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**The Dedanists ™**

Minutes of the 17th Annual General Meeting of the Society held by way of Zoom Conference Call at 6pm on Wednesday the 20th October 2021

**Present:** Josh Farrall in the Chair

 Carl Snitcher, Secretary

 John McVittie, Treasurer

 And 11 additional members of the Society

**Introduction**

The chairman, Josh Farrall, welcomed everyone to the 17th annual general meeting of the Dedanists’ Society covering the financial year 1st August 2021 to 31st July 2022.

Because of the disruption caused by Covid, the Society’s last AGM was held only five months ago. This limits what’s new. At that time, we presented our development plan and proposal for raising fees - and these were accepted. At this AGM, we will cover the standard agenda items plus early reports on progress in implementing the development plan.

Participants agreed that the meeting might be recorded.

**Resolution 1**

To approve the Minutes of the 16th Annual General Meeting held on 12th May 2021.

This Resolution was proposed by Sarah McGivern, seconded by Simon Roundell. There were no abstentions and it was carried unanimously.

**Resolution 2**

To receive and approve the Annual Report, Statement of Accounts and Balance Sheet for the year ended 31st July 2021 (attached).

The chairman summarised the Annual Report as follows:

COVID stopped real tennis for most of the year, but not for juniors. The coaching of juniors was allowed for much of the year on a one pupil / one coach basis, so we reconfigured our Academy Programme to take account of that and were able to deliver 50% of it. We switched unused Academy funds into funding other youth programmes. We donated £4,000 to help the T&RA launch its new Apprenticeship Programme (Investing in Professionals). We used the time released by lack of real tennis to produce the Society’s Development Plan which we agreed at the last AGM and are now implementing.

In terms of the British Real Tennis Academy, we increased the amount of coaching that we delivered by 35%. We recruited an administration team of Paul Weaver and Tory Wall to manage Academy operations. We are enhancing the Academy's presence on our Society website. In September, we launched a new quarterly newsletter called ‘The Dedanist’. In July 2021, we had 225 members, which is up 17 on last year. We were particularly pleased to welcome Chris Ronaldson and Howard Angus as honorary members.

Our Ambassador Programme and our sister organisation, the Dedanists’ Foundation, continue to thrive David Phillips, for example, working with the Foundation, has been instrumental in Moreton Morrell winning a £2,000 grant from the Foundation to recruit more juniors. The Foundation has made similar grants to Cambridge, Seacourt, Wellington, the Orator, Bristol and Canford.

The treasurer, John McVittie, summarised the financial position as follows:

The Society is financially sound. We ended the year with £33,000 in the bank. Because of Covid, activity was down so we only spent £10,000 on the Academy (usually £20,000). We made a loss in the year of £6,000 because fundraising events were cancelled. We’ve since raised subscriptions and match fees to compensate. We expect a small profit this year. Our bank balance today stands at £46,000, which is ahead of forecast. We have the resources to withstand further Covid restrictions and lockdowns should they arise.

This Resolution was proposed by Nick Browne, seconded by Julian Sheraton-Smith. There were no abstentions and it was carried unanimously.

**Resolution 3**

To consider and agree the Benevolent Activities of the Society under Rule 4 of the Rules & Regulations, especially the Society’s support for junior real tennis.

The Society funds and runs the British Real Tennis Academy coaching programme. This is its primary benevolent activity. This resolution sets out to ensure that this continues to be the case.

***Report on the Academy***

Each year, we select players for the Academy on the basis of handicap and age. We stream them into squads according to handicap. The age range is from 11 years old to 25 and the handicap range is from 3 to 60. For example, Rob Shenkman age 24 plays off 3 and Max Warner age 11 plays off sort of 58. This year we ran 5 squads of five or so players each. Previously, these squads were managed by the chairman and Graham Tomkinson. Now each squad is managed by its own volunteer programme manager. These programme managers are Nick Warner, Julian Wilkinson, Mike Henman, Stef King and Graham Tomkinson. We've just put in place an operations management team of Paul Weaver and Tory Wall to run the programme. They are developing an on-line player database for use by players, programme managers and coaches to hold player profiles including coaching reports, progress reports and development plans. This season, we are delivering 22 group coaching sessions at a number of different courts including Queen’s, Wellington, Oratory and Middlesex - and extra one-on-one coaching sessions for players with special potential.

That's an overview of the Academy. It's at least 25% bigger than it was last year. We have programme managers in place that we didn't have before. Once established, they will sustain the programme over the longer term.

***Report on the High Performance Squad by Graham Tomkinson***

The High-Performance Squad is the Academy flagship. If contains the very best players that we support. The handicaps range is 3 to 15. The age range is 18 to 24. The squad includes two professionals, three amateurs, one lady and four men. They are geographically dispersed. Ned Batstone is a student at a US university on Rhode Island,. Robert Shenkman is in Manchester, Levi Gale at the Oratory/Holyport, William Flynn in Seacourt and Lea van der Zwalmen in Bordeaux.

Each player has his or her own personalised coaching and development plan - and motivation is a major theme. We map the players against a pyramid of skills. We have regular reviews. This last year, we ran a module on winning. It was led by Chris Bray. It focused not on how players hit the ball but on how they handle challenge and set themselves up to succeed. All the UK based players have started this season very well - Robert Shenkman, Levi Gale and William Flynn. I would expect all three to qualify for the British Open.

This Resolution to fund and run the British Real Tennis Academy as the primary benevolent activity of the Society was proposed by David Phillips and seconded by Guy Egerton-Smith. There were no abstentions and it was carried unanimously.

**Resolution 4**

To elect the following two committee members, formally proposed, for a further term of three years :

 Freddy Adam, an existing committee member seeking re-election.

Proposed by Simon Roundell, seconded by Nick Browne

There were no abstentions. The resolution was carried unanimously.

Graham Tomkinson, an existing committee member seeking re-election

Proposed by John McVittie, seconded by Guy Egerton-Smith.

There were no abstentions. The resolution was carried unanimously.

To elect the following three trustees, formally proposed, for a further term of three years:

Sir Andrew Hamilton, an existing trustee seeking re-election.

Sarah McGivern, an existing trustee seeking re-election.

John Whiting, an existing trustee seeking re-election.

Proposed by David Phillips, seconded by John McVittie

There were no abstentions. The resolution was carried unanimously.

*Note*: There was no ballot as no other nominations were received by the cut off date of the 22nd September 2021.

**Report on the Dedanists’ Foundation.**

The Dedanists’ Foundation funds clubs to recruit schools and new young players into the game. It nurtures the grassroots. The Dedanists’ Society funds and runs the British Real Tennis Academy to identify and coach the best young player. It develops champions.

Real tennis needs both organisations and needs them to work together well. They do.

**Any Other Business**

To transact any other business that by the Rules & Regulations of the Society has to be or may properly be transacted at an Annual General Meeting.

There was no other business.

**The AGM ended at 6.30pm.**