

FINALS WEEKEND – SEPT 20/21st 2008

Once again the Weather Gods decided that the Enderby Lawn Tennis finals would be held beneath clear blue skies and warm sun, with the occasional soft breeze to keep the ardent spectators comfortable.

So at precisely 13.00 hours on the Saturday, Francesca Gutteridge stepped out onto the court to try for her third consecutive Ladies Singles title against the evergreen Rose Turner. All juniors should note that there will always be certain Senior players at Enderby who set the benchmark for the playing standards, and Rose is a formidable obstacle across the tennis court, so beware.

The match started with some cagey long rallies and much huffing and puffing until Francesca edged ahead with some hard fought deuce games. She then overwhelmed Rose with some hard-hitting tennis to take the first set to love.

Predictably, the second set saw Rose 'dig' in with great defensive play and Francesca began to get flustered. At 4-3 up, Rose needed to go for a 'comfort break' and when the game restarted, Francesca moved up a gear, to take the second set, coming from behind to win the next three games. Well fought girls. Final result Francesca won 6-0 6-4.



The next match was the Mens Singles final, this year to be played between two of the Club's top Juniors, Chris Poli and Danny Hallam. Both players are lightning quick around the courts and while Danny plays like a young 'Nadal', Chris is more orthodox. It should be an interesting game....

After a cautious start, Danny began to gain the advantage with his heavy top spin forehand forcing Chris into error on both sides of the court. Eventually, after some fierce (and extremely fast) rallies it was 5 games all. Chris grabbed the lead with some fierce forehands and finally took the first set 7-5 after a long deuce game.

Chris carried on strongly into the second set, and even though Danny fought back with his strong ground strokes and iron will, it was too late and Chris duly finished the match to win 6-3 in the second set.

I have no doubt that we will see both of these youngsters fighting it out in future Mens finals, but I will be umpiring in a crash helmet next time. It is worth noting that this match was fiercely played, but with a fine sporting attitude from both youngsters. Well done boys. Final result Chris won 7-5 6-3.



On Sunday we all returned, suitably singed, to start proceedings with the Ladies Doubles final. This has produced the interesting pairing of Rose Turner and Jo Mroz against Sarah Holmes and Lisa Hayes.

The game started off with Sarah and Lisa going into an early lead, before Rose dropped anchor to gain ground. Jo and Rose fought well but Sarah and Lisa took the first set comfortably 6-4.

In the second set, Jo began to find space for her forehand and after some

good rallies she and Rose romped away to win the second set fairly easily, 6-2.

As expected, in the third set, Sarah and Lisa began to look more earnest and the game became very tight. Long rallies, fierce interceptions and sharp serving from both sides produced an absorbing match.

Eventually both sides produced winning opportunities, but it was Rose and Jo who took their chances and won a hard fought third set 6-2. A very good match and a rising star is born (Jo). Final Result Rose and Jo won 4-6, 6-3, 6-2

The Mens Doubles final was to be played between the solid pairing of Stuart Turner and Steve Robinson and the 'odd' couple of Dave 'Lobber' Goodger and Chris Poli, the current Mens singles champion.

As expected, Stuart and Steve soon found their rhythm and raced into the lead, with Steve hitting scorching winners with fierce serving and sizzling forehands while Stuart providing good support so that they won the first set easily, 6-2.

Unexpectedly Steve's winners appeared to dry up and Chris began to dominate the rallies with Dave keeping the ball out of harms way, twenty feet above the net. So, that surprisingly, Chris and Dave won the second set comfortably 6-2.

The third set saw both sides playing with more urgency and the rallies became longer and harder. Dave displayed his tactical nuance by keeping the ball high and deep so that Steve could not hit his trademark forehand winners. Meanwhile Chris used his speed and aggression to intercept any less than perfect returns.



Eventually at 5-5 Chris and Dave broke serve and Dave served out to take the epic third set 7-5. Great game lads. The final result, Chris and Lobber Dave won 2-6, 6-2, 7-5

While Chris took a brief rest, we prepared for the last match, the Mixed Doubles Final, Chris Poli and Sarah Holmes against Alex Morris and Patsy Roseblade.

The match began at a scorching pace with Chris and Alex seeing who could hit the ball hardest, while the girls

did their best to avoid the Lads at the net. But, after a couple of deuce games, Chris and Sarah raced into a 5-0 lead, and finally took the first set 6-1 in record time.

Alex and Patsy steadied in the second set and began to turn the tide. However, Chris had other ideas and hit some wonderful shots down the line to regain the advantage. Soon He and Sarah broke serve and despite stern resistance from their opponents, they had soon won the second set 6-3. Final result, Chris and Sarah won 6-1, 6-3.

It is worth noting that Chris had now won all three titles over the weekend, and he becomes the first man to achieve this since Matthew Newcomb in 1993.

Well done Chris!

The only other Men on record to win all three titles in the same year are Martin Hopkins (1990) and Martin Yates (1981). An elite group indeed.

