
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY SQUASH RACQUETS CLUB

Newsletter - June 2022

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President's Welcome

I'm Ellie and I'm the CUSRC president for the 2022/2023 season. This is just a short note to say thank you to everyone who signed up to the alumni mailing list, and a very big welcome to the CUSRC alumni network!

The club has a fantastic history, with nearly 100 years of Varsity matches and countless Blues blazers, league games, and fitness sessions. I hope that by bringing CUSRC members, both past and present, together that we can strengthen our alumni relations and develop a long lasting community.

Look forward to seeing you all at the July alumni event!



Summer Alumni Event

Join current CUSRC members and alumni for an evening of squash and feasting at the Oxford and Cambridge Club, London, on Saturday, 16th July 2022.

Squash from 4pm to 6pm. Dinner at 7pm.



[Click here to RSVP](#)



Meet the Committee

Get to know the 2022-23 squash committee!

[Find out More](#)



Varsity Blues 2022

Cambridge Squash Blues won emphatically at the first squash Varsity matches since 2020. The women had a convincing 5-0 victory while the men had a thrilling 3-2 contest.

A special shout out goes to our man and woman of the match: Benjamin Adams and Ellie white, both playing first string for their respective teams

Read the match reports and learn more about the squads and results below.

[Learn More](#)

CUSRC takes the County Doubles Championships

Picture this; after a long Easter term your exams have just finished, the library has no claim over your time and summer stretches ahead of you. What better way to spend your new found freedom than in the Hunts County Squash Club competing in the inaugural doubles county championships.

[Read the Match Report](#)



Hawks Dinner

On Monday evening members of CUSRC gathered at Hawks Club for our annual Summer dinner. This is a new event in the calendar, which we hope to turn into a long-standing tradition.

[See how the evening unfolded](#)

Join the CUSRC Mailing List

Received this newsletter from a friend? Join the alumni mailing list [here](#)
We are working towards building our alumni community, please sign up to the CUSRC alumni mailing list below to stay in touch!

[Sign up to CUSRC Alumni Mailing List](#)

Meet the Committee



Kieran Paterson

First on our committee introductions comes club stalwart Kieran Paterson who takes over this year as Treasurer. He is studying for a PhD in Organic Chemistry at Queens'.

Favourite Shot: back of the court drop shot
Known For: being completely blind



Matt Levine

Officially CUSRC's fittest member, Matt Levine joins as the new Publicity Officer. An embattled HistPol at Jesus, his greatest achievement of 2022 so far has been growing a beard that his mother described as 'not the worst thing I've ever seen'. Keep an eye out for our new CUSRC website coming out this summer.

Favourite Shot: forehand serve
Known For: counting a bottle of wine as a tinny



Imogen Duncalf

Next up comes Imogen Duncalf, the new Ladies' 2s captain. Studying VetMed at Girton, Imogen does indeed put us all to shame with her Saturday morning fitness turnout.

Favourite Shot: boast
Known For: an impeccable fitness attendance record



JuJu Ganendra

Last in a conspicuously long list of Downing students on the committee comes a second-year lawyer, JuJu Ganendra. With excellent squash skills and an even greater ability to always catch me at my worst in Revs on a Wednesday, JuJu joins as the Ladies' Blues Captain.

Favourite Shot: ankle breakers
Known For: being Charlie's favourite welfare officer



Patrick Nickols

Next we have next year's social secretary: Patrick Nickols, another Downing student (Downing Bar anyone?) and CompSci.

Favourite Shot: backhand drop volley
Favourite CUSRC Moment: Benjamin coming back from match ball to win varsity for Cambridge



Benjamin Adams

His body is a temple and his squash skills certainly are otherworldly, Benjamin Adams takes over this year as the Men's Blues Captain and is studying Engineering at Corpus Christi. Oh how we hope he can 'engineer' another fantastic victory for CUSRC at next year's Varsity match.

Favourite Shot: backhand headfake mizuki topspin cross court nick
Known for: consuming ungodly amounts of protein



Daniel Jensen

The squash skills of one good squash player, the liver of 138 good squash players, our new Men's 2s Captain is Daniel Jensen. The first in the "blank-J" formulation, DJ is studying Music at Downing.

Favourite Shot: reverse boast
Favourite CUSRC moment: getting hammered all day at the Blues' varsity in London



Ellie White

Is it 'Her Excellency' or 'Our Gracious Sovereign'? The new President for CUSRC this year is Ellie White. Striking fear into the hearts of Cambridge and Oxford players alike, Ellie is studying Medicine at Queens'.

Favourite Shot: backhand volley drop
Known for: beating the men (at squash)



Andrew Jeffery

Responsible for all the lovely admin work of a squash club comes Andrew "AJ" Jeffery. A CompSci at Trinity who "will" be getting me Trin May Ball tickets next year, AJ takes up the mantle of Secretary.

Favourite Shot: backhand kill
Favourite Part of CUSRC: club spirit at matches



Max Fryer - Sponsorship Officer

Mansoor Ahmad - Alumni Officer

Varsity Blues 2022



Players

Cambridge Women's Blues | College | Subject

1. Ellie White | Queens | Medicine
2. Hannah Blythe* | Trinity Hall | History
3. Molly Woods* (*Captain*) | Corpus Christi | History
4. Nina Bugeja | Selwyn | AMES
5. Juliana Ganendra | Downing | Law
6. Hannah Taylor | Gonville & Caius | Natural Sciences

Cambridge Men's Blues | College | Subject

1. Benjamin Adams | Corpus Christi | Engineering
2. Matthew Wong | Fitzwilliam | Medicine
3. Isaac Milford (*Captain*) | Selwyn | HSPS
4. Keshav Sivakumar | Robinson | Management
5. Max Fryer | Robinson | Engineering
6. Benjamin Chesser | Emmanuel | Mathematics

Results

Women's: 5 – 0

1. Ellie White | 9-0, 9-0, 9-1 (3-0)
2. Hannah Blythe | 9-2, 9-3, 9-0 (3-0)
3. Molly Woods | 9-0, 9-4, 9-1 (3-0)
4. Nina Bugeja | 9-1, 9-0, 9-1 (3-0)
5. Juliana Ganendra | 9-5, 9-0, 9-0 (3-0)
6. Hannah Taylor | 9-5, 9-2, 9-6 (3-0)

Men's: 3 - 2

1. Benjamin Adams | 9-3, 6-9, 4-9, 10-8, 9-2 (3-2)
2. Matthew Wong | 1-9, 9-7, 8-10, 1-9 (1-3)
3. Isaac Milford | 9-3, 9-2, 9-0 (3-0)
4. Keshav Sivakumar | 9-6, 4-9, 6-9, 5-9 (1-3)
5. Max Fryer | 10-8, 9-6, 9-6 (3-0)
6. Benjamin Chesser | 9-3, 9-5, 9-7 (0-3)

Match Reports

Women's Blues Match Report, written by Juliana Ganendra (Downing College)

Didn't see bagels on the RAC's menu, but the Cambridge Women's were serving bagels all day long.

Hannah Taylor took the court first at number 6. Although the youngest on the team, she had the greatest fire. She coped with the pressure of her first Varsity match with grace. Taylor showed off her speed as she chased down every ball. Her drives were powerful and tight. It wasn't long until she was shaking hands with her opponent – she had drawn first blood for Cambridge and set the winning tone for the rest of the day. Easy. 9-5, 9-2, 9-6.

Juliana Ganendra's match had a rocky start, with the referee forgetting it was English scoring and then five minutes of play with the score at 0-0. Finally, Ganendra drew first blood after an error from her opponent and let out a small shout of glee. After getting accustomed to her opponent's power, Ganendra started lobbing her serves and driving to the back corners before hitting a winner with her classic back hand volley drop. Ganendra won the first game 9-5. After a quick water break, Ganendra returned focused and determined. With disciplined deep drives, she won the next two games 9-0.

Nina Bugeja, the Maltese national champion, brought international expertise to the light blue. Her nimble footwork and great touch shots created beautiful squash. She was described as "The Dictator of the T" because of her absolute control of the court. Perhaps the squash team needs to go on tour to Malta – the birthplace of the Bugeja style. It wasn't long before Bugeja was shaking hands with her opponent, 9-1, 9-0, 9-1.

Molly Woods used her lefty magic to annihilate her opponent. Her agility on the court was spectacular, as she nipped between all the corners and dominated the T (perhaps it was the early morning fitness, or maybe her football blue?). She overpowered her opponent with her tremendous drives. O captain my captain. She truly led by example with her beautiful play. The final score was 9-0, 9-4, 9-1. It seemed fitting that the captain sealed the Light Blue win.

Hannah Blythe's match kept spectators on the edge of their seat. After a few loose shots, tensions escalated when her opponent's wild back swing smacked Blythe – millimetres from her eye. Blythe, initially startled and annoyed, soon buckled down and played beautiful squash, winning the first game 9-2. With a quick icing between games, Blythe would not let her injury stop her. After a few wild swings from her opponent and even a warning given by the referee, Blythe decided she wanted to get off the court and return to safety as quickly as possible. She won the next two games 9-3 and 9-0.

Ellie White took to the court last. Her eyes were slightly tired - storm Eunice had robbed her of sleep. She had spent the early hours of the morning organising a coach to transport the team and spectators after all trains were cancelled. The fatigue disappeared as soon as White stepped onto the court. Her clinical drops and powerful drives caused her to completely dominate the match. White won point after point, with little mercy for her opponent. Her dark blue counterpart only won one point – or as White's mum clarifies, "White lost 1 point". Final score was 9-0, 9-0, 9-1.

The Cambridge team lifted the trophy with an incredible 5-0 victory. We are extremely grateful to Royal Automobile Club and our President, Charlie McLean, who made the event possible. In addition, we are thankful for our coaches, who have guided us in our return to squash and provided invaluable advice. Finally, a massive thank you to our captain, Molly Woods, who guided us through an exciting year and inspired us with her sensational squash. GDBO.

Men's Blues Match Report, written by Benjamin Adams (Corpus Christi)

Benj Chesser was first up at Number 6 - a veteran of 2nd Team Varsity matches but a newbie on the big stage. Playing someone twenty years his senior, he was hoping for a long and tiring battle. After his opponent won a scrappy first game, Chesser began to adjust to his opponent's vast range of drop shots. Sprinting around the court like a slightly disoriented gazelle, Chesser took early leads in the next two games - but was unfortunately unable to get over the line in either. Shaking hands at the end of the third set, his opponent informed him he'd been suffering from cramp in his calf the last half an hour... talk about kicking a man when he's down. Oxford 3/0.

First of the top five to take to the court, and first Robinson College member ever to earn a squash Blue, was natural athlete Max Fryer. His high-paced, hard-hitting style was matched by his young opponent. Determination from Fryer saw him wrestle back momentum, taking the first game 10-8. Having found the perfect balance between tactical analysis and pure intuition, Fryer played one of the best matches of his life to dominate. The relentlessness wore down Fryer's opponent, who by the end of the match could barely stand - reminiscent of Fryer at the CUSRC initiation. Fryer eventually took the match in a crucial 3/0 win.

At number 4, a fellow Robinson college member Keshav Sivakumar came up against a very experienced and skilled rival. This was a real contrast in styles. Having recently recovered from a strained jaw, Keshav looked good physically and came out of the blocks swinging. Keshav's hard, low drives were countered by deceptive boasts and floaty lobs. In a continuous tussle for the middle of the court, Keshav took the first game, but soon found himself on the back foot as his opponent stood strong across the middle. After a long battle, Keshav was defeated 3/1. Isaac Milford played a steady and controlling style of squash in the third string match. His opponent, an experienced and clever player, played his first Varsity in dark blue when Milford was just 10 years old. Milford's youthful energy piled pressure on the veteran. Consistent length, combined with well-timed drops picked up point after point for the light blue. The first two games passed swiftly with Cambridge dropping just 5 points. Inspired by the dominating performance of

Cambridge Women just hours before, Milford went for the kill in the final game. Increasing the pace with swift volleys and gut-wrenching drops, he took out his apron and chef's hat; there was yet another bagel on the menu. All class, Milford closed out the match 3/0. Cambridge regained the lead and were now just one win away from victory.

Matthew Wong's match was the definition of 'percentage squash', a beautiful display of consistency and patience from both players. After losing the first, Wong, the Singapore national champion, bounced back brilliantly. With consistently tight and deep length, he constructed rallies perfectly, piling pressure on his opponent before unleashing precise winners. He took the second in a tight 9-7. The third game was a brutal one. Wong's opponent further extended the length of the rallies battling hard to keep the ball in play, while the light blue attempted to expose weaknesses by increasing the pace. At 8-8 both players were breathing heavily. With the heat of the RAC's courts clearly taking its toll, Wong's opponent prevailed 10-8. In the fourth, Wong struggled to recover from the intensity of the preceding games. Showing his skill, he maintained pressure on his opponent with his precise shots but in the end the English scoring system left the scoreboard a poor representation of his efforts. He went down swinging - Oxford 3/1.

Benjamin Adams took to the court in the deciding match. It all came down to this. The nerves were building around the venue. This was the culmination of many things - not just the long day of hard-fought squash, but also the many months of developing team culture and the many years of consistent training. This was payday.

Having hit his 160 grams of daily protein intake for three months consecutively, the Adams machine was primed and ready to go. He hit his marks early on. Tight, dying length was followed up by vicious kills and delicate volley drops. Asserting his dominance, he took the first game after 28 minutes of gruelling squash. His opponent eased into the match, though, and came back strong, taking the next two games, and a 4-0 lead in the fourth. Just when Adams looked down and out, the passion of the Cambridge supporters revived his energy reserves, and he slotted the best cross court nick of his life. Like a gladiator, he conducted the crowd, feeding off their energy. He powered on, saving a match point to take the fourth game 10-9 after 100 minutes of play. Both players were dead on their feet, but his mental and physical strength saw Adams prevail 9-2 in the fifth game of an epic Varsity match final.

The celebrations began. Coupled with an emphatic women's victory, it was all spiced rum and singalongs for the bus ride home.



Hawk's Dinner - Annual Summer Dinner

On Monday, 13th of June, members of CUSRC gathered at Hawks Club for our annual Summer dinner. This is a new event in the calendar, which we hope to turn into a long-standing tradition. It was a chance for the club as a whole to reflect on the year that has passed, and look forward to the year ahead.

We were kindly joined by the highly tuned athletes of the illustrious Selwyn College Croquet Society, perhaps more proficient in Pimm's drinking than mallet wielding.



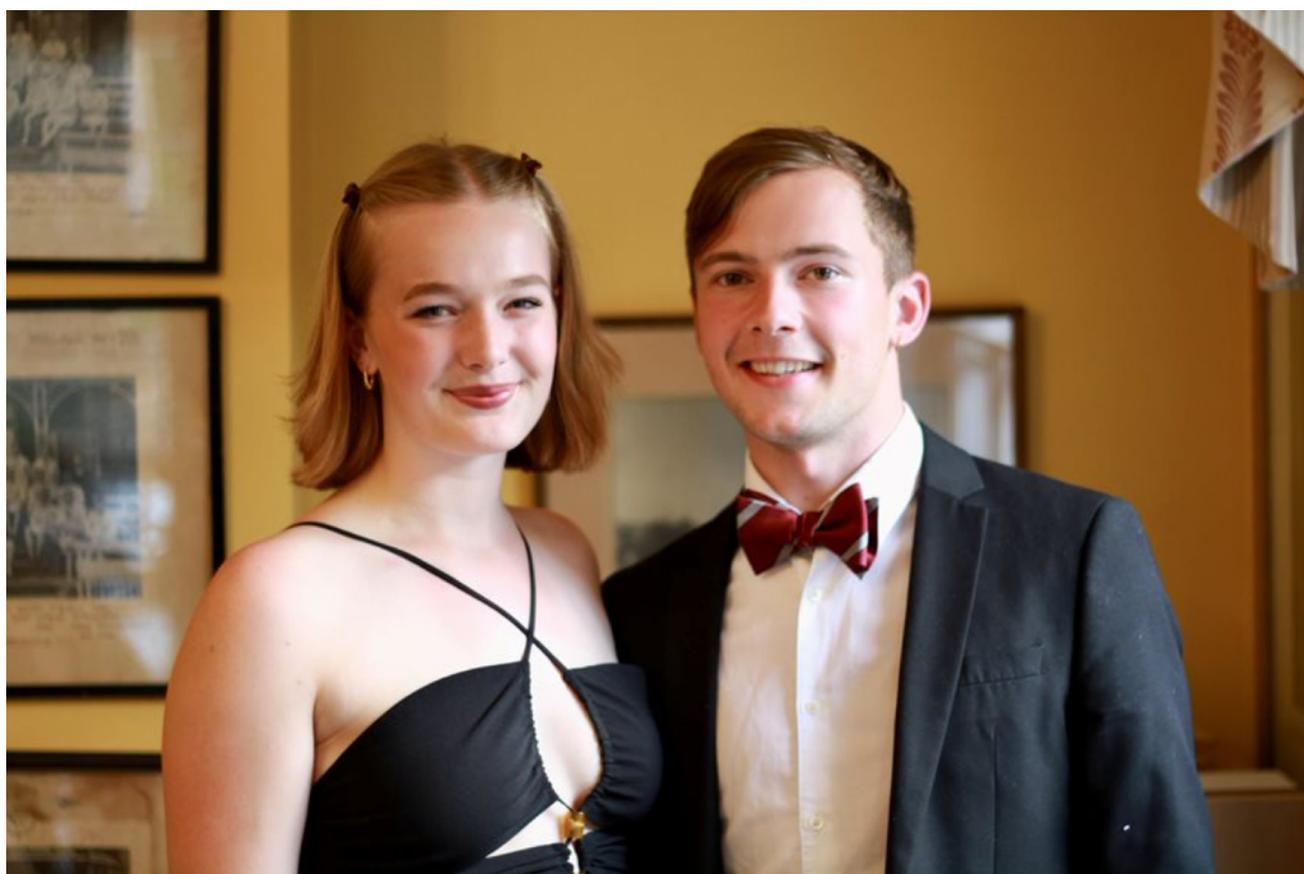
And what a year it's been. As some alumni may know, over the Christmas holidays Richard and Ali made the formal decision to step back from CUSRC. After many years of dedicated service, their contribution to the club cannot be overstated. A dinner in their honour has been delayed as Richard had to undergo an operation, although is in recovery and seemed in good spirits at the Cambridgeshire County Doubles Championships. Thanks to the dedicated work of the committee, with President Charlie McLean steering the ship, Lent term and its Varsities ran smoothly with an impressive 5 out of 6 Varsity wins. James Powley, the resident coach at the University Sports Centre, stepped in to help with training during Lent, and I am happy to announce will be staying on as our Head Coach in the coming 2022/2023 season. Lent term was concluded with a successful Annual General Meeting, where the new committee was voted in, accompanied by another enjoyable Hawks dinner.



It is with this story in mind that the club sat down for the Annual Summer Dinner. Hawks surpassed itself with a feast for the senses; prawn bruschetta served with rocket chilli citrus dressing followed by 8oz pork chop served with a pepper sauce, creamy mashed potato and roasted vegetables. The meal was concluded with New York baked cheesecake accompanied by raspberry coulis and a chocolate wafer. Unfortunately, the cheesecake fell foul of a challenge for captaincy and was rapidly devoured by Max Fryer, pictured.

In typical 'swap' fashion, captains were named for both CUSRC and Selwyn College Croquet Society (SCCS). The first captains of the night, Eleanor White and Neve Feather (of CUSRC and SCCS respectively), put some ground rules in place: International drinking rules apply. Standard. Sadly they were rapidly ousted by Isaac Milford (M1 captain but impressively also a member of SCCS in his spare time), and Max Fryer (a new member of the Blues and so-called 'intuitive beginner' according to the incumbent M1 captain Benjamin Adams). Throughout the evening, Isaac and Max defended their captaincy valiantly, facing down a number of challenges requiring them to down two pints of Toma, swap clothes with the challenges (lots of appreciative comments were made about Max in Juju's dress), and see off their poor cheesecake.

The evening finished in Lola's, which was scarily busy for a Monday evening. With the beat of indiscernible 2000s pop blaring in our ears, CUSRC looked forward to the coming year with enthusiasm, trepidation and a sense of exciting things to come.



CUSRC takes the County Doubles Championships

Picture this; after a long Easter term your exams have just finished, the library has no claim over your time and summer stretches ahead of you. What better way to spend your new found freedom than in the Hunts County Squash Club competing in the inaugural doubles county championships.

At least, this was the perspective of CUSRC members Milford and White, Fryer and Sivakumar and Woods and Bugeha, forming three dynamic duos.

CUSRC gave a good account of themselves, with the girls (Woods and Bugeha) finishing as runners-up in the women's category, whilst Milford and White finished third in the mixed category, beating their fellow squashies Fryer and Sivakumar in the semifinal of the plate of the open doubles category. Read the match report below.



Squash Report (Sunday 12th)

The smell of cava and elation was thick in the air on the sunny Sunday morning of the match. A far cry from clicking a submit button pajama-clad from bed, students were now properly enjoying their post-exam liberation in the lead up to May week.

The match-up? One for the ages. Team captains Isaac Milford and Ellie White were warming up to take on blues team and college duo, Keshav Sivakumar and Max Fryer (incidentally the first two squash blues in Robinson's fifty-year history) in the second round of the County Doubles Closed Championship.

The players greeted each other politely enough, though there were no illusions about what was at stake. The winners would be off to do battle against the counties best in an epic showdown to determine once and for all which pair reigned supreme. Who were fat cats and who were starving dogs?

The first phase of the match was dominated by a length-battle down the left-hand side. Ellie's finely grooved technique was proving a successful counter to Max's less refined style. At 7-3 a worried-looking Keshav urged Max to play more cross-courts to ease the pressure. "They're targeting you, don't play their game". Isaac's accurate volley drops were a vital factor in maintaining control as we reached the meaty midgame.

Max and Keshav were not going to go quietly though. With hundreds of hours on court together, they were quick to adapt to the changing circumstances and began to mount a comeback. Keshav's trickle boasts in particular made quick work of his opposite man and at 8-11 it was unclear who would come out ahead. Some lethal length and a few unforced errors later though and Ellie and Isaac stepped off court with a game under their belt, clearly relieved. 15-10. 1/0

Game two began and with a revised strategy in mind, Keshav and Max started playing much more deceptive squash. Trickle boasts and cross court drops caught Isaac and Ellie off guard and at 11-7 it looked like they might have run out of answers. The early lead proved too much though and Keshav and Max equalized. 1/1

From the first rally of the final game, the court buzzed with an intense focus. The quirks of doubles had been worked out and teammates now moved as one. Tactics were employed, counters found, then novel tactics discovered and implemented. Not only was it dynamic for the players, but great fun to watch. Isaac and Ellie had come out of the gates fighting and took an early lead. A spell of points were played down the right hand wall with Keshav taking on Isaac one-on-one. Plenty of rallies ending in safety lets. Keshav twice forgot to play a shot but made up for it with some brilliant gets. In the end Ellie and Isaac proved why they were captains, winning 15/13 and cementing a place in the next round, going on to win the whole competition.

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