

## FINALS WEEKEND - 09 / 10 SEPTEMBER 2006

Normally the cool Autumn weather is ideal for the Enderby Lawn Tennis Club finals weekend, infact it is not unusual to find the spectators warmly wrapped in woollies and hats watching the matches over steaming cups of coffee. This year however Caribbean weather was magically transported Enderby for two days of glorious sunshine and a faint breeze from the palm trees.



The Mens Doubles Final was the first match to be played on Saturday morning. Once again that formidably stubborn team of Alan Collins and Steve Ince had fought their way to the final. This time they were to play Stuart Turner (the Club Coach) and Greg Hubbard (a young hustler). Alan and Steve, as expected, defended strongly against sustained pressure from Greg and Stuart.



But the remarkable speed and retrieving of Greg coupled with the cultured shot making and volleying of Stuart proved too much for Steve and Alan. A good match to watch. Well done Stuart and Greg.

The Ladies Singles Final was a straight fight between last years finalist Francesca Gutteridge and the experienced Peta Morris. A contrast in ages (I am not allowed to tell you the age difference) and a contrast in styles. The vicious slice of the Morris forehand and backhand against the maturing containment and shot making of Francesca.

Peta, as expected hit some very good slice shots and served well, but Francesca returned with interest and soon began to move Peta around the court preventing here from settling into any rhythm. Eventually Francesca won the match comfortably. Watch out Ladies, next year she will be even taller and faster.....



The Mens Singles final was between two similarly contrasting styles. The cultured shot making and fine serving of Bernard Poole against the fiercely competitive Steve (Robbo) Robinson.

Bernard started impressively with his serving and volleying putting Steve under immense pressure and he soon led 4 - 0. Undeterred Steve began to force longer and longer rallies, eventually levelling the match at 4 - 4. Bernard took the first set in a the resulting tie break.

The second set became an intense war of attrition with some fierce volleying from Bernard and fine retrieving and lobbing from Steve, who came out on top in the second set winning 6 - 4.

The third set began to seriously test the fitness of both players (and spectators). Even longer and gruelling rallies, fine overhead smashes, heavy spin, and again some miraculous retrieving from Steve, who eventually wore down his opponent to win the third set 6 - 4. A great game boys, one of the best Mens Singles finals in recent years. Very well done Steve. Hard luck Bernie.

On Sunday, once the mist had cleared, the Ladies Doubles Final was scheduled. This year it was between the highly rated pairing of Rose Turner and Helen (Philips) Clifford and the experienced Sarah Holmes with newcomer Sharon Carpenter. On paper Sarah and Sharon were up against it.



Rose and Helen started very well and romped into a 5 -0 lead and though Sarah and Sharon rallied and pulled a game back the first set was beyond them.

With a change of tactics in the second set, Sarah and Sharon began to force Rose and Helen into longer and longer rallies and both pairs contributed well to produce some breathtaking exchanges.

Eventually Rose and Helen battled through and won a much tighter second set, but they had to fight all the way.

Well done Ladies it was a very good match to watch and especially well done to Sharon in her first final. She supported the 'always competitive' Sarah very well and they kept Rose and Helen fully stretched throughout the second set.

Helen and Sarah were now awarded a short break to recover for the Mixed Doubles Final. Rose was to play with her husband Stuart, while Helen was combining with Steve Robinson. It is worth noting that all the people playing in this game had already won a final, so at least they were not going to need to warm up too much.



The match started carefully with both men looking to get into the net for the easy kill. However since both of the Ladies are quite capable of looking after themselves the game soon developed into a tense battle with the Ladies trying to keep the rallies going and the men trying to shorten them.

Steve and Helen eventually took the first set in a close contest.

In the second set Steve began to get to the net more successfully with some well timed dashes to

firmly despatch the ball and despite firm resistance from Stuart and Rose, Steve and Helen had soon won the match in style.

Again a good match to watch and it was nice to see Stuart the Coach playing competitively, demonstrating how shots should be played properly and this is no disrespect to Steve who also demonstrated his own very effective style.

So that is it for another year. Thanks to all the helpers, umpires, line judges and especially the players who all produced good tennis and seemed to enjoy themselves.

Thanks also to the Caribbean weather which was certainly the best I can remember and also to Liz for the scones and cream.