

RFA GENERAL SECRETARY'S 2006-07 REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

In my report last year, I made mention of the publication of the joint mid-season newsletter in conjunction with the Eton Fives Association. This year saw the initiative being taken one step further with not only another joint newsletter, but

the publication of a joint Annual Review at the beginning of the season. Feedback to this impressive document has been good and we are extremely grateful for the efforts of Ian Roberts in bringing together such a time-consuming

initiative. The Federation has spent some time discussing the issue of sponsorship and has recently agreed to approach one of the leading global financial services organisations for financial support, primarily aimed at our schools' events. Should they not be interested, other financial institutions have been identified for an approach. As many of you will have read, the City Fives Association is now firmly established and has some ambitious plans over the next five years. Funding is of course an issue, but it is pleasing to report that the game is growing in the Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and will hopefully be shortly be starting in Lambeth.

Thanks to the huge commitment of Andy Pringle, we are now nearly self-sufficient in terms of the maintenance of our website and there are plans to develop it further in the future. Photographs are always welcome for the gallery section, so members are encouraged to forward any relevant material to Andy Pringle. The Board has decided to increase the use of e-mail for the distribution of AGM Notices etc. and the Newsletter, and the questionnaire despatched with the mid-season Newsletter saw over 200 members agree to receive communications in this way in the future. This will have considerable savings on both printing and postage costs. Similarly, the Board was encouraged by the response to the increase in subscriptions agreed at last year's AGM with the majority of members now paying at the higher levels. Only a handful of resignations were received. (See the Financial Report for further details).

The Board continues to be delighted with the high level of entries into our Championships and both the BUSA Tournament and the Schools' Championships had high levels of entries. St Paul's School remained dominant at the Senior Level, but the Schools' Championships in April saw a number of different schools winning events at other levels and it was certainly encouraging to see so many schools taking part in the event. In the National Singles, Matt Cavanagh regained his title and we remain encouraged by the strength and depth seen in the national game at the present time. For the first time this year, the National Doubles had a qualifying tournament along the same lines as the National Singles and overall we were pleased with the outcome which certainly resulted in a higher entry than in previous years. We aim to continue with this format. As ever, we are extremely grateful to all our Championship organisers for their tremendous efforts in making these Tournaments so successful and enjoyable. We would

particularly like to thank Ollie Stone-Lee for all his hard work in acting as organiser for the National Singles for many years. Ollie has decided to stand down as organiser next year and we are currently looking for any volunteers to run this prestigious event.

The monitoring of courts around the country takes up a considerable amount of time at Board meetings and we are very pleased that the new courts at Oundle have recently been completed. Additionally, the courts at Sedbergh have now been enclosed which will make them far less susceptible to condensation and we are aware of a number of other schools where the enclosure of courts is under consideration. The re-development of courts as highlighted in the recent Newsletter at Stoke Newington School, King Charles I School at Kidderminster and at Heversham Grammar School continue to be monitored. We are extremely grateful for the efforts of Steve Korris in re-establishing the game at Leeds University.

At the beginning of the season a successful coaching day was held for Fives Masters at St Paul's School and we are considering holding similar events elsewhere in the country in the future. Enclosed with the AGM papers was the application form for our forthcoming dinner on 29th September this year at Queen's Club. We hope that as many members as possible will be able to join us for this occasion to celebrate our 80th Anniversary.

Following Denise Hall-Wilton's departure from the Board at the last AGM, we have been seeking a successor for her and we are delighted to report that Melanie Whitehead agreed to join the Board at the beginning of this year and was duly co-opted. We are keen to develop ladies' fives and Melanie's input will be valuable in this respect. One initiative currently under consideration is the introduction of girls' championships to mirror those held for the boys and for these championships to be held at the same time as the National Schoolboys.

We say "Farewell" to John East following the completion of his two years as President and the Board is extremely grateful to him for his wise counsel, enthusiasm and invaluable assistance, particularly with the legalities of our incorporation. We are pleased that he will still remain involved with the game through his membership of the Jesters' Committee and we hope that with his new hip it will not be long before we see him back on the fives court.

Ian Fuller - May 2007

FINANCIAL REPORT BY THE RFA GENERAL SECRETARY

Following the increase in subscriptions at last year's AGM, it is pleasing to report that the Association has moved once more into a profitable position. It is also pleasing to report that the majority of members are now paying the increased amount and that the number of resignations amounted to fewer than ten. Whilst the profit from Championships is significantly down from last year, there are still entry fees awaited for a few competitions, although we are finding that more schools are charging for the use of their facilities. Additionally our supplier of tankards had problems in obtaining the usual pewter which resulted in us having to purchase more expensive trophies for a short period. This situation has now been resolved.

Whilst we did not receive any advertising revenue this year, it is hoped that this situation will be rectified for next season.

On the expenditure side, the cost of printing the Joint Annual Review was down on last year's costs, although some of the saving was offset by higher postage costs due to the larger size of the document. With the increase in postage costs last summer, it is good to report that over 200 members have opted to receive communications and newsletters by e-mail in future which should have a significant impact on these costs. Website expenses are down on last year and should reduce more next season as we become more self-sufficient with the site. Total expenditure was down by some £1,600 on last year, partly because the renewal of our Civil Liability insurance will now fall into the next accounting year.

Overall, this represents a far healthier position for the Association and the Board is confident that our income is now at a level to sustain our normal expenditure.

Ian Fuller - May 2007