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# West Heath Tournament 2003



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Sofie Becaus, Ladies singles champion 2003

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Order of Play		
Grass 1	Grass 2	Grass 3
<b>Wednesday 6 August - Ladies' Doubles Final</b>		
	19:00 <b>Ladies' Doubles Final</b> Janet O'Connor and Jane Boyle vs Sofie Becaus and Rachael Gangji	

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## Tournament Gossip

### Saturday 2 August - Ladies' Doubles and finish of Men's Singles Finals

- Saturday dawned a gorgeous day, ideal for grass-court tennis and the completion of some unfinished finals business.
- Mark Stapleton completed his unfinished business by despatching Stan Fletcher in the final set to become champion 6-1 6-7 6-2.
- Sofie Becaus and Stan Fletcher took a very tight final set in the Mixed final.
- Congratulations to the Men's first team who won their last match of the season in sufficient style to achieve promotion to the First Division of the Middlesex league. For a club of our size this is a significant achievement.
- Only the Ladies' Doubles to go now!

### Sunday 27 July - Men's Doubles Final

- Sunday dawned with plenty of sunshine and by the end of the afternoon the grass courts, which had been drenched the night before, were almost playable again.
- The postponed men's doubles final was a very one sided affair, and Cedric de la Chaise and Russell Huxtable won convincingly against Stan Fletcher and Sultan Gangji. The score was 6-4 6-1. [Click here to see the match report](#)

### Saturday 26 July - Final's Day

- Spectators came from far and wide to see the great matches on finals day - as far afield as Herfordshire, Kent and Hampstead. The weather was somewhat inauspicious, but the play proceeded on grass as planned. The visitors from Belgium arrived too late to see the ladies final.

- The ladies' final was completed in two sets, with Sofie Becaus (now Sofie Sullivan) beating Jane Boyle 6-1 6-1 under the eagle eye of Liz Goodfellow. See the [Ladies' singles match report](#). This means that Sofie has won the championship for the loss of only 6 games in total (in 3 rounds)!

- The mens singles final was abandoned at 3-0 in the final set. See the [Men's singles match report](#). Mark Stapleton has the edge in the final set with one service break.

- Stan Fletcher believes he was rescued by the heavy rain, but stands a chance on a dry day of breaking back and taking the final set.

- 1974 was the year Jane Boyle first won the ladies' singles title at West Heath. This was also the year our new champion, Sofie Becaus, was born.

- Despite the disappointment caused by the weather the Finals Day Tea was excellent and went all too quickly!

- There was heavy rain in the evening but the Finals Day Barbecue was still well attended. Our particular thanks go to Stan Fletcher who braved the rain to man the outside barbecue to cook the chicken and bangers.

### Thursday 24 July

- There have been some great matches on the way to the finals, which bodes well for the finals themselves. Do come along (see the pictures of previous finals day teas above!

- Drat! Got there too late to see the super tennis played this evening (Thursday). Apparently Elana Valarche took the second set off Jane Boyle, who recovered superbly in the third set to win the semis 6-3 3-6 6-0. And Cedric de la Chaise had a close first set with Mark Stapleton, taking him to a tie break before Mark could gain the upper hand by a tight margin to win 7-6 6-4.

- I missed two super meals on Tuesday and Wednesday too, though I did make the ones on Monday and Thursday. Yum Yum.

- Ludmilla is not betting on her husband, Mark Stapleton, in the final this year, as she reckons Stan Fletcher gets more practise - he's a coach!

- Stan Fletcher made short work of beating Sultan Gangji, who could be heard complaining about the number of bad bounces this year. Stan won 6-0 6-1.

- Seriously though, we've had some really great weather this season so far, and the grass courts are showing the strain somewhat. Pepe thinks he should close court after the final



to allow it to recover a little for September.

- We've had around 20 hits most days on the web site this year. That's double what we got in 2002. Thank you for your support, and I hope you have a great finals day!



### Sunday 20 July

- Well! I've never seen anyone so determined! The shock of the tournament so far was Elena Valarche winning the first set against Carol Jardine 6-3. When the second set got to 5-5 we had our hearts in our mouths. Elena determinedly broke Carol and was serving for



the match. And then Elena held serve for a memorable victory. In the post-match press conference all Carol had to say was "She played well. She played well".

- When Marjan Denis played Liz Goodfellow Marjan played a quality first set and took the tie break to establish the advantage. But then Liz raised her game in the next two sets to take the match 6-7 6-2 6-3. Liz was described by a bystander as "a good mover!"

- Mark Stapleton took the first set easily, 6-2, against Jeff Fine, but then Jeff put up some stubborn resistance to ensure he was not broken in the second set. In the ensuing tie-break Mark took the match in fine style. However, we think he will have to do considerably better if he wants to win the title this year. He has one week to reach his peak.

- Marjan Denis was supposed to play 3 consecutive matches, and indeed she did, but the first one started late so the rest were held up somewhat. The result was that her doubles with Paul O'Flynn against Russell Huxtable and Moira Duncan started an hour late and reached one set all but could not be completed because Russell had to leave. So they all have to come back tomorrow!

- Stan Fletcher is hoping to get through to the final to meet Mark Stapleton, and believes the result will depend on how he (Stan) feels on the day. Stan is one to go for his shots, and they will either go in or out! Mark's style can be a little more cautious. If the top two seeds do meet it could be quite a contest!

### Saturday 19 July

- A warm welcome to Phillip Sullivan's mum. Phillip and Sofie told her about the daily web site updates and she now uses it regularly to check on the progress of her daughter in law.

- Stan Fletcher did indeed put in his first appearance of the tournament and play three games on the trot today, but was assisted in this aim in his second round match by the early retirement of Vivek Sood. Vivek decided to save himself for his later doubles match. However, Vivek and Brian Coffey later lost - again to Stan, this time partnering Sultan Gangji.

- I saw the last set of Russell Huxtable vs Aruna Gunasekera. Although Aruna hit some good shots, his unforced error rate was considerably higher than Russells, so Russell won through 6-0 6-2.

- Jeff Fine vs Kevin Ryan was a good ding-dong battle. Both hit a number of fine winners after grass-style shots to manoeuvre the opponent into a losing position, involving a lot of slice shots. The match was played in a good sportsmanlike manner, but both parties clearly got rather frustrated when broken on serve. Jeff won through 6-4 6-4.

- Apologies to Max Lickfold and Brian Coffey for any confusion I caused. Brian must have overheard me saying Max was ill. During their social game, at a change of ends Brian then expressed sympathy to Max Lickfold, who either must have been considerably confused or thought it was Brian's eccentric way of passing comment on his tennis. However, I was referring to Max Jacquin, Mary Jacquin's three year old son, who is, worryingly, suffering from a virus and fever ahead of his planned trip to EuroDisney on Tuesday. As far as we know, Max Lickfold is in perfect health.

- Brian Coffey's red shorts put in another appearance yesterday, and I was told that his wife was capturing them on camera. If it is a good picture, can I have an electronic copy for this column, please?

### Friday 18 July

- According to the Order of Play for tomorrow (Saturday), Stan Fletcher will put in his first appearance of the tournament. If all goes according to his plan he is scheduled to play

three matches starting on the hour, every hour from 12:00 to 14:00. This seems like quite a tight timetable!

### Tuesday 15 July

- Today I attended our IBM IT Architects Institute. The most interesting presentation was from Roger Blake, who has designed the Wimbledon information technology each year since 1992. The [www.wimbledon.org](http://www.wimbledon.org) site is run by IBM and gets many millions of hits per hour and the average person stays on it for 2 hours! By contrast it would be a good day if we got 20 visits! I asked Roger if he had any spare kit to help with presenting the score on finals day, but he said that scores were the province of the Referees Office, not IBM, so he could not help me, at least this year! IBM does just about everything else with information, including the match analysis and TV graphics. My favourite is the real-time scoreboard. Apparently they peaked at 200,000 simultaneous users of these at the same time. Funnily enough the load drops significantly at weekends!

- As I've just driven back from Nottingham I don't have tonight's result. Sorry! Normal service will be resumed tomorrow.

### Monday 14 July

- Apologies for the late update, but I have been away on business. Apparently I missed a good BBQ too.

- I have had my knuckles rapped by the club Chairman for the contents of this column so will mind my p's and q's a bit more in future!

- Gill Green was partnering Sally Tornow against Julia Abbot and Carol Jardine. Gill was looking very sophisticated in a crisp white tennis dress and a new hairstyle. Apparently this contributed to Gill's solid performance. Meanwhile, at the other end Carol had switched from her black outfit of the day before to all white (and frilly). The first set went with serve to 5-all, then there were two consecutive breaks leading to a nerve-wracking tie break taken by Carol and Julia. At this point the low sun intruded, forcing a switch of courts. This seemed to suit Carol and Julia better than their opponents and they romped home with the second set 6-2 and the match.

- On court 2 there was a ding dong battle between Marjam Dennis and Louise Terry. Apparently the court also decided to enter the fray and contributed a few bad bounces at unhelpful times. But Marjam coped better and won 6-3 7-5.



### Sunday 13 July

- It was another lovely day - maybe too hot for midday matches. An excellent tea was provided by Joan Barnes, keeping the competitors well fed.

- Not a single ladies singles match was played today of the three outstanding, despite today's deadline. Come on ladies - get a move on!

- Dan Braverman played some excellent shots against Mark

Stapleton (who was on his third match of the day), and these were roundly applauded by the appreciative crowd watching court 2. Dan's reward was a number of break points, but a number of unforced errors deprived Dan of any breaks. After a slow start Mark served very well and closed the match in straight sets 6-2 6-3.

- A whisper I heard has Cedric de la Chaise as the outsider to watch, though he is not necessarily being tipped (yet) to beat Mark Stapleton or Stan Fletcher.



- After his Boris Becker antics on court 1 yesterday, Phillip Sullivan was proudly showing off his grazes, which looked a distinctly sickly yellow colour. Sofie indicated she was none too pleased....

- Vince Mulvey was disappointed to lose a close three setter 6-1 3-6 6-3 to Jeff Hiday. Jeff must have pretty fresh still because he did not even come off court before starting once more on his mixed with Julia Boiko. But this time he did not fare so well. The first two sets were evenly split - 7-5, 3-6. Their opponents were Joshua Azouz and Elena Valarche, who was apparently desperate for a Russian man, but was pleased in the end to have chosen young



Joshua. Elena and Josh were up 5-2 in the third, deuce on Joshua's serve, and we were all expecting a swift end, but Julia in particular played some excellent shots, aided and abetted by Jeff, to pull it back to 5-5, whereupon Elena and Joshua pulled out all the stops to take the next two games and the match.

- Yours truly lost a close match to Vivek Sood. Vivek played well in the final set which went with serve until 5-5, then breaking me and holding for a deserved victory. Now if only I had been able to get those lobs over his head.....

- Martin and Alexander Raybould present a double-ambidextrous mens pair, with both serving left handed but playing right-handed groundstrokes (when convenient). It obviously fooled Yusuf Samad and David Griffiths, who proceeded to lose 6-3 6-2.

- Sartorial elegance was the name of the game when Brian Coffey teamed up with Carol Jardine. After many comments Brian was persuaded to drop his red shorts in favour of a more conventional white pair. Meanwhile Carol Jardine was sporting a black pair of (tennis?) knickers, which perfectly matched her black tennis outfit (or so I was told). The power dressing worked well in the first set, but ultimately was in vain as Paul O'Flynn and Marjam Denis won the match 3-6 6-4 6-2. Those in the know had confidently expected that Brian and Carole would have had violent arguments between points about the efficacy of homeopathic medicines, but I am pleased that none were reported.



### Saturday 12 July

- It was a glorious day for grass court tennis. Everyone enjoyed their matches in the sun and those surviving until 8 p.m. rounded the evening off with take-away pizza and chicken wings (pre-gourmet dinner!)

- Yours truly struggled in the first set against the latest up-and-coming Raybould tennis superstar (Alexander, aged 11). My advice is to beat him this year because he is going to thrash most of us next year. Like his father he is ambidextrous - serving left handed and playing his ground strokes right handed. I did not get the hang of his left-hand slice serve in the first set. To add insult to injury he was able to pass me almost every time I came to the net, even though my approach shots were almost inch perfect to his baseline, though a little lacking in pace, perhaps. Fortunately in the second set I found my service rhythm and was able (probably for the last time) to take advantage of his short height and reach. The third set was very tight and after 2-all we traded 3 service breaks and I was very lucky to hold for 5-3 after which I was able to take the match.

- On the next court Kevin Ryan seemed to be having few problems despatching Charles Rubinstein. However, after losing 6-3 6-1, Charles found that he had been playing in his varifocals rather than his usual tennis distance glasses and demanded a replay. Kevin replied that he had forgotten to wear his lucky socks whereupon Charles felt suitably chastised and decided to withdraw his demand for a replay.

- Phillip Sullivan raised a loud cheer every time he hit a winner against Sultan Gangji, but it happened too infrequently to affect the outcome and he only got the one game.

- Later Phillip realised that he and Evita Bier needed more than just their best tennis against Charles Rubinstein and Julia Abbot and decided to go for more shots in the manner of the young Boris Becker's grass court dives. However, this did not do the trick either, but we all think Phillip has improved a great deal and wish him and Sofie all the bests when they move to Australia for a year or so in September.


**Wednesday 9 July** - There have been the usual reports of jostling for position among some of the ladies with the strongest of the old and new male members to secure themselves a good match for the mixed. You can decide for yourself how successful they have all been by examining the draw above. Our view is that Sofie Becaus got there first (see the mixed draw)!

- A number of last year's finalist have LTA inter-club ratings. Click [here](#) to find out more.

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Men's Open Singles - Holder : <a href="#">Mark Stapleton</a>					
Sat 12 July	Sat 19 July	Tue 22 July	Thu 24 July	Sat 26 July	Winner
Mark Stapleton	M Stapleton 6-2 6-3	Mark Stapleton 6-2 6-3	Mark Stapleton 6-2 7-6	Mark Stapleton 7-6 6-4	 <a href="#">Mark Stapleton 6-1 6-7 6-2</a>
Dan Braverman	M Raybould w/o	Jeff Fine 6-4 6-4			
Martin Raybould					
David Griffith	Kevin Ryan 6-3 6-1	Cedric de la Chaise 6-1 6-3			
Kevin Ryan	Jeff Fine 6-0 6-2				
Charles Rubinstein	de la Chaise 6-0 6-2	Russell Huxtable 6-0 6-2			
Brian Coffey	Maciek Janowski				
Jeff Fine	Aruna Gunasekera 7-5 6-0	Dudley Leigh 6-3 6-0			
Cedric de la Chaise	R Huxtable 6-0 6-0				
Paul O'Flynn	A Brodie w/o	Sultan Gangji 6-3 6-4			
Maciek Janowski	D Leigh 6-1 6-2				
Huw Crompton	Jeff Hiday 6-1 3-6 6-3	Fareed Samad 6-1 6-3			
Aruna Gunasekera <b>beat</b> Farouk Samad 6-4 6-0	S Gangji 6-0 6-1				
Mike Prest	F Samad 6-1 6-0	Stan Fletcher 6-4 6-2			
Yusef Samad	John Fox w/o				
Russell Huxtable	Vivek Sood 7-5 1-6 7-5	Stan Fletcher 6-3 retd			
Mark Anderson	Stan Fletcher 6-0 6-0				
Andrew Brodie					
Dudley Leigh					
John Barnes					
Vince Mulvey					
Jeff Hiday					
Phillip Sullivan					
Sultan Gangji					
Fareed Samad					
Edward Coviello					
Clive Truman					
John Fox					
Vivek Sood					
Peter Davies <b>bt</b> Alex Raybould 3-6 6-1 6-3					
Paul Rubie					
Stan Fletcher					

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Ladies' Open Singles Holder : <a href="#">Sofie Becaus</a>				
Round 1 Sun 13 July	Round 2 Sat 19 July	Semi-final Wed 23 July	Final Sat 26 July	
	Jane Boyle Sally Tornow Carol Jardine	Jane Boyle 7-5 6-2	Jane Boyle 6-3 3-6 6-0	<a href="#">Sofie Becaus</a> <a href="#">6-1 6-1</a>
Julia Abbot Elena Valarche	Elena Valarche 6-4 6-2	Elena Valarche 6-3 7-5		
Louise Terry Marjan Denis	Marjan Denis 6-3 7-5	Liz Goodfellow 6-7 6-1 6-3		
	Liz Goodfellow	Sofie Becaus 6-0 6-2		
Moira Duncan Mary de Jong	Moira Duncan 6-2 6-3			
	Sofie Becaus			

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Men's Open Doubles				
Holders : <a href="#">Cedric de la Chaise</a> & <a href="#">Russell Huxtable</a>				
Round 0/1 Sun 13 July	Round 2 Sat 19 July	Semi-final Wed 23 July	Final Sat 26 July	Winner
	Sultan Gangji Stan Fletcher	Sultan Gangji Stan Fletcher 6-3 6-2	Sultan Gangji Stan Fletcher 6-1 6-2	<a href="#">Russell Huxtable</a> Cedric de la Chaise <a href="#">6-4 6-1</a>
Brian Coffey Vivek Sood	Brian Coffey Vivek Sood 6-4 6-7 6-2			
Charles Rubinstein Aruna Gunasekera				
Jeff Fine Mark Anderson	Andrew Brodie Paul O'Flynn (Jeff Fine Mark Anderson won but Mark injured)	Andrew Brodie Paul O'Flynn w/o		
Andrew Brodie Paul O'Flynn				
Jeff Hiday Huw Crompton	Fareed Samad Maciek Janowski 6-0 6-1			
Fareed Samad Maciek Janowski				
Yusuf Samad David Griffith	Martin Raybould Alexander Raybould 6-3 6-2	Mark Stapleton Kevin Ryan 7-5 6-0	Russell Huxtable Cedric de la Chaise 6-4 2-6 6-2	
Martin Raybould Alexander Raybould				
	Mark Stapleton Kevin Ryan			
Dudley Leigh Joshua Leigh	Paul Rubie Vince Mulvey 3-6 6-1 7-5	Russell Huxtable Cedric de la Chaise 6-2 6-0		
Paul Rubie Vince Mulvey				
	Russell Huxtable Cedric de la Chaise			

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		Ladies' Open Doubles Holders : <a href="#">Jane Boyle</a> & <a href="#">Janet O'Connor</a>			
Round 1 Sun 13 July	Round 2 Sat 19 July	Semi-final Tue 22 July	Final Sat 26 July	Winner	
	Janet O'Connor Jane Boyle	Janet O'Connor Jane Boyle 6-1 6-4	Janet O'Connor Jane Boyle 6-1 6-3		
	Moira Duncan Mary de Jong				
	Carol Jardine Julia Abbott	Carol Jardine Julia Abbott 7-6 6-2			
	Sally Tornow Gillian Green				
Louise Terry Susan Harrison	Louise Terry Susan Harrison w/o	Liz Goodfellow Marjan Denis 6-1 6-0	Rachael Gangji Sofie Becaus 7-5 6-0		
Ludmilla Stapleton A N Other					
	Liz Goodfellow Marjan Denis	Rachael Gangji Sofie Becaus 6-2 6-0			
	Elena Valarche Julia Boiko				
	Rachael Gangji Sofie Becaus				

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		Open Mixed Doubles Holders : <a href="#">Sofie Becaus</a> & <a href="#">Stan Fletcher</a>			
Sat 19 July	Sun 20 July	Tue 22 July	Thu 24 July	Winner	
Ludmilla Stapleton Mark Stapleton	Ludmilla Stapleton Mark Stapleton 6-0 6-1	Ludmilla Stapleton Mark Stapleton 6-1 6-3	Sofie Becaus Stan Fletcher 6-1 7-5	<a href="#">Sofie Becaus</a> <a href="#">Stan Fletcher</a> <a href="#">6-3 2-6 7-5</a>	
Susan Harrison Aruna Gunasekera					
Yusuf Samad Louise Terry <b>beat</b> Joan and John Barnes 7-6 6-3	Elena Valarche and Joshua Azouz 6-1 7-6				
Elena Valarche & Joshua Azouz <b>beat</b> Julia Boiko & Jeff Hiday 7-5 3-6 7-5					
Sofie Becaus Stan Fletcher	Sofie Becaus Stan Fletcher 6-0 6-0	Sofie Becaus Stan Fletcher 6-0 6-0			
Sue Latimer Edward Coviello					
Evita Bier Phillip Sullivan	Julia Abbot Charles Rubinstein 6-2 6-0				
Julia Abbot Charles Rubinstein					
Carol Jardine Brian Coffey	Marjan Denis Paul O'Flynn 3-6 6-4 6-2	Marjan Denis Paul O'Flynn 6-4 6-7 6-3			
Marjan Denis Paul O'Flynn					
Moira Duncan Russell Huxtable	Moira Duncan Russell Huxtable 6-3 6-3	Rachael Gangji Sultan Gangji 6-2 6-0			
Jane Boyle Paul Rubie					
Mary de Jong John Fox	Mary de Jong John Fox 6-4 6-3	Rachael Gangji Sultan Gangji 6-2 6-0			
Radhika Sood Vivek Sood					
Sally Tornow Huw Crompton	Rachael Gangji Sultan Gangji 6-2 6-0				
Rachael Gangji Sultan Gangji					

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## Match Reports

### Men's Singles Final



Both Stan Fletcher and Mark Stapleton looked on form in the knock up. Stan won the toss and elected to serve and kicked off with a double fault, but continued with a series of serves that Mark was unable to return. Mark took his first service game with a series of serves and volleys and the game was on. Stan found the court surface rather slippery and this must have put him off rather.

Stan's second service game was rather error prone - he dumped a few easy winners in the net, and Mark broke and then held. Stan

made a few more unforced errors in his next service game to give Mark three break points before Mark converted and held for a 5-1 lead which he converted for the first set. Interestingly the set finished within seconds of the end of the first set of the ladies' final.



Stan kicked off the second set by winning his serve, and after Mark also held Stan changed his grass-court shoes for a pair of black all-weather shoes. This seemed to do the trick. and he took his second service game with a cracking serve (see picture). Matters proceeded with serve until Stan had a break point in the sixth game, but Mark equalised and held. In the eighth game Stan earned two more break points with a cracking pass down the line, but Mark pulled it back to deuce once more. An approach shot from Stan to within inches of the corner set up a winning smash, but again Mark held his nerve to equalise and then played well to shut the door for 4-all. Matters proceeded with serve until 6-all.



In the second set tie-break Stan kicked off with a cracking volley to the sideline for 1-0. Mark won his first serve, but on the second Stan just managed a return that could have been going out. Mark elected to play it, but dumped it in the net. Stan slipped on his serve for 2-2 and yet another towel down. On the next point Mark put his volley out for 2-4, and on the next point Stan fell over, but got up fast enough to put a good passing shot down the line that Mark could only



watch. 5-2 to Stan, who then held one of his serves to leave Mark serving at 3-6 down. Mark missed the volley and it was one set all.

The players were offered a rain break or a switch to shale before the third set got under way, but elected to continue on grass. Mark held the first game then Stan took a tumble or two and Mark broke him. Mark held again, but then the rain started coming down harder and the umpire (Kevin Ryan) suspended play for the duration.

The match was completed on Saturday 2 August in front of a crowd which was initially very quiet and polite, though it came into its own later. It's tough to resume for just a few games after a week's delay, and both players started slowly. In the first service game of the resumption Stan missed three volleys, Mark hit a return which was just too good, and it was 4-0 to Mark. On Mark's serve Stan hit a super pass, Mark double faulted twice and put a volley out to give Stan some hope. In the next game Stan gave a demonstration of how to volley and it was 4-2. But Mark held, leaving Stan to save the match from 2-5 down. It was too much pressure, and Stan kicked off with a double fault, lost a rapid-fire volley exchange and put a volley in the net to give Mark two match points. Mark sealed the championship with a very good passing shot to win 6-1 6-7 6-2.

## Ladies' Singles Final



This is the first time in at least 30 years that the ladies final has been contested by two lefties!

In 1974 Jane Boyle won her first

Ladies Singles title and has won it a total of nine times ('74, '76-81, 2000, 2001). I do not know how many time she has been the losing finalist, but she must have appeared in most of the finals since this time. She believes she is currently playing better than ever. This is a record of achievement of which she must be justifiably proud.

In Sofie Becaus (now Sofie Sullivan) Jane took on a newcomer to the club tournament who must be only half her age.

Sofie won the toss and elected to serve. Sofie struggled on her first service game, Jane taking her to break point, but Sofie won through in the end and immediately proceeded to break Jane. Sofie's next service game went in similar style - Jane taking her to break point, but this time converting to pull back to 1-2. On Jane's next service game Sofie struggled to get to Jane's backhand drop shots, but Jane made a number of unforced errors to hand Sofie the game and a 3-1 lead. Sofie held and Jane was broken again to leave Sofie serving for the set which she won 6-1.



The court was very wet and slippery and it became increasingly difficult to move on it.. Sofie changed her tactic to play more on Jane's forhand to avoid Jane's backhand drop shots. Jane was broken again in the first game of the second set and was broken again later as Sofie won the second set 6-1 to deservedly take the championship. Sofie played some consistent tennis throughout, and managed to get to a number of Jane's drop shots without falling flat on her face in the mud.

Next year is likely to be the second year in succession where the ladies champion has elected not to defend her title. Lesley South is no longer a member, and Sofie will be in Australia unless she can arrange a timely holiday. Good luck to her.

Next year is likely to be the second year in succession where the ladies champion has elected not to defend her title. Lesley South is no longer a member, and Sofie will be in Australia unless she can arrange a timely holiday. Good luck to her.

### **Men's Doubles Final**

The postponed men's doubles final was played on shale on Sunday 27 July, having been abandoned the previous day because of the Finals Day rain.

Sultan Gangji and Stan Fletcher vs Russell Huxtable and Cedric de la Chaise was unfortunately a very tame affair. Sultan and Stan were not on form to start with and just never got going. They lost their opening service game and just never caught up in the first set. They did not get going in the second set either - one bystander said they just did not play in the second set.

By contrast, Russell and Cedric were model "professionals", determined and consistent, and, by all accounts, played well and were good value for their 6-4 6-1 win.

### **Mixed Doubles Final**

The postponed mixed final was played between Sultan and Rachael Gangji and Sofie Becaus and Stan Fletcher. Stan was desperately trying to avoid the ignominy of being in all three finals and winning none, as he was not quite firing on all four cylinders. The smart money was on a victory in two sets for Sofie and Stan, but the reality was that it was a very tight 3-set match that could have gone either way.

Sultan opened the match, but got broken immediately. Games then went with serve to give the first set 6-3 to Stan and Sofie. In the second set Sofie's serve was under a lot of pressure and she could not find a decent first serve for love or money. The Gangji's took it easily 6-2.

It was the same in the third set, but somehow Sofie managed to hold serve until Rachael slipped from her previous good form and dumped a few volleys in the net to lose her service game. Sofie was then broken, and the score reached 5-5 with everything to play for. At this point Rachael was still having problems with her volley, and slumped to 0-40 down on her serve, but valiantly pulled it back to 30-40 with a couple of good shots before conceding the game. This left Sofie to serve for the match. The score got to deuce before Stan and Sofie closed it out for a hard-fought 6-3 2-6 7-5 victory.

## Player Biographies

### Mark Stapleton

Strong right-hander who is now back playing for West Heath in the Middlesex league after a season on loan to David Lloyd to gain experience of the Intermediate division. Mark's domination of the men's singles resumed in 2001 after a brief interruption by Miles Raybould in 2000. Mark is married to the delectable Ludmilla whom he partners in the mixed doubles. Mark's almost continuous domination of the singles title is threatened by Stan Fletcher, the new number 2 seed.

### Sultan Gangji

Sultan's 2001 hip problem is now reported to be history. A good indication of this comes from the men's singles draw, where the main seeds are now required to play four rounds before taking their place in the final! He must be determined to make his mark on this year's championships after last years string of losing finals. See Sultan for a practical view on the efficacy of Glucosamine Sulphate.

However, our keen reporter has been unable to observe Sultan in competitive action recently, so his form is currently unknown.

### Stan Fletcher

A newcomer to the club, Stan is about to make a significant dent in the tournament expectations of other seeds. Will he beat Mark Stapleton in the singles?. The smart money appears to be backing him.

### Russell Huxtable

Hardly the club fashion idol, Russell gives the impression of being laid back on the tennis court, but this is deceptive as spectators of last year's men's doubles final would have seen. Adam Seitchik and Russell took a tight doubles final without losing their serve against Sultan and Gabriel. This year Russell is partnered with Cedric de la Chaise in the doubles.

Can he do something this year? He insisted that his mixed partner (Moirra Duncan) should forsake gainful employment in order to concentrate on her tennis. However, the opposition in the mixed is pretty strong. Not only are the Stapletons and Gangjis both hot contenders, but Stan Fletcher and Sofie Beaus must also be reckoned with.

### Kevin Ryan

In the past Kevin has been a good doubles player and steady under pressure although his singles record does not match his doubles ranking. We have no form for him this year, as yet, but his frequent trips to his new apartment at the Val de Lobo tennis resort are either a sign of his determination to train properly for this year's tournament or represent a more laid back attitude to life in general and tennis in particular. See what you think as the draw progresses.

### Sofie Beaus

Sofie Beaus (now Sofie Sullivan) is a newcomer to the West Heath Tournament, but this left hander has made such a promising start that she features in all 3 finals. We confidently expect her to win at least two of these, despite the distractions of her and Philip's recent honeymoon and the impending move to Australia.

### Lesley South

Lesley has decided to concentrate her efforts on feeding the masses at the Globe this year and has not entered. Shame she can't defend her ladies singles title.

## Jane Boyle

Jane holds more West Heath ladies singles titles than any other West Heath member, past or present (1974, 1976 - 1981, 2000 and 2001), a record of which she is justifiably proud.

There was a noteworthy party for Jane this year. Will the inevitable slow-down mean that Sofie Bercaus pips Jane to the post this year? Or will it be Jane's year yet again? Jane believes she is playing better than ever this year and is looking forward to the challenge.

## Janet O'Connor

Very little has reached our reporter's ears concerning Janet this year. Her dog was seen gnawing at Paul Rubie, and she is reported to be back with an old flame from yesteryear (no - not a canine this time).

## The LTA Official View

The LTA have an [inter-club rating](#) scheme for players who register. You get an initial rating, then ratings are updated regularly based on your tournament results. The ratings of our club finalists are on the LTA web site (click on the underlined link above) and can be years out of date (mine is). The ratings are changing shortly. Here are some of the old ratings:-

2.3 - Stan Fletcher (and Sultan at his prime)  
 4.1 - Mark Stapleton (up in 2002 from 4.2 in 2001!)  
 4.2 - Jane Boyle, Sultan Gangji, Peter Phillips  
 5.2 - Kevin Ryan, Lesley South (and yours truly)  
 6.1 - Liz Goodfellow (I don't think this is current somehow).  
 Janet O'Connor appears to have no published Middlesex rating.

**Singles:** [Men's](#), [Ladies](#) **Doubles:** [Men's](#), [Ladies](#), [Mixed](#)  
[Order of Play](#), [Match Reports](#), [Biographies](#), [Gossip](#), [Rules](#)



## Rules

1. The tournament officially begins on Thursday 10 July and the Finals will be played on Saturday 26 July. If rain prevents play the finals will be played on Sunday 27 July. The Draw will be up by Wednesday 9 July to allow competitors to arrange matches during the week. First round matches must be played before or on Saturday 12 July.
2. A chart of available court times is drawn up and competitors are asked to book the courts they intend to play on.
3. The player(s) whose name(s) appear at the top of the fixture are responsible for challenging their opponent(s).
4. The Tournament is to be played on all the courts, apart from the Semi-Finals which will be played on grass, unless the weather does not permit. In the event of disagreement between the opponents on the surface to be chosen, this will be decided by the spin of a racquet.
5. New balls will be available for the Semi-Finals and Finals.
6. All rounds are to be played within the scheduled times indicated at the top of each draw sheet to enable smooth flow. **Extensions will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and with permission of the joint referees.**
7. All matches will be best of 3 sets. The tie-break will operate at 6-6 in **ALL** sets. The rules of the tie-break are displayed.
8. All matches must be continuous and appeal for bad light will be considered at 9 p.m.
9. Please give your entry fee to Sultan or Liz.
10. Competitors are expected to volunteer to be lines persons on Finals Day.
11. The Joint Referees are Sultan and Liz, whose decisions will remain final

Sultan Gangji and Liz Goodfellow

## Tournament Picture Gallery

Hold your mouse pointer still over each picture to see the caption !







Singles: [Men's](#), [Ladies](#) Doubles: [Men's](#), [Ladies](#), [Mixed](#)  
[Order of Play](#), [Match Reports](#), [Biographies](#), [Gossip](#), [Rules](#)