

## 2015 MASTER HOME INTERNATIONAL SCOTLAND

<b>Event Dates:</b>	Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> - Saturday 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2015		
<b>Address:</b>	Aberdeen Squash and Racketball Club, Aberdeen.		
<b>England Teams:</b>	<b>Men's O45</b>	<b>Men's O65</b>	<b>Women's O45</b>
	David Youngs (Captain) Andrew Cross Steve Dodridge Jonathan Lilley Steve McLoughlin Andy Normile	Barry Featherstone (Captain) Ian Graham Larry Grover Terry Norman Derek Collins Alan Hendry Martin Pearse	Diana Parums (Captain) Isabelle Tweedle Amanda Warren Rachel Woolford Sue Smith

### MENS OVER 45 RESULTS SUMMARY

Team					Total	Position
		20	17	20	57	1
	3		5	5	13	4
	4	18		8	28	3
	2	18	17		37	2

### MENS OVER 45 REPORT

It was a new-look Over 45 team that arrived in Aberdeen on time and ready for action (or five of the team, at least. Since being replaced as captain last year, Steve McLoughlin seems to have taken things into his own hands and arrived late, leaving the team selection for the first match a little difficult. He finally made it, only to demand to play at number 2 - having never beaten David Youngs in his life - but as captain, Youngs accepted it and was happy to play at 3).

The first match against Ireland saw debuts for Andrew Normile, Steve Dodridge and Jonathan Lilley with Andrew Cross and McLoughlin making up the rest of the team. Lilley opened up proceedings with a very hard-fought 3-2 victory. Looking nervous from the start, he dropped the opening game but soon regained his composure to take the second and third. With a 2-1 lead he looked in control, only for his opponent to level at 2-2. Lilley - who has been ranked as high as 69 in the world in his younger days wasn't about to lose this one and produced an excellent 5th game to win 3-2. Dodridge and Normile both produced high-class performances, winning their matches 3-0 and 3-1 respectively. Andrew Cross, the most dependable player on the team, beat Jonathon Simpson 3-0 to put us in a 4-0 lead, and when Steve McLoughlin won his match it was the perfect start a 5-0 victory. Our Friday evening was spent in the clubroom at the Aberdeen Squash Club and only Jonathan Lilley felt the need to go to bed early after 2 halves of shandy!



Day two called for a change of team to face Wales. Out went Dodridge and in came Youngs. Normile was first with a 3-0 victory, followed by Youngs who also had the same score line. Andrew Cross had a tough game against Nick Dyer who had narrowly gone down 3-2 to Frank Ellis from Scotland on the previous evening. Cross won the match 3-1 but was made to work hard for it. Lilley was very impressive in his 3-0 victory and McLoughlin completed our second 5-0 win with a 3-1 victory over Gary Charles.

More team changes were needed for the final match against Scotland, with Normile giving way to allow Dodridge to play his second match of the weekend. Dodridge got us off to the perfect start with a 3-0 victory and when Youngs beat Peter Buchannan also 3-0, we needed just one more win to claim the title. Andy Cross v Frank Ellis was the mouth-watering clash that would eventually seal the victory for England, and the two had played each other last week at the British Open with Cross the comfortable 3-0 winner. However, anyone who knows Ellis knows that after a week's training Frank could easily be a different player, and he pushed Cross all the way before victory was sealed 10-9 in the fourth game. Lilley came up with his third victory of the weekend which left us 4-0 in front with McLoughlin to play – and as he was playing Malcolm Kerr who beat him 3-2 the last time they met, Steve had something to prove. The first game was close up to 7-6 when an unfortunate clash of heads left McLoughlin with blood pouring from his nose. McLoughlin insisted he was fine to carry on and returned to court only to lose the next 20 points!!! 2-0 down and 8-0 down didn't look good and so it proved as Kerr finished him off 9-1 for his 3-0 victory.

Two 5-0 victories and a 4-1 win left us miles clear of the opposition and together with the Ladies' Over 45 team and the Men's Over 65 team we had all become winners.

The evening entertainment was first class and thanks to Aberdeen Squash Club for their hospitality, which was possibly the best there's been since I've played for England. The highlight of the evening, however, was Andrew Cross' attempt to get back into his room with no key after Jonathan Lilley had fallen asleep in the club toilets and

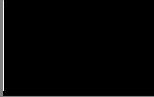
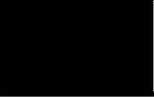
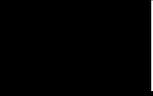
couldn't be found; and apologies must go to Ian Graham (Over 65 team) who had Andy Normile try and get in his bed on three separate occasions when he returned to his hotel room!



Not much to say about Martin Pearse this year as he won his only match but he has promised to refund everyone's payment (personally) for breakfast after it wasn't provided.

**David Youngs (Captain)**

## MENS OVER 65 RESULTS SUMMARY

Team					Total	Position
		15	20	20	55	1
	6		3	15	24	3
	3	19		20	42	2
	4	8	1		13	4

## MENS OVER 65 REPORT



I know only too well the frustration of injury so commiserations to Aubrey Waddy and Chris Goodbourn who both had to withdraw from the England team after aggravating injuries during the British Open. This meant that Martin Pearse came into the team to represent England for the fourteenth consecutive year. A marvellous achievement only slightly marred by the fact that they have all been for the O65s! I know: but Martin writes the rules. He changed the eligibility age for playing cricket for the Norfolk O70s to 68 last year, but unfortunately was not selected. Shades of Kevin Pietersen here methinks! As Martin was playing cricket for Norfolk's O90s on the Thursday and opening the batting he expected to be a bit too tired to play two matches in two days and so selected Derek Collins (British O65s winner) to play his other game instead of him for what was expected to be the crunch match against Scotland. I thought I was the Captain? I would have followed Dave Hardern's advice

which was to rest Martin and bring in Derek for all three games! Norfolk did win the cricket match against Kent and having spent 3 hours 34 minutes at the crease to hit his highest score of the season, Martin top scored with 9 runs not out. Having watched him on the squash court I am amazed he can get from one wicket to the other without being run out. Enough about the Chairman.

Congratulations to Derek Collins, Alan Hendry and Terry Norman on being selected to make their debuts for England.

The team in playing order was: Derek Collins, Barry Featherstone, Larry Grover, Ian Graham, Terry Norman, Alan Hendry and the Chairman. Our first match against Ireland went as expected but not without a few sharp intakes of breath. Playing at No 5, Alan Hendry on his debut made a flying start winning the first two games 9-1, 9-1, before losing the third and then taking the fourth for a 3-1 win. Playing at No 3 Ian Graham had a very comfortable 3-0 win dropping only nine points. I lost for the second year in a row to their No 1 player, David Gotto. This time it was 3-0, but an enjoyable game as he is such a quality player. Terry Norman then wrapped up the match with a 3-0 win only dropping nine points against his former team mate John Kielty. Larry Grover playing at No 2 against Robert Peel took the first two games before losing the next two. The fifth went to 8 points each; they then had 7 match balls between them before Larry won on the next. A 4-1 victory to England.

Our second match against Wales started at 1000 on Saturday morning with the Chairman first on at No 5. It wasn't long before he was 1-2 down and I was at a loss how to help him out. Fortunately Youngsey was watching and he told him to try hitting the ball using the strings rather than the frame. This had the desired effect and MP took the fourth 9-6 before running away with the fifth 9-1. Ian, Alan, Larry and me all secured fairly comfortable wins to secure a 5-0 win against the Welsh.

Our final match against Scotland who had also beaten Wales and Ireland was to be a winner takes all match and on paper it looked to have the makings of a close match. First on was Terry Norman against Alex Everingham and he was soon 2-0 up, but Alex came back to take the next two, winning the fourth 10-8. Fortunately Terry calmed our nerves by running away with the fifth 9-2. We were one up. Larry Grover was next on at No 3 and he won 3-0 without any trouble. Next on making his England debut was Derek Collins against Jim Dougal: could Scotland pull one back? Fortunately for us Jim had played David Gotto in the morning and just lost 10-9 in the fifth. Poor old Jim, he was out on his feet and could hardly move and Derek took full advantage winning the first two games 9-2, 9-3 in no time. Somehow the third didn't go all Derek's way: Jim always seemed to be in the right place and too many cross courts saw the game at 8-8. However Derek held his nerve and closed out the game 10-8 to win 3-0 and also win the tournament with two strings still to play. Next on was the much improved Alex Sinclair to play our No 4 Ian Graham. A very good game ensued with neither player wanting to lose. Ian won the first before Alex took the second 10-8. Ian kept his focus and won the next two for a 3-1 win. The final match was me against Scotland's No 2 Ian Ross and I managed to control the T and won 3-0. A 5-0 win for England and we were the Champions. Well played Team.

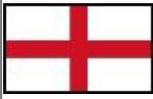
An excellent presentation dinner on Saturday evening was made even more enjoyable for the England teams as we all won. Di Parums and David Youngs both made very witty speeches that were very much appreciated by everyone. I didn't make a speech as I wasn't asked to: mind you neither were Di or Dave, but it didn't stop them. I think it was because I had overheard Di's team talk: Listen to me, shut your gobs and do what I say. Succinct as ever Di.

Many thanks and congratulations to Scotland Squash and the Aberdeen Squash Club on hosting a superbly well run tournament. Also to Dave Hardern for dealing with all the administration involving the accommodation and function. Thanks also to the other halves who came along and supported us. A fab weekend.

Stop Press: Apparently Martin scored 90 runs not 9. Sorry Martin but I am a bit dyslexic.

**Barry Featherstone (Captain)**

### WOMENS OVER 45 RESULTS SUMMARY

Team					Total	Position
		X	20	20	40	1
	X		X	X		
	4	X		19	23	2
	0	X	6		6	3

### WOMENS OVER 45 REPORT

Was this the year for International Pull Outs? It certainly felt like it on the ladies over 45 team. With injuries and illness being suffered by several of our qualifying players, there was some trepidation about who the other teams may put out against us and by no means inconsiderable doubt about who would be taking home the trophy.



Therefore Captain, Di Parums, had a quick precautionary polish of the cup before it went back on display just in case it was not to be for the first time ever this year. *(At this juncture, it should be noted that although Isabelle Tweedle had kindly picked up the cup from the injured Andrea Santa-Maria, following a previous incident when*

*she totally stripped the silver plate off by using a completely inappropriate polish and had to get it re-silvered at great expense, the Captain was quite relieved to receive it intact and relatively shiny still!!)*

Probably the most important, disappointing and notable absence was the whole Irish ladies contingency who had been unable to field a ladies team. Di was certainly gutted that she could not roll out her well-rehearsed Irish accent during the final speeches though those who heard it last year showed some relief. But seriously, it really took the shine off what was a wonderful weekend and we really hope they can complete the set for this fixture next year.

With the Friday evening match therefore being our 'void' the England ladies took to the spare court with gusto, keen to demonstrate their skill and professionalism with a dazzling display of woody frame shots and 'just out' serves. In the event, we were useless, a fact further confirmed by Seamus, one of the men's Ireland team who was heard to comment on the balcony 'Our lot should have turned up after all'!

Following a very cautious whisky tasting on Friday evening and a brief social in the bar, a generally early night was had by all in readiness for the big day ahead.

First match of the day was against Wales which is usually felt to be fun, extremely friendly but a fixture we should be capable of winning easily. However, as each match was played, it became very apparent that Wales did not intend to be the 'easy' opponents this year. Given how tight it was likely to be against Scotland later in the day, it was particularly important that no-body dropped any points. However, Sue Smith clearly felt that she needed a specific mention in the match report and therefore decided to use up all her team's nervous energy and take her match right down to the wire. With the nail polish now missing from her team mates fingers, she has rightfully earned her mention in the end speech and this report. This must not be repeated Ms Smith!

Although both Di Parums and Isabelle Tweedle are very old hands at this these days, nerves showed in very early stages of both their matches but soon calmed to produce clinical and excellent squash. Rachel Woolford had a good game, efficient and confident most of the time with few mistakes and no real sign of nerves. Mandy Warren was a most welcome number 2 and demonstrated that she is playing at a high level this year consistently in both the major tournaments. The match against Wales was won 5-0 but the whole team was talking about the hugely improved standard of fitness and determination in the Welsh girls and this sets the bar high for future fixtures.

As usual therefore, it all came down to the afternoon match against old rivals but definitely old friends, the Scots. Again, they had a few missing so it was likely to be fairly even. All went swimmingly from the start with matches felt to be in doubt won in style. Sue, Di and Isabelle all had really impressive wins against opponents who have provided a real challenge in previous encounters. As our number 4 Rachel Woolford took to the stage, we were confident that the match was all but in the bag. Our clever 'numbers' team member Isabelle was charged with the task of calculating odds, outcomes and various scenarios, so we only had to get this match to take the trophy home to sunny England once more. In addition, against all odds, nobody wanted to be the only one to drop a match as it had all gone so well until now. For future reference, when Rachel is about to start losing the match she reduces her effective shot playing balancing it beautifully with chatting to herself (and anyone on court, the balcony, etc) At 2 all, there was a veritable soliloquy going on between every point, so Captain Di stepped forward and took charge with the well-known coaching instruction 'Shut your mouth and channel all the energy flowing out of that through your racket instead' Now, I am absolutely certain that she had absolutely no idea what on earth I was saying but was so startled it enabled her to play a proper game of squash and win a thrilling 5 setter for her team. This will be a match to remember for a long time and embodies the spirit of these wonderful international weekends. So with only Mandy Warren to play, the pressure could have built up to unbearable levels for her not to drop her match. In the event, she was cool and calm, seeming to enjoy every moment of the win. Against the odds, England had not dropped a match so credit to all members of the team and definitely to the increasingly threatening opposition. Next year we will definitely have to be on red alert to the secret Welsh training and the possibility of additional Scottish players being rolled out.

There were one or two other notable observations and presences this weekend – Di Parums (nee Perrett) found a long-lost cousin in Geoff Perrett from Wales, Simon Parums made a great team mascot as he diligently stood on the balcony through every single match (OK, with a pint!) Di can't do Welsh or Scottish accents and come hell or high water Martin Pearse will always get on the team!

However, the ultimate demonstration of international friendship came towards the end of the dinner event when chatting and reminiscing was underway in the bar and a trip to the loo was necessary for Di. Assuming she was alone in the ladies but finding the loo roll empty as usual in a female toilet, she began to swear drunkenly and somewhat coarsely about its absence at such a critical time. As the swearing and cursing built to a crescendo, a little hand clutching a bundle of paper was pushed under the cubicle wall in a gesture of friendship. It was my old mate Sue Strachan from Scotland who epitomised the spirit of the whole weekend in that single gesture. I hope I have the opportunity to repay this kindness at some point in the future!

Thanks to Scottish Squash for a memorable weekend but final mention must go to Aberdeen Squash club who were superb throughout – it makes such a difference.

**Di Parums (Captain)**