

ESC History interview

Rosie Fraser

High level topics

1. What brought you to squash rackets, and when did you first play?
 - a. At Invergordon Academy I loved PE, but way back then the PE curriculum consisted of athletics and hockey. I was in my twenties before I started racket sports.
2. When did you join ESC?
 - a. I came home from S Africa in 1976 and joined Edinburgh Sports Club. From what I remember, I think the club may have been at membership capacity. The reason I say this is because before I could get a membership, I had to play the Ladies Club Captain to determine if I was good enough to join. I remember I had to play one of Scotland's finest - Anne Smith
3. When did you first and last play at ESC?
 - a. First time – 1976, most recently – this week!
4. Would you like to provide a timeline of your early life?
 - a. I was born in the Highlands - in Invergordon- and in my first four years at Invergordon Primary School there was a total of four people in my class. It was a shock to my system when I got to Academy and my class size was twenty-eight.
5. Were you a member of other club(s)?
 - a. Collegians, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, 1970-1976
 - b. The Rideau Club in Ottawa (just across the Ottawa river from Hull, Quebec (where I was working in 1981)
 - c. Lancaster Park squash club, Christchurch New Zealand, 1991
6. Did you / do you play other sports
 - a. Hockey in RSA for Natal 1971-1976
7. When did you start coaching, who have you coached?
 - a. Shirley Brown in 1978 (when I was a PE teacher); she was a Waverley member. Represented Junior Scotland.
 - b. Took pupils from Liberton to Waverley for coaching.
 - c. Took refereeing qualifications
8. What was your experience in team management?
 - a. After I came back to Scotland from Canada in 1981, I became involved with Scottish Squash again. In those days Mike Fitchett was in charge of the Scottish Junior Programme and we had Junior Squad Training once a month at Heriot Watt University. I was very privileged to have taken and managed (as coach/manager) the Scottish Girls Squad to the first Junior World Championships in Birmingham in 1983. The World Championships were held every two years and I managed the Scottish senior Team to Australia (1985) and the Juniors to exotic places like New Zealand (1989), also to Sydney Australia (1995) and Rio de Janeiro Brazil (1997). European championships (Juniors, boys and girls) took me to Finland, France and Belgium, and of course there were the annual Home Internationals
9. What's your best sporting achievement?
 - a. Probably my biggest achievement was coaching Shirley Brown - a Liberton High School pupil (that's where I worked most of my days). Shirley represented Scotland at both Junior and Senior Ladies level. Her big rival was Alison Bowie who used to play at ESC
 - b. I have played in World Masters Events - my best one being in Aarhus Denmark in 1989 where I was accompanied by Anne Smith and Anne Bauermeister. I got third place in both O35 and O40
 - c. The 1994 'Coach of the Year' award, presented at Murrayfield by Craig Brown (aided by Ally McCoist). Many sports were represented that day, and it was a splendid ceremony
 - d. I was ESC Ladies champion in 1984

10. What did/does ESC bring to your life?

- a. It was important for me to be able to play squash, and experience the joy and friendship that I have got from it. I do remember in my younger days at the club that my regular opponents were Anne Smith, Ray Lynch, Anne Bauermeister, Sandra Kempston, Irene Cowper and we all played for Lothian. What is particularly nice is that now I am still able to go on court with Sandra and Ray - friends from old - albeit on a different court. I play tennis with Sandra and Ray every week.

11. What was your career?

- a. I graduated in PE from 'Dumf' (Dunfermline College of Physical Education) in 1970, and immediately went to teach at Girls High School in Pietermaritzburg, S Africa, where I stayed for five years
- b. In 1976, I returned, and got a job at Liberton (having applied to Edinburgh Council in advance).
- c. In 1980 I went to Canada with the Standard Life Squashers, liked the look of Canada, so applied for a Commonwealth teacher exchange and worked for a year in Hull, Quebec in 1981.
- d. In 1991, I did a second exchange in New Zealand at Hornby High School in Christchurch (where I felt a few earth tremors during my stay). This exchange, like the earlier Canadian one, was also because I saw and liked the country when touring with the Scottish Junior team a few years before.
- e. I retired from Liberton High School in 2009

12. Are you happy with the progress the club is making, e.g. Padel, Table Tennis installations, and refurbishment in general?

- a. Yes, particularly Padel.

13. Have you any other questions, or suggested topics?

- a. Despite now being old and grey, I still manage to go on the squash court! I was able to play in the Ladies Team until just before lockdown - just can't move quite as quickly. It's my preferred racket sport but I should say that as I get older and 'greyer' I'm very thankful that our ESC Manager has introduced us all to PADEL

Photographs to be included
