

OSRA

Minutes of Committee Meeting held on Monday, September 22nd, 2025

Present:

Michelle Knight, Jim Reay, David Quinn, Martin Packman, Brian Bell, Jason Varrie

Apologies:

Michael Beck, Steve Kuester, Steve Dance

Matters Arising:

It was confirmed that Racquets (Thame) received planning consent and the courts will now close on October 5th this year.

Accounts:

The Quarterly accounts had been distributed pre-meeting and Treasurer, Brian Bell, confirmed that there were no extraordinary items in either income or expenditure.

League Secretary Report:

DQ opined that all things considered the Summer Leagues ran rather well. There remain issues with the number of sides leading to potentially uncompetitive divisions and teams failing to field five players at the tail end of the season, but he did remark that the motion passed at the recent AGM giving more flexibility to the format could be of great help to combat these.

The Winter Leagues are up and running with 31 entrants spread over 4 divisions, all of which, and the top one in particular, are looking fierce!

Racquets intend to fulfil their home fixtures at Wheatley Park but beyond that (eg Winter 2) is very uncertain.

Great to see that as the number of clubs gradually reduces that some are endeavouring to increase their supply of teams. Credit should go to Abingdon, Hithercroft and Henley especially but is there still some scope remaining for them!

Certainly, one or two other clubs need to have a hard look at this as we don't want to create a situation they have in other counties where there are too few divisions with long distances to travel, playing fixtures that are very one-sided.

University is considering a 4th side for Winter 2 and the likes of Carterton, Witney, Chipping Norton, Spiceball and Brackley need to put this whole topic on their to do list.

County Coach Report:

Junior County Coaching has resumed. There are fewer numbers in the higher age groups but encouraging numbers lower down. Nuffield, Abingdon and Henley will host the coaching sessions with Ross Gore, Ben Rosec and possibly Mike Beck giving Jason a hand.

No report or pictures have been forthcoming for the Junior County Closed but 20 players rocked up on the day and Jason will send a list of winners for display on the website.

As a new and enterprising adventure, Henley and Hithercroft may stage a joint Junior event with funding provided by South Oxfordshire District Council. A similar gathering was recently held involving juniors from 3 neighbouring counties and with this in mind, JV and JR will meet to discuss the possibilities.

England Squash Business:

ES is pushing Marking Courses. It is some time since OSRA held one so DQ will look into organising one in 2026.

ES advertised Women's Week but rather belatedly for OSRA to do anything of significance. However, it was great to report that Helen Knowles has Ladies Squash evenings back up and running, the first attracting 16 people. It was suggested that if Helen would like to stage a Ladies Tournament then OSRA would be happy to lend its support and to that end Michelle and Jason will contact her.

JR will be updating ES on the allocations they made and paid us this year. Any monies that were not claimed, he is hoping they will agree can be used elsewhere but it is thought the amount may not be very significant.

AGM Discussion Feedback:

To try and improve the interest in playing on squash courts, it had been proffered that Racketball should be encouraged. Unfortunately, it was not possible to identify anybody who might pick up and run with this.

The League format was discussed and the motion mentioned earlier was passed.

A lot of ideas were forthcoming in relation to sponsorship but it needs somebody to drive any initiatives. JR will see if Steve Dance and Steve Kuester are prepared to take this on.

Website Visibility:

It was suggested that a poster be devised to advertise the website in Clubs/online etc. Brian Bell agreed to coordinate this.

It was thought that there may be more footfall than DQ believes and that you could do too much work for very little reward. Keep plugging away seemed to be the message.

Tournaments:

Following the success of the Hithercroft Open and the demise of Thame, it was felt that OSRA should coordinate a calendar of tournaments encouraging one or two clubs to come on board and ensure that these events were reasonably spaced out. Michelle volunteered to take on this role and DQ will brief her shortly.

Any Other Business:

JV suggested a fun Doubles Tournament. He will ask Abingdon if they are keen.

He also mentioned that he has been approached by an individual looking to take on the role of Chair. Watch this space in the New Year.

The next meeting will be in January with BB to organise.