



## A Christmas 2024 Message from our Chair, Anne Clark



As we near the end of 2024, time to reflect and prepare for the challenges that 2025 has to bring.

2024 was the world's warmest on record with intense heat waves, deadly hurricanes and storms. Sporting events suffered including the Championships at Wimbledon with heavy rain (more than a month's rain – 52.6mm fell in the first nine days of the championships with 5.6mm recorded at Kew Gardens on the second Tuesday) causing a major backlog of matches. Clever rescheduling enabled completion of all matches by close of play on Sunday. Watching Henry Patten combine with Harri Heliövaara to win the men's doubles final 11-9 in the deciding tie-break was uplifting. Mika Stojsavljevic and Mingge Xu were runners up in the girl's doubles. Alfie Hewett won the wheelchair singles (becoming the fourth wheelchair tennis player to complete the career Grand Slam), then teaming up with Gordon Reid to win the wheelchair doubles. Alfie and Gordon then became the first men's doubles team in wheelchair tennis history to complete the career Golden Slam at the Paralympics in Paris.

The weather was kinder for the Olympic Games held in Paris, other than for the opening ceremony. With the time difference only being an hour it was easy to watch the array of sports including the new event of street dancing.

I'll avoid politics but just say 2024 saw a general election in the U.K. and presidential election in the U.S.

The SLTC of GB had a busy and fun year. Our AGM in March was held with dinner at the Richmond Golf Club. This was attended by nearly 50 people with our guest speaker, Ian Hewitt who was joined by his wife Jenifer. Our next AGM is scheduled for Monday 10 March 2025 again at the Richmond Golf Club, followed by a dinner. Please mark in your diaries.

Our 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary event at the House of Lords in May, hosted by Lord Gus O'Donnell was attended by nearly 60 members and their guests. A suitable celebration of this milestone.

In addition to the visit to the House of Lords we had another very successful Cocktail Party, held on the first Wednesday of the Championships. With around 200 attending this provided a fantastic opportunity to watch the tennis and meet up with many friends. Our thanks go to the AELTC for their continued support.

We now have circa 368 members (239 male and 129 female).

The Club had a successful season with 30 fixtures scheduled - 4 were cancelled or postponed, 14 won, 4 draws and 8 losses with many close results. On the National side matches included playing against the Royal Navy, Taunton, Warwick BC and Shrewsbury plus many in the south east. International fixtures included the annual match against Norway, at Southsea, a match vs. a team in Chattanooga, the annual match vs. the Dutch (played at Aldershot) and against the Fitzwilliam Club (played at Edgbaston Priory Club). Thanks as always go to all of our match managers and congratulations to the teams.

I've said before, winning isn't everything but one response to that was "why do we keep the score....?" I do know that everyone taking part enjoys the tennis and the social aspects of playing and visiting different teams. We continue to aspire to the ethos of the Club – 'to promote the playing of lawn tennis in its original spirit, for the love and enjoyment of the game alone'.

Our 2025 plans include domestic fixtures plus the regular matches vs. Norway in Bergen, the Dutch in Holland, the Fitzwilliam Club in Ireland, with the possibility of matches vs. a team in Paris and one in Germany.

The match managers always welcome expressions of interest in playing in matches - please check the fixture list, which will be put on our website or shared via email. If you feel you could help manage a match contact Chris Gotla or Bim Newton.

My personal thanks go to all of the SLTC of GB Committee and the match managers.

### **Club Website**

Our website is located at: [www.slctofgb.org.uk](http://www.slctofgb.org.uk) and access to the member-only pages requires you to create an account. We currently have less than 50% of members who have created an account so we would like to encourage others to register.

If you have any questions regarding account creation or the website generally, please contact Phil Tovey, System Administrator, who will be happy to help.

A few cracker jokes to hopefully (?) smile at....

Memories of the British Museum's issues this year....

**Q. "Did you hear about the Christmas cake on display in the British Museum?"**

A. It was Stollen

One of the film releases.....

**Q. Why isn't Barbie having turkey for Christmas dinner this year?**

A. Chic-Ken is enough

**Q. What impact will the 20mph speed limit in Wales have on the charts this year?**

A. Chris Rea will be driving home for Easter!

**My wife said, "you've told me 14 tennis jokes today and it's getting annoying!"  
I responded "right, now I'm telling joke 15, love".**

You may have read a report earlier this year "It's official: tennis is the healthiest sport in the world!" and playing tennis can increase your lifespan by an incredible 10 years.....so, if you can, keep playing!

On behalf of the SLTC of GB, wishing you and your families a very peaceful, happy and safe Christmas and we look forward to a fun 2025 with plenty of tennis.

With best wishes,

**Anne (Chair, SLTC of GB)**