

Independent Schools Tennis Association



www.istatennis.co.uk

President C.J. Gorringe C.B.E. (formerly Bradfield)

Chairman	R. Cake	(formerly) King's College School, Wimbledon	rjcake@btinternet.com	07711-617 349
Hon Sec	A.J. Blackman	Reed's School, Cobham	ajblackman@reeds.surrey.sch.uk	
Hon Treas	Ms C.E. Nicholls	Cranleigh	cen@cranleigh.org	

ISTA NEWSLETTER to Schools, September 2020.

We hope that you are able to enjoy conditions that are a little closer to normal now that many pupils have returned to school, and that there is the prospect of some tennis before long. We are watching carefully how COVID-19's second wave develops and what the Government's restrictions become. With so many uncertainties, **we will not be sending out our customary newsletter in January** with entry forms for the ISTA Championships which are scheduled to take place at Eton from Saturday 3rd until Tuesday 6th July 2021. **We will wait until the prospects for the Championships become clearer.**

The principal purpose of this newsletter (we do not normally distribute one in the autumn) **is to announce ISTA's new link to and support for the relatively-new grass roots tennis Charity "Bright Ideas for Tennis" (BIFT).** We would very much encourage our member schools, and pupils, to show their support by signing up to some of BIFT's fundraising events for next year, hoping that they are able to take place safely. Please see BIFT's letter below, in red, for ideas, events, more information and how to apply:

Bright Ideas for Tennis is a charity whose primary goals are to increase participation at grass roots level, and to make tennis accessible and affordable for all, using tennis as a tool to improve one's physical health and mental well-being.

BIFT have strong ties to both current and former GB Davis Cup and Fed Cup players and utilise these players to help inspire the kids, re-enthuse the adults, and help BIFT fundraise. Since our inception in 2013, we have worked with approximately 300 UK tennis venues, have raised more than £750K, and have provided just over 5000 hours of free community-based sessions as a result.

We have recently set up our own disability tennis programme called 'I Play 30' and, prior to lockdown, were coaching approximately 170 SEN pupils from 14 Special Needs schools across the UK. We will be opening 7 new venues in September 2020, with a further 7 venues scheduled for launch in April 2021.

If anyone would like any further BIFT charity information, please visit www.brightideasfortennis.org.

As with all charities, BIFT was completely decimated by Covid-19 in its fundraising efforts for 2020. **But we are now delighted to be in receipt of the support of ISTA, and to be able to announce a series of fundraising events designed specifically for ISTA schools, pupils and parents.**

As well as fundraising, our main objective is to give the participants a fantastic experience. So if you love tennis, would enjoy sharing a court with one of GB's stars, and are keen to give something back to the sport that has given you and your family a lifetime of enjoyment, **please show your support by signing up to one of the following 3 events:**

Feb 2021 - 24hr Tennis Marathon at the National Tennis Centre, Roehampton. We are currently recruiting for 12 ISTA schools to participate. Selected schools will be responsible for filling a 4hr time slot. Up to 8 players could take part, and would 'mix-in' with a selection of Davis Cup / Fed Cup players. This will be our 7th Marathon. Previous GB players have included Tim Henman, Greg Rusedski, 2015 Davis Cup Champion Dom Inglot, 2012 Wimbledon Doubles Champion Jonny Marray, and 2020 Australian Open Champion Joe Salisbury.

September 2021 - Parent and Child BIFT Trophy (venue tbc). This is a fun competition, where pairs are guaranteed a minimum of 4 matches. **Pairs will be 'representing' their schools** so the stakes will be high, and that's before the competitors even think about the 1st prize 5* holiday to the wonderful Forte Village Resort in Sardinia.

December 2021 - Davis Cup / Fed Cup Pro-Am (venue tbc). Your chance to pair up with your favourite player, and learn the secrets to their success. This event would comprise a masterclass coaching clinic, a light-hearted competition where you get to play with / against the best in GB, topped off by refreshments.

As a token of our appreciation, **those schools that show the most support will be rewarded with a Masterclass Open Day for their tennis teams - 2 Davis Cup / Fed Cup players will visit your school, provide a series of coaching clinics followed by a Q&A session.**

If you have any questions, would like to suggest other fundraising opportunities, or would like to register your interest for any of the above events, **please contact Danny Sapsford, Charity Manager (former Davis Cup player and 1982 Thomas Bowl winner!)** on danny@brightideasfortennis.org or 07986 880518.

Danny tells me that he will be happy to talk to each school about their ideas for each event and how it can work. BIFT's experience to date has been with clubs, so to be working with schools is a new departure for them. As Danny explains above, BIFT has done extensive charity work with clubs, young players at clubs, handicapped children and adults, and introduced many children and adults to tennis and given them initial coaching; all that is why ISTA is excited to give schools the chance to become involved. Funds raised by schools will go to BIFT's charity programmes. For the 24-hour event, BIFT traditionally sets a date for schools to register interest, then BIFT evaluates each project before selecting those that will participate; it is likely to be "First come, first served".

For the other 2 events, BIFT hopes to have a good spread of entries among all ISTA schools, so initially the limit will be set at 2 (or 1?) pairs per school.

Best wishes,
Ralph Cake
Chairman, ISTA