Treasurer, Trevor Stevens of Deddington.

Thanks also to Sue Jelfs of Banbury West End and Adrian Taunton of Brackley for preparing the Floodlit Fixtures. Last but not least, Bronwyn, who helps me arrange fixtures and check the information on the site.

I welcome any suggestions or comments to improve the administration or running of the Leagues or website. Just go to the Contact page to get in touch.

Thanks

Regards



Nick Adams

League Secretary - Banbury Tennis Leagues