

Wales v Scotland - Radley - 3rd May 2025

Two teams of 9 players set the field for “battle” at 09.00. Beforehand there was a strong Scottish presence followed by a slow steady stream of Welsh men and woman, plus labrador Milly.



The format of the day was that each player would have a singles and doubles match other than Jeff Avery who would have 2 doubles. In addition, there was a system of scoring points for games and matches won including points for hitting the winning targets: Dedans 2, Grille 5 and Winning Gallery 10. For more details see the appendix at the end of this report.

First on was Jeremy Irwin Singer against the left-handed and canny Scottish captain, Maggie Henderson-Tew. Both players served well outwitting their opponent on several occasions but when Jeremy found Maggie's forehand she pulled off returns of great length and variable pace often gaining reward. In the 10th game we were in a whisker of 5 all but then Maggie closed out the match. 4:6 to **Scotland**.

It was the Welsh captain, David Phillips', opportunity to bring balance and after taking the first game his opponent Nick Gordon showed superior skill returning all thrown at him. Mid way through in one game David was 40 owe 15 up but was outwitted by serve. Matters slid 1:6 to **Scotland**.

Michael Llewelyn-Jones fresh from a drive up from the capital breezed on court to dominate his opponent, Michael Magnay. MLJ mixture of power, main wall boasts,

and good length put Michael Magnay under such pressure that he succumbed 6:0. Michael struck several winning targets. **Wales** first victory of the day.

The first doubles took place between Jeremey Irwin Singer/ David Phillips and Maggie Henderson-Tew/ Nick Gordon. This was an even affair and possibly both the Scots had thought since they had beaten their opponents in the singles matters would be a stroll in the park. Jeremy and David felt otherwise, rather bruised the two Welsh men, who have played before, gelled and their style complimented to bring another victory for **Wales** 6:4.



Our amateur trainee professional, not a misnomer, took on the energetic and engaging Dan Worboys, giving him 30 owe half 30. Nick used his varied and heavily worked service to put Dan under pressure. Despite this Dan steeled himself for the challenge and took many of the rests some distance. Nick conscious of hitting winning targets made his challenge more intriguing but it was evident that he relished the encounter despite the jeopardy. Two winning galleries, 3 grilles and 2 Dedans was what the team needed. The match was a thrilling encounter with Nick prevailing 6 games to 5. Another victory for **Wales**

At this point we sang the “Welsh National Anthem” and our opposition “Flower of Scotland”. Real tennis courts with their acoustics are truly the places for these to be sung.



Derek Williams wearing his Welsh cap took on Ian Falconer. Both players with beaming smiles went hammer and tongs. The winning targets were constantly under attack but despite this Ian managed one grille and Derek one Dedans. The encounter was

intense and fast. Sadly, Ian came out on top 3:6 to **Scotland**. 3 matches a piece but Wales ahead on the targets. Looks were getting serious.

Peter Lewis then took on Ned Gordon, son of Nick. This was a nip and tuck match with Peter using a variety of serves and calling on his experience against a talented and youthful opponent. Some quality tennis was played on both sides which produced our only 5 all 40 all moment. Sadly, **Scotland** came out on top 6:5.

Michael Llewelyn-Jones / Derek Williams v Michael Magnay / Ian Falconer. Another high intensity match between these hard hitters proved entertaining. Michael and Derek gelled together and came out on top 6:4. Victory for **Wales**. Four matches a piece. There was frequent counting of the number of targets hit.

Next on was our dependable and every improving Jenny Jones playing against Oscar Falconer, son of Ian. Jenny not to be put off by youthful vigour smiled and accurately moved her opponent around placing him under pressure with good length balls. All the pressure proved too much for Oscar who submitted 6:1 **Wales**

Elwyn Hughes, playing his first match for Wales, took on Ewan Smith. Elwyn had a steady head, working his opponent to both sides of the court and eventually broke Ewan's back hand. Experience, concentration and determination saw Elwyn through to win 6:2. **Wales**. Six four up could this be our day?

Nick Jamieson and Peter Lewis then took on Dan Worboys and Ned Gordon. Knowing this a must be a win match the Scots, who were well paired, placed Peter under pressure and Nick ever hungry for a winning target also seemed under pressure. The Scots played very well with Ned showing some promising shots for a young man relatively new to the game. The Scots used the handicap difference well and brought an unexpected crushing defeat 0:6 to **Scotland**. An important win for Scotland.

Two rubbers to go. Could Jenny Jones and Jeff Avery be the ones to get us over the line? The ever-combative Miles Buckingham played with Oscar Falconer, with Miles serving to Jeff, his old school chum from Clifton. Many of us have fallen to Miles' drag serve which on this occasion was too much for Jeff. Both tried hard to gain traction in the game and even despite Jenny's nimbleness we were always under too much pressure. Scotland prevailed 1:6 **Scotland**.

Six rubbers a piece!

Elwyn Hughes and Jeff Avery then took on Miles Bucks and Ewan Smith. Jeff was warming up and striking the ball cleanly and Elwyn steady as in his previous match. Jeff took on his old sparring partner who once again used his drag serve to good effect. The Welsh pair were under pressure but there was a glimmer of hope at 5 all, could we do it? was this



going to be a 40 all? Not to be the case. 5:6 to **Scotland**.

After nearly 7 hours of play it came down to one game! Could the scoring system come to our rescue but sadly not 625 to 644 in favour of the Scots. Our most valuable player was Michael Llewelyn-Jones with 93 points and the Scots MVP was Ned Falconer 95. It was a close affair. **Congratulations to Scotland.**

To celebrate this great occasion, we were treated to an exhibition match, a single set, between Nick Jamieson and Alex Machin. Both players were rapidly into full battle mode. The intensity was frightening yet gripping, the balls being struck so cleanly with such power. Nick contained the pressure that Alex applied and at 3 games all it seemed it could go either way. A drop in concentration and focus by Alex and Nick took the next 3 games to win six games to three. What a way to finish off the day. Thank you, Nick and Alex.



Speeches were made with thanks to our hosts for the encounter and super buffet as well as the 3 markers of the day, Chris Ronaldson, Nino Merola and Alex Machin. It was great to have so many friends and family supporters supporting their country.

David Phillips then presented the Tunnock's Celtic 2 trophy to the Scots captain Maggie Henderson-Tew. A great day had by all.

Match Report David Phillips - Captain and MM

All matches can be seen on this link.

https://youtube.com/live/_n8nboXjFR8?feature=share

The Third

CELTIC CHALLENGE II – WALES V SCOTLAND

HOW IT WILL WORK: TIMING AND POINT SCORING

All matches will be played for **40 mins** (including knock-up) or **one 6-game set**, whichever is the shorter;

The **winner** of each match shall be awarded **10 points**. If a full set is not complete, the winner will be whichever player is ahead on games and points when the buzzer (if any) sounds or Marker shouts;

The **loser** of each match shall be awarded **5 points**;

Each player will be awarded **5 more points** for **each game** won;

In every match, **each winning opening** will be worth **additional points** to the player who wins the point. **The Winning Gallery = 10 points; The Grille = 5 points; and the Dedans = 2 points.**

Each player will accumulate an individual point total, which will count towards their team's overall result.

The Result:

The **Winner** of the Celtic Challenge II will be the team that has amassed **most points** by the close of play;

The **Most Valuable Player** award will be given to the **individual** Welsh and Scottish player who has contributed **most points** to their respective team

Each Scottish and Welsh player will be given **one vote** to cast in a secret ballot for their own side's **Shot of the Day**.

A huge thank you to our sponsor, Tunnock's,