



# The Veterans Squash Rackets Club of Great Britain



## MINI NEWSLETTER – DECEMBER 2020

# HAPPY CHRISTMAS

LET'S HOPE 2021 WILL BRING...  
JOY, A VACCINE, A RETURN TO NORMALITY,  
A GOOD DEAL & SQUASH!

### A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

I note that annual Chairman's reports usually comment on all the activities and accomplishments of members during the year and would end this report here!

However, as members cope in different ways with the pandemic and associated closures/lockdowns GB Vets turns its attention to preparing for the future.

As your new Chairman I wish to broaden the geographic scope of our organisation and make every effort to set up Golf Days regionally. Doubles events could follow if we can find suitable venues that would allow for the replication of the RAC weekend.

The Championships have been losing

numbers in recent years despite the tremendous efforts of Geoff Howes to make it work as locally as possible in early rounds. Consideration is being given to allowing competitors to qualify for the finals weekend on a regional basis.

At a time when very little squash is being played and then only in social bubbles I want to keep everyone interested with news of fellow members. The new feature on players by Aubrey Waddy is a great start. Finding out how everybody is keeping fit has elicited some surprising stories. This Newsletter has a new slant on fitness and will publish easy fitness hacks from members that you can try (or not!). I have taken the liberty of doing the first one myself and the benefits of 16

hours fasting are presented for you to try (or not!).

December 3rd brought a reassessment of the Covid-19 regulations that has allowed some socially distanced squash play whilst leaving others, in the highest tiers, unable to do much at all. The new vaccine that will be available gradually in 2021 may herald the return of more conventional squash and allow us to leave a dismal 2020 with some hope for the future. I hope the 5 days lifting of restrictions over Christmas gives you all a chance to see close family members and I send Christmas cheer and good wishes to all members from myself and the GB Vets committee. I thank them, on your behalf, for all their hard work this year.

**Ian Graham**

### NEW MEMBERS

We warmly welcome the following new members who have joined since our last Newsletter:

**Simon Bryant**  
Chichester

**Ann Manley**  
Redland Green

### FIRST PHOTO OF THE RUSSIAN VACCINE



**STAY FIT,  
SAFE,  
HEALTHY  
AND  
HAPPY!**



# The Veterans Squash Rackets Club of Great Britain

## BETT DRYHURST - One Player, Five Questions Interviewed by Aubrey Waddy

Legend. When Ian Graham suggested I ask five questions of long time GB Vets member Bett Dryhurst, I realised the only thing I knew about Bett is that she was, or indeed still is, a legend. A quick look at the records section of the England Squash Masters web site fills in some detail. Bett is not an ordinary legend, she's a Venti legend, although those of you who know her will appreciate that this is in an espresso-sized cup. Between 1992 and 2019 Bett has won no fewer than 24 national and international Masters titles, including four world championships from eight finals, and she's not finished yet. She is in a very select group of players who have managed to win successive world championships in the same age group, in 1997 and 1999. That's just squash. At racketball Bett has a total of 31 major titles, Open and Masters, in singles, doubles and mixed doubles. She was National Open Racketball singles champion five times.

There isn't room in the newsletter to do justice to someone who has achieved all that. And broken bones falling off both horses and bicycles! And who has avoided injury falling off a rowing machine on account of making too

much effort. And who has emerged unscathed from both bungee jumping (the famous Nevis bungee near Queenstown in New Zealand) and skydiving.

Bett didn't take up squash until she was 29. As a girl she did lots of riding, first on ponies in gymkhanas and then on horses at point to points. Her first racquet sport was badminton and she had an England trial for netball while still in her



Bett Dryhurst

teens. A year after starting squash she set her sights on entering o-40s Masters competition. This shows her determination, with her plan stretching ten years into the future. "I thought about what I could aim for," she says. She won her first World Masters title as an o-45 in 1992, in Vancouver. Squash, and latterly also racketball, have been her sports focus for the last 45 years. She was given a 'Supreme Award' in Worcestershire for sporting achievement. Bett is a longstanding member of Barnt Green Sports Club, south of Birmingham. With Barnt Green as her base, as well as playing, she has done a huge amount of amateur coaching across the West Midlands, and has been heavily involved in county squads. She has kind words to say about support for juniors from England Squash.

Bett turns 75 this month. Her current goal is next year's European (squash) Masters championships in Edinburgh. If she hasn't by then broken the rowing machine, a recent gift from her partner Dennis, and is still indulging in the pastime established during lockdown of riding 100 miles a week, on a bike this is, not a horse, she will certainly be fit enough.

### 1. *What was your hardest match, win or lose?*

It's interesting that in answering the question about her hardest match, Bett refers more to the mental than the physical side. Two matches stand out, firstly the 1992 World Masters final, where Bett beat the top seed and home favourite Robyn Prentice, 3-9, 9-1, 9-5, 9-3. She felt very much on her own at the tournament, since few other UK players had made the trip. In the final she had absolutely no one supporting her. Secondly, there was the 1997 World Masters final in Johannesburg. Here Bett beat another home favourite, Jean Grainger. Jean was an especially daunting opponent because in contrast to Bett, she had taken up squash at an early age, with a long career as a full international, before moving on to Masters tournaments.

### 2. *Who was your best opponent?*

No single player stands out for Bett as her most formidable opponent. You only have to look at the list of her great rivals to see why. It includes Jean Grainger and the outstanding English duo of Averill Murphy and Ann Manley. Bett has contested no fewer than four World Masters finals against Ann Manley!

### 3. *What was your most disappointing loss?*

Regarding her most disappointing loss, one of the World Masters finals Bett played against Ann Manley was in 2012 in Birmingham. This time it was her home territory, and she claims to have "trained hard" for the tournament (this from someone who, the second time I spoke to her in the middle of November, had earlier that day completed a 28 mile bike ride plus a session on her rowing machine!). In Birmingham Bett was supported all the way through by friends and family. This brought its own pressures and must have sharpened the disappointment of losing the final 7-11, 10-12, 10-12. She doesn't feel she did herself justice: "I played into her game at the front."

### 4. *What's the most remote place you've played squash?*

Friends and family were far away for Bett's most remote tournament, on the fourteen square mile territory of Norfolk Island, nearly 900 miles east of the pointy bit of Australia. She noticed the tournament online, "it was mentioned on a web site," and thought, "it would be a good one to have a go at!" It sounds as though it was, with stories of superb hospitality. I forgot to ask Bett the undoubtedly redundant question, did you win the tournament?

The fifth question was chosen by Bett herself:

### 5. *What has given you the most satisfaction in squash?*

Bett speaks with great enthusiasm about her thirty years of coaching and supporting squash in the West Midlands. This has consisted of more than simply turning up at her local club to coach the juniors, though she does plenty of that. Currently she has both a girl and a boy in their teens who are hoping to turn pro. She is proud of how well Worcestershire, a small county in squash terms, has done in junior competition. She was given formal recognition by the county with an award for her services to squash.

Bett also speaks with pride about the work she has done for the West Midlands region. The regional committee has been successful among other things in extracting grant funding from England Squash, who have themselves given Bett an award for her contribution as a volunteer in the game.

A final story tells as much about Bett as anything. She speaks with pride about three particular girls whom she got started in squash at the David Lloyd centre in Bromsgrove. None of them was going to be a world champion, but the point was, they had become involved. Some years afterwards Bett bumped into the Mum of one of these girls, who told her she had made it onto the squash team at university. No gold medals or special recognition or awards for that, just enormous satisfaction.



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## MEMBERS LOCKDOWN ACTIVITIES

**Karen Hume** and **Robert Smith** have been playing in socially distanced groups and doing routines/ghosting etc. Robert's new knee is progressing well.

**Chris Lock** has been going on long uphill bike rides and longer walks in the countryside. He has also been in a racketball bubble.

**Mandy Akin:** Working from home takes up most of my 5 day working week. However around 11am I do 30 minute boot camp (*work out, so I'm told, not basic training for the Army, Ed*) followed by 30 minute HIIT (*'High-Intensity Interval Training' so I'm told, Ed*) cycle on indoor bike. On the better days an outdoor cycle (about 12 miles) in the afternoon or join husband Albert for a walk with our new dog. At weekends I look after and exercise by riding 'the best horse in the world' for an hour or so. (*Phew! I'm exhausted just reading this, Ed!*)

**Bett Dryhurst** has been enjoying long 30 mile cycle rides. A recent birthday present of a Concept 2 rowing machine has meant a new training programme aimed at World domination of indoor rowing!

*Come on guys and gals share your Lockdown Activities – only clean and relevant ones though please!*

## EASY FITNESS HACKS

My suggestion is 16 hours fasting. There are many books on this subject including 5:2 fasting and all easy to Google. 16 hours fasting is straightforward. You eat in any 8 hours period that suits your lifestyle. I do 11am to 7pm and it can be daily or just once a week as you please.

The main benefits are dead and damaged cells in the body being broken down for food called Autophagy, cutting visceral fat, lowering production of insulin and fighting inflammation. You should also lose weight which is great unless you are at your target and then you need to eat more in the time period! I like it for the reasons above and I can eat whatever I want. Most of the time after 7pm I would just consume food I wish I had not the next day!

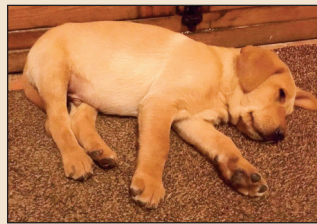
Please send in a fitness hack or offer one that you have seen others do successfully.

**Ian Graham.**

# Well they made ME giggle!...



This is Buddy, I bought him as a surprise present for my husband but it turns out he's allergic to dogs. So unfortunately I'm going to have to



find a new home for him, and I'm just wondering if anyone out there can help? His name is Alan, he's 61, great at DIY, plays squash and drives a nice car.

Husband and I went grocery shopping with masks. Got home, took off masks, brought home wrong husband! Stay alert people!



# HAPPY CHRISTMAS

## STAY FIT, SAFE, HEALTHY & HAPPY!

## VACCINE = RESTRICTIONS LIFTED = SQUASH!