

ESC History interview

Ian de Sales la Terrière

(born 1930)

1. What brought you to squash rackets, and when did you first play?

- a. At prep. school there was no squash, and I was more involved in racquets at Eton, playing 3 games of racquets to one of squash to keep in practice at both. My first important squash match at the age of 16 or 17 was against the Rev. Basil Greenup, who took the services in our College Chapel. He said that I was the first boy in the school to beat him. Greenup had been in the top ranks of British squash before the war, with only the great Amir Bey, regularly able to beat him. I played Norman Yardley who captained England cricket but was also a formidable squash player. I took the first game off him, but by then he had got used to our slow court with the inevitable result. Much later, when playing in an Old Boys versus current pupils' match (my eldest son was playing for The School), I found myself playing Guy Beaumont, later Duke of Roxburgh. If there had been talk of 'having to be kind to the old buffer', the boot was firmly on the other foot! I won the Surrey Junior Championship playing John Partridge in the semi-final. I next saw Partridge on court 5 at ESC playing for England V Scotland in the late 50's or early 60's. While at school, I got a racquets lesson from Jim Dear at Queens (Jim Dear was a leading professional in the 1930's, and is shown in the 1937 photo of the opening of the ESC new wing). We also played a game of squash, and Jim said "Mr. La Terrière, squash should be your No 1 game".



2. What did you do immediately after school?

- a. I went to Sandhurst, mostly playing racquets, reaching final of the Army Doubles. I was called to play squash at The Staff College, the senior officers training school – against Colonel Tony Lascelles, and beat him - my father said "that's your Army career gone". I later won the Army Squash Championship, playing Brigadier Burnett in the third round; he said "I won this competition before you were born – I suppose it's your turn now". Nigel Broomfield's father was Secretary of the Catterick Officers' Club, and I gave his two sons some lessons. Nigel won the amateur championship, but disappeared to the Diplomatic Corps, Moscow, Warsaw and ended up as our ambassador in Bonn. We played several County matches together for Yorkshire, usually losing to Middlesex.

3. And what about a little later?

- a. In 1955, I reckoned I was world No 7 of the known playing population - two of whom were Pakistani professionals one Egyptian and three English amateurs - Alan Fairbairn, Roy Wilson and Allan Seymour-Hayden. I went on the GB tour to North and South Rhodesia, all round South Africa, and Kenya on the way home. In S.A. we played Johannesburg, Durban, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town and Jo'burg again. The other team members were Allan Seymour-Hayden, Mike Perkins, Norman Borrett, Dick Hawkey and Brian Phillips. We lost overall – Brian Callaghan and his brother Denis were both formidable players. The brothers between them contested nine South African Championships between 1950 and 1961 – an event which was won in 1962 by our own Mike Oddy. Their No. 3 was also good and improved to beat me in the S.A. Championships.

4. When was your first international match, and how many caps did you get?

- a. My first matches for Scotland were in 1952 against Ireland in Belfast and England at ESC. I won 22 caps, the last of which was in 1965.

- b. I was playing at The Fitzwilliam Club in Dublin against someone who consistently got in the way, and the referee was ungenerous with lets, so I was about to lose to him when there was a crack and he fell to the ground; his Achilles tendon had ruptured (some years later it also happened to me). Later that evening, Bill Shaw and I were locked out of our hotel room. In the next room George Chisholm and Hughie Allan were already asleep, so I quietly climbed over their beds, out of the window and into our room to open the door for Bill.
5. When did you join ESC?
- a. 1961.
6. Do you have recollections of the matches you played for the Club?
- a. Against Whitecraigs v Ian Tulloch, who later said “you beat me the other day, my wife gave me hell, saying “you can’t lose to La Terrière, he’s old”.
- b. Robin Barr (of Irn Bru fame) was known as ‘The Long Bar’ – he had the longest arms and consequently the longest reach in the business. The trick was to aim the ball at his midriff, which is actually surprisingly difficult to do – and you leave yourself out of position. *(the same Robin Barr was seen recently on Michael Portillo’s ‘Great British Railway journeys when he visited Barr’s Irn Bru factory in Cumbernauld)*
- c. I was driving home from a county match in Glasgow with Shaw/ Sinclair / Davies as passengers. At a roundabout I knew either left or straight on would take us to Edinburgh. “Straight on” said Alun Davies, so straight on I went, straight over the middle of the roundabout.
7. When did you first and last play at ESC?
- a. 1952 international for Scotland against England.
- b. Probably In 1978, as I had a major accident near Ballindalloch (north of Grantown-on-Spey) after attending a luncheon for the opening of a new distillery at Keith. I dosed off, failed to turn a corner and ran straight into a petrol tanker. I heard later that I had avoided being breathalysed, as the Police Sergeant had said “we’ll not take a sample – he has nae long tae go”. That was more or less the end of my squash career, although I played a few games at Rannoch School later on, very ineffectively.
8. Would you like to provide a timeline of your early life?
- a. I spent my first three years or more in Fyzabad, now border of India/Pakistan. My father was a Cameron Highlander, in Burma at the time I was born. Hence my middle name being ‘Cameron’.
9. Were you a member of other club(s)?
- a. Jesters and The Naval & Military.
10. Who were among your most regular opponents?
- a. Alun Davies, Bill Shaw, Paul Harding-Edgar, Maurice Pollock and John Buchanan
11. What was your best squash achievement?
- a. Beating Denis Callaghan on S.A. 1955 tour in Durban.
- b. Playing in the 1964 match against England when we prevailed.
12. Did you have sports and sporting achievements?
- a. Tennis, Real Tennis, Skiing – at Glencoe, Glenshee, Cairngorm and The Lecht. I was race secretary for The Scottish Ski Club for five years. I took a Regimental ski team to the Army Championships at St.Moritz, and was chosen for The Inter-Services, also for The Inferno at Mürren. The Inferno was a race revived by Field-Marshal Montgomery for competition between European army teams. But I got a recurrence of ‘flu the night before the event and was sent to bed by Montgomery himself. So having done the four hour climb to the Gipfel, all I could do was lie in my hotel bed and watch the competitors slide past.
- b. From the moment I discovered Real Tennis (Jeu de Paume, Royal Tennis, Court Tennis), that was a game that took over much of my life. I learned at Bordeaux but played mostly at Falkland Palace (of course), but also in Melbourne, Ballarat, Romsey and Hobart, Tasmania; also Boston US. I played at Troon while that court was going, Newcastle, Queens and several other courts around Britain.

13. What did ESC bring to your life?
- Companionship and many amusing matches.
 - I was a Director from 1964 to 1967.
 - I was made an Honorary Member in 1983.
 - Maurice Pollock (joined 1968) remembers playing many matches with Ian in the 1970's, during which they both played in the team which won the Scottish Championship. Ian and Alun Davies rotated at No 1, with Bill Duncan being another team member. Maurice remembers Ian as 'quiet and gentlemanly' until getting behind the wheel, also on one (unprintable) occasion on a misty night when referring to Glasgow's qualities.
14. Who were your best friends at the Club?
- Alun Davies, Bill Shaw, Maurice Pollock, Philip Mackenzie-Ross and several others.
15. What was your career
- Army from 1949-1961, commissioned into the 11th Hussars 1951. Germany near Russian frontier/ Malaya 1953-55 / Carlisle / Germany 2Div. HQ / got married at Holy Trinity Brompton – (from Carlisle) 1957 / Omagh, Northern Ireland - not long after the IRA Omagh raid, ended up (1961) in Muscat (seconded from the squadron in Sharjah), where I played cricket and tennis. Retired as a Captain 1961.
 - Worked for Cockburn & Murray, a wine shop in Castle Street.
 - Asked by J&B to open a shop in South St Andrew St (formerly a Gilbey's off- licence) – recommended by friends of my first father-in-law, who were agents for wine in Bordeaux, Burgundy and Oporto.
 - Moved to George St – must have been in 1964 – as I remember fetching two cases of champagne to ESC following the famous 1964 victory over England and drinking it out of pint mugs.
16. Are you happy with the progress the club is making, e.g. Padel, Table Tennis installations, and refurbishment in general?
- Seems to be going very well – plenty of life going on. When the real tennis court was refused, the club seemed to go into much more action. If the Real Tennis court had gone ahead, there may well have been no Padel Courts.
17. Do you have any photographs, memorabilia or other records from ESC?
- I've supplied a photo of me as a young squash player, circa 1950.

Photographs to be included



The March 1964 defeat of England – the first time they had ever lost an international



2011 – ESC 75th anniversary dinner- Ian with Sylvia Boyd, Bill Shaw and Dorothy Sharp



2017 Nov 24 Directors dinner - Ian is between Brian Suddaby and Ronnie Pearson



2011 – ESC 75th anniversary dinner. Ian 2nd

First Round	Quarter Finals	Semi Finals	Final
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hashim Khan * 9 9 9 Matthew Farhang Mohtadi + 4 2 3 Jack Giles 9 9 9 W J Ashford 5 7 5 Abdul Bari 9 3 9 9 Denis Hughes + 3 9 1 4 Alan Fairbairn * + 9 10 9 Leslie Keeble 4 8 2 Azam Khan 9 9 9 Roy Wilson * + 0 5 0 Ian de Sales la Terriere + 10 9 9 D W D Shaw + 9 7 5 Roshan Khan 9 9 9 Richard Hawkey + 2 5 4 Sir Charles McLeod + 9 9 7 3 10 Peter Daggart + 5 6 9 9 8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hashim Khan 9 9 9 Giles 1 2 4 Abdul Bari 6 9 9 9 9 Fairbairn 9 3 2 10 7 Azam Khan 9 7 9 9 Le Terriere 1 9 2 2 Roshan Khan 9 9 9 McLeod 3 3 6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hashim Khan w/o Abdul Bari scr Azam Khan 9 2 10 9 Roshan Khan 6 9 8 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hashim Khan 6 9 9 7 9 Azam Khan 9 6 6 9 5

1954 British Open – Ian loses 3-1 in quarters to Azam Khan, who loses to seven time

right in the front row

winner Hashim Khan 3-2 in the final. Ian beat Bill Shaw in the first round