

Disability Tennis Report 2019

2019 saw another excellent year for disability tennis in the West of Scotland.

Glasgow Disability Tennis continues to provide coaching and competitions for individuals of all ages and abilities with a physical, sensory or learning disability. Those attending the weekly sessions have the opportunity to develop their tennis skills alongside becoming fitter, gain confidence and independence, improve their self-esteem and develop friendships contributing to the improvement of their quality of life.

The club works closely with many organisations within the Glasgow community and benefits from support from pupils from Glasgow senior schools doing their Duke of Edinburgh Awards. Several of these pupils go on to take their LTA Level 1 & Level 2 coaching qualification as they further develop their own knowledge of tennis and want to continue supporting people in the community.

In 2019 Glasgow Disability Tennis organised two LTA Open Court Festivals (learning disability and wheelchair) both held at Scotstoun and three LTA Regional Series Tournaments, learning disability, wheelchair and visually impaired for players categorised from B1 to B5.

Glasgow Disability Tennis were invited to do an exhibition of visually impaired tennis at the Glasgow/Murray Trophy. The event took place on Sunday 22nd Sept prior to the Men's Doubles Final which featured Jamie Murray. Five players from GDT did a fantastic show case of VI tennis to the crowd. The players were able to stay to watch the finals and were pleased to have photos with Jamie Murray.

Many players from Scotland continue to travel to competitions held at venues across the UK. Most notable results this year:

LTA Visually Impaired Regional Series Tournament – 27th & 28th July at Newlands Tennis Club

This was the first official LTA VI Tournament in Scotland and followed two successful VI Team competitions organised by GDT in 2017 & 2018. The event attracted 37 players from across England and Scotland. Amongst those who entered were 7 players who represented Great Britain in their category in the International Blind Tennis Tournament held in Dublin in 2018 and Benidorm 2019. Four of these are current World Champions. GDT players were: Kerry Burke, Laura Grant, Andrea Logan, Frances Maguire, Yvette Robertson, Sam Howie & Graeme Roache. Andrea Logan reached the final of the Women's B3 category losing to world champion Amanda Large from England.

LTA Learning Disability Regional Series Tournament – 7th & 8th September at Scotstoun

A total of 39 entries with 24 being from Scotland competed over the two days. Results of West of Scotland players:

Aidan Moody – Yellow Ball – Gold Div 1 Singles; Silver Div 1 Doubles;
Ronan Cacace – Yellow Ball – 4th Div 1 Singles; Silver Div 1 Doubles;
Matthew Copley – Yellow Ball – Bronze Div 2 Singles; Bronze Div 1 Doubles;
Blake Cuthbertson – Yellow Ball – Silver Div 2 Singles; Gold Div 3 Doubles;
Jack Dickson – Yellow Ball – Bronze Div 3 Singles; Bronze Div 2 Doubles;
Alastair Ramsey – Yellow Ball – 4th Div 3 Singles; Silver Div 3 Doubles;
Craig Newton – Yellow Ball – Gold Div 4 Singles; Silver Div 3 Doubles;
Jamie Kearns – Yellow Ball – Gold Div 5 Singles; Gold Div 3 Doubles;
Greg Coultas – Yellow Ball – Bronze Div 5 Singles; Bronze Div 3 Doubles;
Lucy Porteous – Green Ball – Gold Div 6 Singles; Gold Div 4 Doubles;
Stephen MacMillan – Green Ball – Bronze Div 6 Singles; Bronze Div 4 Doubles;
Frances Smiley – Green Ball – Silver Div 7 Singles; Bronze Div 4 Doubles;
Scott Smith – Orange Ball – Bronze Div 9 Singles; Silver Div 6 Doubles;

LTA Wheelchair Regional Series Tournament – 5th October at Scotstoun

Ellie Robertson from Glasgow Disability Tennis won the Junior Singles event beating fellow GDT member Leo McLeod in the final. In the Junior Doubles, Leo with his partner from Dundee won the event beating Ellie and her partner from Buckinghamshire.

LTA Visually Impaired National Tournament – 15th, 16th & 17th November at Wrexham Tennis Centre

Four Glasgow Disability Tennis players represented Scotland in the singles and doubles events. Laura Grant and Frances Maguire played in the B1 category. Yvette Robertson, in her first year of competing, played in the B2 category and Andrea Logan competed in the B3 category. Andrea was 3rd in the B3 Women's Singles and won the B3 Doubles Consolation event.

LTA Learning Disability National Tournament – 15th, 16th & 17th November at Sunderland Tennis Centre

A total of 19 players from Scotland competed in singles and doubles with players from across the UK. As in 2018 the overall winner and runner up of group 1 was taken by Scottish players Dominic Iannotti (Prestwick) & Luke Turnbull (Berwick). Results of West of Scotland players were:

Aidan Moody – Yellow Ball - 4th place Div 1 Singles; Silver Div 1 Doubles;
Ronan Cacace – Yellow Ball - 6th place Div 1 Singles; 5th place Div 1 Doubles;
Blake Cuthbertson – Yellow Ball – Gold Div 2 Singles; 4th place Div 2 Doubles;
Matthew Copley – Yellow Ball – Bronze Div 2 Singles; Gold Div 2 Doubles;
Jack Dickson – Yellow Ball – Silver Div 4 Singles; Gold Div 3 Doubles;
Alastair Ramsey – Yellow Ball – Gold Div 5 Singles; Bronze Div 3 Doubles;
Greg Coultas – Yellow Ball – Gold Div 6 Singles; 4th place Div 4 Doubles;
Lucy Porteous – Green Ball – Gold Women's Singles; Silver Green Ball Doubles;
Frances Smiley – Green Ball – Silver Women's Singles; 5th place Green Ball Doubles;

LTA Wheelchair National Tournament – 28th November to 1st December at Shrewsbury Tennis Centre

Two players from Glasgow Disability Tennis competed in the National Tournament. Ellie Robertson won the Junior National Singles consolation event beating fellow GDT player Gregor Anderson in the final. Both teamed up in the Junior National Doubles where they finished third.

Further match play opportunities are offered through the Scottish Learning Disability League which provides lower ability players to have the opportunity to learn about match play at red & orange ball level. This introduces them to scoring & basic tactics in a fun and informal environment. The league has been a great success with players competing from Edinburgh, Prestwick, Ravenscraig, Stirling, Strathgryffe, Accessible Tennis, Annan, TAG and Glasgow Disability Tennis.

Virtus World Intellectual Impairment Sport (formerly INAS) held the Global Games in Brisbane, Australia from 13th to 18th October. Virtus is for performance level athletes with an Intellectual Impairment and is part of the Paralympic Organisation. For the first time ever, this competition was endorsed by the International Tennis Federation (ITF) and will be again in 2020 at the Tennis World Championships to be held in Belgium in July. Scotland's Dominic Iannotti was selected as part of the GB team. His performance saw him beat the No 1 ranked player in the World from Australia in the Men's Singles semi-finals before beating his GB team mate Fabrice Higgins in the final. This earned Dominic the ranking of World No 1 for 2019. He also won the Mixed Doubles with GB player Anna McBride and was runner up with Fabrice in the Men's Doubles. Both Dominic and Fabrice also took the Men's Team title.

Two members of Glasgow Disability Tennis represented Great Britain in the Special Olympics World Summer Games held in Abu Dhabi (UAE) in March 2019. Jack Dickson won Gold in the green ball Men's Singles and silver in the yellow ball Men's Doubles and Frances Smiley won silver in orange ball Women's Singles and 4th place in the green ball Women's Doubles. Both were joined in Abu Dhabi by Lesley Whitehead who was the GB team coach.

Many thanks to all the volunteers who have supported the players at the Scottish competitions this year.

The Tennis Scotland Disability Programme of the Year Award was won by Accessible Tennis.

For more information about the opportunities Glasgow Disability Tennis provides or for Virtus World Intellectual Impairment Sport contact Lesley Whitehead at Lesley.whitehead@ymail.com

