

BOOK REVIEW



“SQUASH The Skills of the Game”

by Ian McKenzie (Crowood Press)

Ian McKenzie is undoubtedly one of the best known coaches in the Middlesex area. Currently the official county coach, Ian is this season working with other coaches and Middlesex Junior Committee members to develop the county junior squad. Most of his time, however, is now spent working out of Stripes SC with his elite group of International and Nationally ranked players, notably of course Lucy Soutter.

A New Zealander, Ian maintains many links with his fellow Kiwi's — it is well known that he operates a clearing house for transiting squash players from his Middlesex home!

☆☆☆☆

Ian's long experience, depth of understanding of the game and his ability to communicate show through clearly in this book. He starts with a concise introduction and goes on to take the reader through the elementary to the advanced stages of the game, ending with tactics, fitness and even a chapter on mental preparation!

The book is interesting either as a straightforward cover to cover read or as a reference book, there being a comprehensive index at the back to aid the latter. There is something in this book for everyone and I

Ian McKenzie with one of his elite group from Stripes SC, Lucy Soutter.



would recommend an initial read through followed by the selective use of those parts that deal with aspects of the game that interest you.

Each subject in the book is very clearly laid-out; for example, the part that deals with the basic shots of the game contains not only a description of each shot but also photographs of it in execution, court plans showing positioning of feet and direction of shot and details of the objective of the shot, the target area, method and where appropriate, variations on the theme.

Having described the basic and advanced shots, Ian discusses the development of advanced techniques such as deception, disguise, spin and surprise.

Importantly, having given the reader considerable material to *think* about, Ian continues with several chapters that introduce the concept of skill tests and provide ideas for practicing, either solo, in pairs or groups.

I personally found the section on tactics of particular interest (this won't surprise those of you familiar with the state of my game!). The ideas expressed are, when all is said and done, quite logical, but having them clearly written down in front of you, reading, then thinking about them really does help! Again, this section is supported by excellent diagrams and photographs (my old Geography teacher would have been proud of Ian).

The use of such visual aids not only supports the text but also makes the book look interesting thereby helping avoid the “text-book fatigue” syndrome that page after page of words brings on.

There is no doubt in my mind that whatever your standard, whatever aspect of the game interests you, then this book will be of value. Congratulations Ian, and as Lucy said, if the ideas in it worked for her, why not for us? (Is the cheque in the post yet Ian?) ●

PRO-KENNEX SUMMER SQUASH TOURNAMENT 1986

The finals of this popular annual event took place on Tuesday 30th September at Stripes in Ealing. Five finals took place on the night with **Gahan Fernando** (Oakleigh Park) upsetting the form book to record an impressive 3-2 win over Scotland's **Alan Thompson** (Cannons) in the Mens Final. Gahan seemed to be cruising to a 3-0 victory at one point but Alan staged a brave fightback at 0-6 in the third to take the game to five.

Mary Jo Reid of Australia, now living in Middlesex and playing for The Club at Hendon in Division 2 of the Middlesex League, won the Ladies event by default as her opponent, last years winner **Sheila White** (Herts), had to withdraw due to an injury sustained in her semi-final. Instead Mary Jo played Pro-Kennex's own man, Leicestershire county player Ian Roberts, winning 3-2. On this form the men she will be playing in the League this season had better beware!



Pro-Kennex winners — Mary Jo Reid and Gahan Fernando.

Herga players featured prominently in two of the three other matches. **Julia Lamb** (nee Collins) beat team-mate **Jeanette Fornwalt** 3-0 in the Ladies Plate, but in the Mens Plate, **John Zlotniki** went down 3-2 to **Ian Stratford** of Gallagher.

In the Mens Veterans **Peter Hoade** (British Airways) beat **Bob Morris** of the SRA by three games to one.

Prizes were presented by **Julian Cox** of PRO-KENNEX to whom, along with host club Stripes, the thanks of all this years' competitors are extended. ●