

SINCE 1908



SPORTING A TRADITION

newsletter

august 2011

627 Glenferrie Road Hawthorn 3122 • T 9818 1331 • F 9815 1080
E info@clubhawthorn.com.au • W www.clubhawthorn.com.au

New President, new Board new direction

It would be fair to say that over the last few months, our Club has experienced one of its darkest and toughest time in its long and wonderfully rich history. However, in saying that, I truly believe we are on the road to recovery and some financial stability now that we have extricated ourselves from our venture into the restaurant business.

It's difficult to explain in this article how we got ourselves into this predicament however, we will endeavour to do so at the **upcoming AGM on 23rd September 2011.**

As difficult a time it has been, it's not all gloom and doom. Our Club has had a fabulous sporting tradition, particularly in squash and this Board wants to steer the Club back to what it has traditionally done very well... running a successful Sporting and Social Club.

We must acknowledge that during these recent tough times our association with TABCORP has remained strong. Without their support, our future wouldn't have

been secured. For those of you who are unaware, the entire gaming landscape will change in August 2012. The industry becomes deregulated which means for us we would have to run the gaming business ourselves or take the safer option of aligning ourselves with professionals within the industry to manage it on our behalf. After much deliberation, we took the latter and after being courted by various gaming service providers, decided to stay with the revamped TABCORP not only because they wooed us financially, but because they proved that they were the best organisation to look after us for the long term. Due to the upcoming gaming changes, TABCORP will be reinventing themselves from August next year. Their new name/identity will be TGS.

When the new restaurant opens in a couple months after they have completed their renovations, we will have a great food offering for all Members to enjoy. We haven't finalised the "Members deal" as yet - let them open first - but be assured we will have a very beneficial one.

Most of you would have now met and spoken to our new Club Coordinator, John Dellar who has come to us after spending the last 25 years at The Rosebud Country Club. John has great experience to offer us in gaming and general Club running. He has already made subtle operational changes that have helped streamline the running of the Club. I'm sure you would all like to join me in welcoming John to and look forward to the further enhancements he will make.

The Board encourages every Member to attend the **AGM on the 23rd September.** I look forward to seeing you there.

One last comment before signing off. A big thank you to all of my co-Board Members who have really "put in over and above" during the last month. Their efforts need to be acknowledged in helping the Club get back on track. If you see Sue Dunlop, Lorraine Howe, Mike Gillett, Cleo Nanni, John Sands and Roland Thomas around the Club, a big thank you wouldn't go amiss.

David Barrie President

Winners are grinners

LAST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH

WHERE WERE YOU?

FRIDAY 29th JULY

Around 50 Member's and partners turned up for a very enjoyable evening of socialising. Great to see a few of the boys from Hawthorn Rec.

\$300 was won by Lynne Hunt and credited to Bill's Membership Card. **MAGIC CAR WASH** won by Bill Wilkinson.

MEAT TRAY won by Pauline Bardwell who was also there.

SQUASH COACHING won by Jayne Barrie and boy, am I going to work her butt off!

FRIDAY 26th AUGUST

Cash Draw was won by **Reuben Herries** who was not present so he misses out. The Draw next month will go up by \$50 to \$300!

MAGIC CAR WASH & THE COMPUTER VOUCHER from **Computergate** was won by Harold Hoffman.

MEAT TRAY was won by Ron Hutchinson and the **SQUASH COACHING** by Staff Member Hamish.

NEXT ONE - FRI 30th SEPT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



David Barrie



Lorraine Howe



Mike Gillett



John Sands



Sue Dunlop



Roland Thomas



Cleo Nanni

Club washes its hands off the bistro

EXCLUSIVE OLD NEWS!

Van Win Nyguen

Asian Correspondent

Corks were popping recently when the Board of Management were delighted that the Contract of Sale for the Club's bistro was signed. The Contract is unconditional and settlement date was the 1st September 2011.

Club President-Elect Mr David Barrie said, "Over the next couple of months there will be renovations undertaken before the new restaurant will be open for business."

Board Member John Sands said, "We don't envisage any disruption or inconvenience to our Members however if there is, we apologise in advance."

Board Member who wishes to remain anonymous, Sue Dunlop added, "We believe the end result will be a great advantage to the Club as we will have a fabulous food offering adjacent to us but without the pressures of running it." It might be prudent to add at this point that Ms Dunlop can't cook to save her life and will no doubt frequent the new establishment almost every night for a decent feed.

Lorraine Howe, another Board Member who is a very good cook but lousy squash player added, "This will allow us to refocus our efforts and concentrate on our primary goal of running a successful Sporting and Social Club."

MAJOR SPONSOR

**Club Member
David Bygate**



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- ✓ Complete car cleaning services
- ✓ Car detailing - steam cleaning, cut and polish and leather clean
- ✓ Air conditioned Cafe
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Club Hawthorn to hold AGM - hundreds expected to attend

Bernie O'Shay ASIC

To comply with point 10.1.1 of the Clubs' Rules of Association, the Board of Management, prior to Wednesday 24th August, will formally be notifying all Members of the pending AGM which will be held on

Friday 23rd September 2011 at 6.30pm.

The Rules of Association also state in point 10.1.3 - **A Member desiring to bring any business before a meeting may give Notice of that business in writing to the President, who shall include that business in the Notice calling the next**



Cleo Guido Nanni
Club Captain

Welcome to a new season, even though we are several weeks into it.

Firstly congratulations must go to our D2 team from last season on winning the Grand Final, that was a great effort. So when next at the bar, Members must buy them at least one beer "as a consideration."

I would like to welcome our new Members from Hawthorn Rec and our top A1 side from Yarra Valley Country Club.

I understand they have all settled in very well, and the A Reserve side is now "enjoying" the company of "our" Phil Howe as a

Club Hawthorn - the Nanni State

Member of their A Reserve side. Can you imagine playing 18 rounds with "Fruit-loop-Phil." That's enough to send anyone back to their old Club.

If any Members are interested, the Hawthorn Rec players have all courts booked for practice on Sunday mornings from 9am to 12 midday. I am sure if anyone is looking for an extra hit on a Sunday morning they would be most welcoming. Please remember entry can only be made via the back door off the laneway, there is no access to the Club until after 12.

Club Championships:

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Club Championships, it was our first in a number of years.

I would like some feedback as to the best format for next year, would Members prefer the same format as this year or would it be better run over one weekend with everyone guaranteed at least three matches, something like a masters tournament,

General Meeting after the receipt of the Notice - or in other words if any Member wishes to raise a topic that they would like to discuss at the AGM please note this topic and either deliver it to John Dellar at the Club or send it via his email to jdellar@clubhawthorn.com.au

The Board of Management would like to encourage all Members to attend the AGM however please be aware that the Rules of Association, which in 10.1.2 states - **No business other than that set out in the Notice convening the meeting shall be transacted at the meeting** - will be strictly followed, therefore please send any topic you would like discussed at the meeting to John Dellar by Wednesday 24th August. Only financial Members are eligible to participate.

well, maybe not exactly like a masters tournament but a tournament nevertheless.

2011 Winners were:

A Grade Winner: Andrew Shaw
Runner Up: John Sands

B Grade Winner: Sue Dunlop
Runner Up: Attila Hahn

C Grade Winner: Chris Sementas

Runner Up: Roland Thomas

Ladies A Grade Winner: Deb Bullas

Runner Up: Tania Nawathanby

Racquetball Winner:

Alan Cowling

Runner Up: John Sands

Wanted: Lockable glass display cabinet

We want to set up a small squash retail section where merchandise can be sold. Do you know where we can get a cabinet without having to pay a king's ransom for it? Give Sue Dunlop a call - 0403 012 679.



Like sands through the hourglass, so are the daze of our lives

After an absence of nearly four years, it was nice to walk back into the Club and see so many familiar faces and of course along with that, the required number of jibes from long standing Members about my social standing, weight, squash ability or lack of. After a short period of time a great white shark started to circle and I was coerced on to the Club Hawthorn Board.

Operations:

In July 2011, I started a review of Club Hawthorn's operations including back and front of house operation procedures, staffing, current contracts and maintenance programs.

It became apparent very quickly that we were lacking in a number of areas regarding Club operational policies and procedures.

The main requirement for Club Hawthorn to move forward was to find a Club Coordinator well versed in the gaming industry and experienced in private sporting club management.

Through a series of contacts John Dellar was introduced to the Club and employed in June 2011 as Club Hawthorn's Operations Coordinator.

There are a number of areas that required attention at this stage. With the sale of the bistro, a decision was made to re-commission the old kitchen to enable us to service our squash suppers, functions and a new light

luncheon menu from 12noon to 2pm.

Club Staff:

As we are losing a number of staff Members over the next few months, an advertisement for new bar staff was placed in the local paper and selection and interviews are currently under way.

Going Forward:

There a number of new initiatives going forward, one being a trial of a new on-line court booking system. Don't worry for those Members that don't have internet access, you can still book manually. Also:

- Monthly Club maintenance program
- Bar staff training programs
- Bar staff uniform change (White top and black pants)
- Daytime squash activities
- Refurbishment of the Club's memorabilia

I ask that Members provide me with feedback over the coming months with these changes. I, or the Board, cannot be successful without your assistance, this is not the Board's Club, it's all of ours and for us to move forward it requires all input of all Members. This is and will be a work in progress. *John Sands*

Bloody thief!

Bill Johnson

Inspector, Hawthorn Police

This is a sad story which police are investigating. Club Member Phil Howe donated a half bottle of Eau-De-Toilette to the Club and left it in the men's change room for everyone to enjoy and someone of low breeding stole the bottle.

When questioned, Phil Howe said, "I hope the low life and his boyfriend enjoy it. Wished I had peed in it but they couldn't tell the difference anyway!

And the bottom 8 winners are...

Phil Howe

Editor-In-Chief

I have been compiling who the bottom 10 players in the Club are and have gleaned the information from scraps of paper found in rubbish bins scattered around the Club and from the back of toilet doors. It's amazing what people will write on the back of a door when boredom gets the better of them in the toilet. In an effort not to embarrass the last 2, I have not included them. They are a little delicate when it comes to criticism.

1. Lorraine Howe. My dear wife. I call her 'dear' because quite frankly she is expensive to keep. Dear comes from one of the most non-sporting families in Essex. Her father, now 80, was once asked to kick off a local football match in Upminster and had to be replaced by a substitute after failing at five attempts to connect with the ball. He was rushed to hospital with exhaustion and cramps.

Dear plays squash by flatly refusing at any time to move away from the service box. She last won a point three years ago during a power black out.

2. Cleo Nanni. This heavy-weight player bases his game on the principle of dominating the court from the tee. Being heavy-set and only three foot six inches tall, he can be beaten by almost anyone without actually moving. One opponent, irked by his lack of effort, suggested testily that he might be more comfortable if he brought a chair with him and sat out the match in the centre of the court. However, he is a dangerous player: one day he might fall on someone and crush them.

3. Alan Howe. Same surname, no relation but affectionately known as 'Dad.' Dad has exquisite lack of coordination allied to a sweeping swing that is rarely in danger of connecting with the ball. He is convinced the double yellow dot ball is too fast for players of his standard and feels his game would improve if he were allowed to play with a balloon.

4. Sue Dunlop. A delightful lady with a figure somewhere between Twiggy and the flat pitch at the MCG. Sue often plays against men and her principal undoing is that throughout a match she gazes fondly into her partner's eyes, disregarding the

state of play completely. She would prefer to play with the lights off arguing that it would not affect her game at all, indeed it would enable her to exploit her forte - hand to hand touching.

5. Ian Harold. Known as the gentleman of the court. He never claims lets or strokes because, as he says, he gets far more pleasure in giving them. Every rally is punctuated with cries of, "So sorry...your point," or "Dear-oh-dear, I didn't mean to hit the ball out of your reach." He attributes his lack of aggression on court to his up-bringing at De La Salle Pansy's Primary.

6. Ross Trompf. He squeezes in at number six for his unmatched aptitude for losing concentration. I believe this is possible because, as the game continues, his mind becomes increasingly focused on the thought of a glass of red in the bar afterwards. He has been known to put 27 balls into the tin and rush from the court to the bar without thanking or shaking his opponent's hand.

7. John Sands. He knows a great deal about the game without actually putting his knowledge into practice on court. His game is rugby, and quite frankly it shows on court. He gives away quite a few strokes through foul tackles. He has been warned by many referees for getting in a scrum and sticking his finger where it's not wanted. He does, however, move about the court like a bull and has the strength to intimidate opponents, especially in the rucks.

8. Wayne Daniels. (Not his real name for reasons of compassion). This 'walkabout' player puts in, and I quote from a Scientist, "The most futile squash performance." I feel like a voyeur just watching him. Strolls around the court aimlessly feeling like a bloke who's thrown his boomerang but it didn't come back. Once covered in bandages but has since dispensed with them due to a miracle cure. Wayne recently played a volley and the referee was so stunned and confused that he awarded Wayne's opponent a stroke for it. I think 'Walkabout-Wayne' is lost and needs to find himself and get his mojo back. The team's suggestion is to go back to the bandages. He played better squash with them on.

9 and 10 omitted for health reasons - my own!

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Improve your squash with a Professional Squash Coach

Phillip Howe 0433 416 565



John Dellar has tickets on himself

This being my first article for the Club Newsletter, I checked the starter's orders from the Editor-in-Chief, Phillip Howe. Amongst the criteria required for the publication, was a photograph by each of the writers. My photo attached was very recent, taken in Richmond when the ticket meter decided to give me real value for money. Two dollars into the machine and \$20.00 worth of paper kept issuing.

Firstly, I want to thank Members for making me feel so welcome. I have met many of the Members and look forward to continuing to do so. Whilst I played social squash a century ago as a student, I must admit to not realising the strength of competition that exists. From what I have seen already, the passion for the game, friendships and level of competition is far greater than appreciated by the general community.

I have arrived at a time when the Club is in a rebuilding process. The challenges are real and critical to revitalising Club Hawthorn. The commitment shown by the Board Members of the Club is fantastic. Their willingness to make appropriate change where necessary for the benefit of the Members and the Club at large, allows me to provide industry knowledge and experience, new ideas and recommendations with confidence.

I have made many operational changes since I arrived, mostly transparent to Members and customers but they are actions that have provided controls, systems and procedures which are imperative to the smooth running of a Club.

Progressively I am trying to identify maintenance issues that impact on the comfort and enjoyment by Members. Examples include working with the new cleaning company to improve general cleanliness and hygiene and having 72 lights returned to working order.



A light lunch menu is now available at the Club six days a week. The menu offers something for everyone and is certainly worth trying. Support for the lunch is as important as buying a beverage at the bar. Additional changes in the Club includes a fridge in the Members bar stocked with a range of beer, white wine and soft drink, available for take away. For the pokie players the gaming room has had several changes, including installation of three state of the art machines last week with new games.

Also added in the last month or so was a bank of new machines now offering a linked jackpot that has certainly enhanced the offering in the gaming room.

I am looking forward to the future with great anticipation.

John Dellar
Operations Coordinator

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S COMMENT

Thank you John for your article but more importantly for recognising me as the Editor-In-Chief of the Newsletter.

I have said this before but let me say this again at the risk of repeating myself...Protocol is a good thing. For a very long time Members have treated me like a public convenience and a second class citizen. Can you believe that? Obviously you are a very astute operator in recognition my talents. Quite frankly, you have my vote of confidence. I'm your man John! Let's sort this Club out...and the Board. A couple of wishy-washy people there if you want my opinion.



The Swann's fight over golf

Jason Bach
Golf Pro

I want to tell you a story about Club Members **Paul and Denise Swann**.

Paul is seriously thinking of giving up his passion of playing golf for health reasons. Denise is going to kill him.

For some time now, she has had this ridiculous idea that Paul spends so much time playing golf that he's losing touch with her and his one or two children, little whatsitsname and the other one. Actually, it all came to a head at about eleven thirty one night. She suddenly started shouting at him, "Golf, golf, golf, all you ever think about is bloody golf!" I can tell you it frightened the crap out of Paul, after all, you don't expect to see your wife on the fourteenth hole at that time of night?

Then there's her attitude towards his life-size inflatable Greg Norman doll. No, she didn't stick a pin in it, she waits until he falls asleep then pushes it out of the bed.

She's even knocked down his pile of stones in the garden where he had his vision of Arnold Palmer.

Anyway, while we're on the subject of golf, let me tell you a true golf story.

Another friend of mine, I've got quite a few friends, joins a golf club and on his first game with three other guys, two of them Members at Club Hawthorn **Ralph Altman**, and **Bill Jones** and another who is equally a nobody. Anyway, my mate takes a piece of four-be-two out of his bag and whacks the ball 280 metres straight down the fairway. He then hooks it brilliantly on to the green with an old hockey stick, and putts in from 15 metres away with a piece of rusty old pipe. Can you believe that? Please try to otherwise this story is not going to work.

Anyway, Ralph, upon observing this phenomenon naturally becomes

despondent and can't believe his eyes.

"I can't



believe my eyes," he said. There, I told you he couldn't.

Bill, Ralph and the other member were equally amazed. "F-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-f-lippin' Hell," said the nobody. Did I mention he had a stutter?

Anyway, my mate gets around the course in this manner and wins the game by nine holes.

Bill Jones who recently paid \$2,500 for a set of the latest golf clubs said, "Look, I'm going back to the clubhouse to slit my throat can I buy you a drink?"

When they get to the clubhouse, my friend asks for a whiskey and then juggles three ice cubes and heads them, one at a time, into the glass, followed by a squirt of soda from 5 metres away straight in the glass without touching the sides.

The President of the club, nice guy, Camberwell Grammar, Melbourne University, the SAS and Australia's Got Talent said, "Listen here clever dick, but I couldn't help noticing the unorthodox manner in which you conduct yourself, and correct me if I'm wrong but were you recently released from the, um, laughing Academy or to put it bluntly, the mad house?"

My mate said, "No, not at all. You see, I'm a little like Phil Howe. We are both so incredibly good at everything we do that unless we make it as difficult as possible, we get bored to death." For example, did you know that Phil plays squash with a G-string back to front and one eye shut and still manages to win?

At this point Ralph said, "Do you mind if I ask you a rather delicate and personal question?"

He replied, "I know what you are going to ask, and like Phil, the answer is standing up in a hammock."

Win a bottle of champagne

CLUB HAWTHORN ORDER OF MERIT

Most improved rating for the season
wins a bottle of Champagne

Rank	Player	Rating	Last Game
17	Jonathan Klein	337.83	29/06/2011
31	Ian Worsam	315.29	29/06/2011
47	Charles Bunker-Smith	305.13	29/06/2011
93	Steve Hales	277.19	29/06/2011
123	Aaron Meade	261.56	23/02/2011
179	David Samuels	242.34	05/04/2011
192	Steve Cuff	238.09	05/04/2011
242	Gwinyai Chakonda	225.48	14/06/2011
249	Wayne Daniels	225.1	10/05/2011
324	Michael Gillett	208.63	17/05/2011
340	Andrew Shaw	205.83	21/06/2011
351	Shane Way	203.77	25/05/2011
383	Matthew Thomson	197.46	17/05/2011
393	Phil Howe	194.22	19/07/2011
395	Mark Premoselli	194.17	17/05/2011
403	Ross Trompf	193.13	31/05/2011
404	Ron Hutchinson	192.97	25/05/2011
411	Paul Mayorkinos	191.9	18/05/2011
428	Sue Dunlop	189.6	31/05/2011
460	Randal Lamont	184.48	09/05/2011
475	John Sands	182.4	18/05/2011
506	Mike Grange	177.08	25/05/2011
507	Peter Keys	176.93	16/05/2011
509	Chris Chetwin	176.89	31/05/2011
538	Cleo Nanni	172.08	25/05/2011
581	Attila Hahn	166.44	18/05/2011
619	Andrew Williams	160.07	16/05/2011
644	Brian Hui	157.02	12/05/2011
694	Bill Jones	152.32	16/05/2011
702	Roger Schnagl	151.51	16/05/2011
	Catrina Cook	141	12/04/2011
822	Laurie Fisher-Williams	136.86	31/05/2011
871	John George	131.5	31/05/2011
888	Greg Cornehl	130.05	18/05/2011
	Bernadette Murphy	129.97	29/03/2011
914	Bob Barwick	127.12	18/05/2011
929	Jill Morsch	125	18/05/2011
	Andrew Oroszvary	124.64	10/11/2010
937	Shelley Davies (Irvin)	124.11	18/05/2011
	Ian Wilkinson	120.76	20/04/2011
980	David Bygate	119.47	31/05/2011

Rank	Player	Rating	Last Game
981	Bill Stevens	119.18	18/05/2011
	Mario Greco	117.39	13/10/2010
1003	Lee Waller	116.25	25/05/2011
1037	Chris Sementas	112.32	18/05/2011
1060	Roland Thomas	109.08	25/05/2011
1062	Debra Bullas	109.04	24/05/2011
	Ian Harold	106.63	09/03/2011
1087	Rohan McGregor	105.99	19/04/2011
1088	Nancy Atkins	105.82	18/05/2011
	Ralph Altman	103.84	17/11/2010
1133	Libby Innes	99.66	23/05/2011
1140	Peter Bonis	99.09	25/05/2011
1149	Tania Nallathamby	97.85	24/05/2011
1169	Graham Forbes	95.36	17/03/2011
1192	Max Smyth	92.2	14/04/2011
1199	Alan Howe	91.8	18/05/2011
1206	Michelle Savage	91.03	18/05/2011
1209	Brian Moroney	90.53	11/05/2011
1221	Allan Kewming	89.14	11/05/2011
1243	Kylie Hall	83.93	23/05/2011
1244	Jim Lack	83.75	03/05/2011
1248	Christine McNamara	83.08	18/04/2011
	Keith Hadden	79.25	18/05/2011
1291	Neerosh Mudaly	75.83	24/05/2011
	Ron Illman	73.71	17/03/2011
1367	Lakshmi Wijeyewickrema	56.01	03/05/2011
1395	Lorraine Howe	46.32	23/05/2011
1397	Anita Rumba	46.04	17/05/2011
	Judy Simmons	41.49	12/04/2011
1420	Krystle Hawe	39.16	03/05/2011

Rules of the game

THE WARM UP

Immediately preceding the start of play, both players shall be allowed onto the court for a period of five minutes to warm-up together. FIVE MINUTES and not five or ten minutes each side.

After two and a half minutes the Referee shall call "Half time" and the players shall change sides unless they have already done so. The Referee should also advise the players when the warm-up period is complete with the call of "Time."

In the warm-up both players must have equal opportunities of striking the ball. Some players like to hit the ball down the wall over and over again. The Referee must decide when the warm up is unfair.

Or, maybe for every shot a player hits to

himself you could do the same and add one more for good measure. They might get the idea that you are not happy with the amount of times he hits the ball to himself. (Not recommended).

Either player may warm the ball up during any interval or both players may warm the ball up to playing conditions after any interval at the discretion of the Referee.

STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS!

Next Newsletter is out in November. Articles required by 15th November.



MAJOR SPONSOR

computergate

THE HUMAN FACE OF TECHNOLOGY

Court costs effective immediately

Player 1	Player 2	Court Hire Fees
Full Member \$0	Full Member \$0	\$0
Full Member \$0	Rec/Social Member \$5	\$5
Full Member \$0	Non Member \$10	\$10
Rec/Social Member \$5	Rec/Social Member \$5	\$10
Rec/Social Member \$5	Non Member \$10	\$15
Non Member \$10	Non Member \$10	\$20

The 50's Club celebrate



Club Members born in 1958 and all hit the big Five-O in the same year celebrate at Ecco in Toorak Road. From left: Lorraine Howe, Denise Swann, Cleo Nanni, Jill Sands, David Barrie and Linda MacKill celebrate getting 'old...er'

5 reasons to drink red wine

Yeah, like Members at Club Hawthorn need a reason to drink wine. But just in case you are thinking of giving it up, this might convince you to keep drinking wine.

- 1) Red-stained teeth might not be a good look but Italian research has found red wine destroys streptococcus mutans, the biggest enemy of tooth enamel. *(We should all gargle with red wine every morning).*
- 2) As early as 3150 BC, Hippocrates was using wine to disinfect wounds and purge fever. *(That explains why I have not had a fever in over 40 years).*
- 3) Drinking wine moderately into senior years reduces the likelihood of Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. *(That explains why I haven't....I....I....I've forgotten what I was going to say...)*
- 4) It reduces the risk of infection by helicobacter pylori bacteria, a major cause of gastritis, ulcers



and stomach ulcers. *(Perfect).*

- 5) Wine is seen as a mild tranquiliser helping to reduce anxiety and tension. *(That settles it. Each day after work, I'm going home for two glasses of wine - one for anxiety and the other for tension and one for good luck).*



The Drop Shot



Not for the faint hearted but the drop shot should, ideally, be played when your opponent is behind you. Pretty obvious right? Wrong! I see drop shots played from anywhere on the court irrespective where the opponent is and often in an effort to trick them. **SQUASH IS NOT A TRICK GAME!** Sometimes they get away with it but more often than not they don't.

The drop shot can be looked upon in two ways - to finish off and win a rally or to drag your opponent down into the corner forcing a loose return from which you then put the ball away (preferably long and into the back corner) to drag your opponent to the back again. This will test their fitness.

When is the best time for a drop shot? I personally believe it is when you have forced your opponent deep into the back corner and the only option they have is to boast the ball out. If you picked the boast coming, get down to the opposite corner and drop the ball. There is nothing worse than your opponent being forced to play a boast because your drive was too good and then have to watch you execute a drop while they are trying to run it down. Apart from anything else, it will tire your opponent if he has to go from one extreme corner to the next. They might pick up a few if your drop is not tight, but they won't do that all night.

Frustratingly I see players play a beautiful deep shot forcing a boast from the opponent but what does the player do? Holds the shot hoping to trick the opponent into thinking a drop is about to be played then cross-courts the ball back to where the opponent is. **SQUASH IS NOT A TRICK GAME!** The premise of squash is to place the ball in the opposite corner to where your opponent is so that they have to do a lot of work covering a lot of ground.

So how do you hit a drop shot? On the forehand and backhand, the ball should be undercut with a very open-faced racquet, into either of the front corners. When I walk onto a court for the warm up, I tend to look for a mark on the front two corners of the wall to use as a target for the drop. If there is none, then I resort to a safe height.

How do you position your body to play the drop? Crouch with your head down and reach forward for the ball. Your feet should be wide apart to allow maximum reach and your free arm is counter balancing the body. Point your front toe at the ball. *Take the ball early ahead of your body and at the height of the bounce, and follow through up and not down on the ball.*

By reaching out for the ball, you are making sure you are leaning forward so that you can line up your drop shot just above the tin. Make sure to aim for either of the front corners on an angle. Ideally you want the ball to come off the front wall and run along the side wall making it difficult to return or the ball hits the nick and dies on the floor. If there is no mark for me to use as a target, I like to aim 300mm or 12" in the old measure above the tin. This allows for a safety margin.

Drop shots are one of the main shots to play in a game of squash but you must practice it to perfection. You will hit a lot of tins initially but keep at it because in time, it will achieve the desired effect.

If you want to see how drop shots are hit as close to perfection as possible, check out the A1 boys when they next play at home. You can learn a lot by watching them.