



## **A Christmas 2025 Message from our Club Chair, Anne Clark**



Much too quickly we are approaching the end of 2025. Time to remember the excitements of the year and look forward to 2026.

2025 major sporting events included the FIFA Club World Cup in the USA, the UEFA Women's Euro in Switzerland and the amazing Women's Rugby World Cup held in England. We had a total Lunar Eclipse visible to everyone globally, on 7 September. There were many unexpected natural or man-made disasters such as the global internet blackout, devastating wildfires, floods and earthquakes.

On a lighter note, who noticed the fun International Talk Like a Pirate Day and that September was National Happy Cat Month?

The 2025 Wimbledon Championships were sunny and hot, with temperatures reaching over 30°C (86°F) during the first week and finals weekend, and an all-time opening day record set. The tournament saw a major shift with the full implementation of live electronic line calling, replacing human line judges for the first time. Other highlights included a record-breaking first day for British players, with seven winning their first-round matches, and the men's final between Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz drawing a peak UK audience of 8.8 million.

548,770 guests came through the gates, over 50,000 plants were supplied and approximately 1.92 million (not sure who counted!) individual strawberries consumed during the event, equalling about 140,000 punnets or 38.4 tons.

Julian Cash and Lloyd Glasspool winning the men's doubles making history, becoming the first all-British duo to do so for 89 years was inspiring. Alfie Hewett was runner-up in the wheelchair singles and doubles with partner Gordon Reid.

The SLTC of GB had another busy, enjoyable tennis-filled year.

At 1 December, we had 371 members (compared to 365 in 2024) made up of 235 (237) male and 136 (128) females.

The Club had a very successful season with 32 fixtures scheduled - 3 were cancelled, 17 won, 3 drawn and 9 lost with many close results.

All international fixtures were competitive and fun.

Our team had a fine 6-2 win vs. the Fitzwilliam Club in Dublin in April.

A prestigious new fixture against one of France's premier tennis clubs, Paris Jean Bouin took place in May. The PJB Club has been in existence for well over 100 years and is the main training centre used by players during the French Open. Our thanks go to The Wimbledon Club for being so accommodating and the AELTC for their support with this fixture. In 2026, we are planning a return match in Paris with the hope that this will become a regular annual fixture.

The annual match vs. the Norwegian seniors was held in June in Bergen, on Norway's west coast, known for its vast harbour and exceptional seafood. The atmosphere during the matches was "electric" culminating in a final score of 19 - 7 to our Club. Our Norwegian hosts looked after us very well and once again created an experience to remember for all who took part.

In November we competed against a strong Dutch team in Doorn near Utrecht. We travelled with a team of 5 men and 4 women and nearly pulled off a famous victory. However, the match result was 16 - 14 in favour of our hosts with the tennis played competitively but in great spirit. Our thanks to all the players and especially the Dutch for their hospitality.

Thanks as always go to all of our match managers, the many clubs who host us and congratulations to the teams. If you could help manage a match and/or would like to put yourself forward for selection, for ladies fixtures contact Celia Gregory, for men's matches your contact is Chris Gotla.

Our AGM was held with dinner at the Richmond Golf Club. This was attended by just over 40 people with our guest speaker, Dan Bloxham regaling various stories of how he came to be Head Coach at the AELTC and a few about the Championships. Our next AGM is scheduled for Monday 2 March 2026 at the Richmond Golf Club, followed by a dinner. Please mark in your diaries.

Another very successful Cocktail Party was held in July. The opportunity to watch top class tennis and then meet up with friends and other tennis enthusiasts is always very popular. Our thanks go to the AELTC for their continued support.

The Club's success is only possible thanks to the tremendous efforts behind the scenes. Thanks go to the SLTC of GB Committee and the match managers for their commitment and assistance.

I thought that I would ask AI whether we play to win in tennis. The reply was: "Yes, the fundamental goal in tennis is to win points, games, and sets to win the match, but the way you play involves a strategic mindset of playing to win (applying pressure) rather than playing defensively to avoid losing, focusing on your strengths and exploiting opponent weaknesses. Even in practice, aiming to win fosters better results, but losing is a key part of improving your overall game."

So there you go.....

Our Club was formed 'to promote the playing of lawn tennis in its original spirit, for the love and enjoyment of the game alone'.

I'd hate to disappoint you so a few cracker jokes and trivia to hopefully (!) make you smile.

**Why didn't anyone bid for Rudolph and Blitzen on eBay?**

*Because they were two deer!*

**How do tennis players keep in touch?**

*They use their 'net' work.*

**Quote from Andre Agassi:**

"Tennis uses the language of life. Advantage, service, fault, break, love – the basic elements of tennis are those of everyday existence because every match is a life in miniature."

**Fun facts:**

2025 is a perfect square. It is the result of squaring 45. This is notable because  $20+25=45$ .

**Pigs can't look up:** It is physically impossible for pigs to look up into the sky due to the anatomy of their neck muscles and spine.

**A baby puffin is a 'puffling':** An adorable name for a baby bird. (cute!)

**Disney's blockbuster series Rivals:** an eye-popping scene featuring nude tennis was nominated for most memorable moment at the BAFTA's.

On behalf of the SLTC of GB, wishing you and your families a very peaceful, happy and safe Christmas. Here's to an exciting 2026 ahead, filled with fun, friendship, and plenty of tennis!

**With best wishes,  
Anne (Chair, SLTC of GB)**