



St. Philips Volleyball Club (SPVC / Pips) Newsletter 6: May 2026



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Club Chair's Notes

by Mitesh Patel

The 2025–26 season brought significant achievements, structural improvements, and valuable learning opportunities across all sectors of our club.

League Advocacy & Team Registration

At the Cambridge Volleyball Association (CVA) Annual General Meeting (AGM), our committee successfully advocated for competitive fairness. We partnered with the CVA committee to maintain a unified men's league, ensuring an equitable playing field for all member clubs. Following this resolution, we successfully registered and maintained two men's teams and one women's team throughout the season.

The committee fulfilled its primary objectives for the season through two core initiatives:

- **Enhanced Training Programmes:** Head Coach Hamid Sanami and I established an effective player feedback loop. We designed tailored session plans to challenge and advance individual skill sets. This structured approach significantly boosted player confidence and match performance. Opposing teams noted our transformation, praising our substantial technical progress compared to the previous season. This validation confirms our coaching methodology is on the right track.
- **Optimised Training Schedule:** We restructured our weekly schedule to maximise court time. General training and home matches moved to Mondays, while team-specific sessions took place on Saturdays. This structure offered squad members two full training days per week. While initial engagement was high, inconsistent attendance later in the season impacted match-day execution. To address this, coaching staff designed targeted training sessions. Maximising attendance will remain a priority for the upcoming season to eliminate fundamental errors.

Junior Club Success

- The formal launch of our Under-18s Junior Club is one of our most successful milestones this season. The program averaged 15 participants per session, peaking at 21 players. Due to this strong engagement, our venue partner, Netherhall School, has offered to actively promote the club to its students and extend our reduced rental rates into the future.

Seasonal Highlights & Tournaments

- **Media Upgrades:** We successfully transitioned our "live" match broadcasting from Instagram to YouTube (<https://youtube.com/@spvc-cambs?si=HsHiAuDqpa0Mm3gU>) to improve viewing quality. We aim to introduce full live-streaming capabilities during the 2026–27 season.
- **Norwich Volleyball Association (NVA) Eastern Regional Tournament (NERT):** Our men's team were a stand in at the NVA tournament. While the team finished last, the tournament provided invaluable high-level match experience that will aid our development.
- **CVA League Completion:** Congratulations to all teams on completing the CVA league. Special recognition goes to the Men's 1 team for their strong performances throughout the year.
- **CVC Junior Tournament:** Our junior teams competed in the Cambridge Volleyball Club tournament, all wearing our club kit tops, demonstrating exceptional discipline and sportsmanship. Although finishing last in the 4v4 and 6v6 formats, the players won several sets and earned high praise from opposing coaches. This success is a testament to the hard work of Head Coach Hamid Sanami.

Club Growth & Acknowledgements

Our total membership has reached 100 active individuals, including volunteers (referees, scorers and line referees), supporters, juniors, and senior players. Thank you for powering our club's growth.

The management of this club would not be possible without the tireless dedication of the Executive Committee. Thank you for all your hard work. We look forward to welcoming you all back for the 2026–27 season. Go Pips!



Treasurer's Notes

by Maike Steindel

As we head towards the end of the season, I wanted to share a quick update on the club's finances. I'm happy to report that our accounts are looking very healthy and we will be entering into the next season with a solid buffer, which can be used for new training equipment, socials, etc - let us know your ideas!

With currently £2,579.12 in our bank account, we expect our end of season balance to be around £1,830 after all bills paid and fees received - approx £1,200 more than last season!

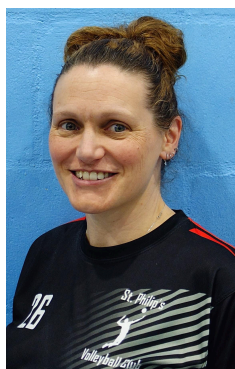
If you'd like to know in more detail what items have contributed to this balance, keep an eye out for the finance section in the AGM and the minutes, which will be circulated afterwards.

Looking into the future, we are yet to start using our card reader as an alternative to bank transfers for our Bronze member session payments, T-shirts, etc. Another item the committee want to address next season is a change of banking provider, since Lloyds has started charging account fees. As part of my role this season, I have done some research and come up with two viable avenues: either to simply change banking provider to e.g. NatWest's or Co-op's Community Bank Account, or to apply for charity status, which is a bit more laborious, but may pay off in the long term. I am leaving the implementation of these plans in the capable hands of our club chair Mitesh and the remaining committee members.

Finally, on a personal note, I want to share that I will be stepping down as Treasurer and leaving the club at the end of this current season. It's been a pleasure managing the club's accounts and doing my bit behind the scenes, but it's time for me to pass the baton.

This means we are looking for someone to take over the role for next season! You absolutely do not need to be a financial expert or an accountant—you just need to be reasonably organised and comfortable keeping track of what comes in and what goes out. If you're interested, or just want to chat about what the role actually involves week-to-week, please catch me at one of our next training sessions or drop me a message.

See you all around!



Fixtures Secretary's Notes

by Carrie Hodgson

For the second year running, St. Philips entered two men's teams and a women's team in the Cambridge Volleyball Association (CVA) County League.

Thanks to all players who signed up for matches promptly, and to those who signed up to make up numbers in the teams other than their own.

The Men's 1 team had their most successful season since the covid pandemic, winning six out of their 12 matches and finishing mid-table (5th out of 9 teams). Great job all!

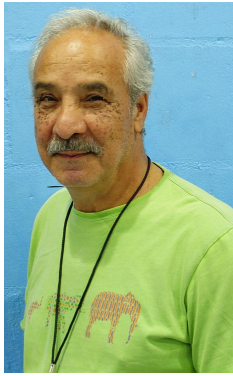
The Men's 2 team was composed mainly of new players who joined our club this season. There were some good games, with two reaching 5 sets. Well done, team 2!

The Women's team had some very close games this season, with two matches going to five sets. Let's keep working on our skills, and I look forward to playing with you all next season!

Besides confirming teams for matches, I also have to ensure that referees are provided for other team's matches and scorers (and line referees) are provided for our home matches. I would like to encourage more members to get involved in these roles next season, as it gives a greater understanding of our sport.

League Table - MENS 2025-26										
Team	Pd	W	L	SF	SA	PF	PA	Pts	FF	SS
CVC1	12	12	0	36	3	809	583	60	0	0
Bury Bobcats	12	9	3	30	17	895	812	51	0	0
Stowmarket	12	8	4	27	16	805	687	47	0	0
CVC2	12	7	5	25	22	833	831	44	0	0
St. Philips (Men 1)	12	6	6	22	22	778	757	40	0	0
Rhinos	12	4	8	20	26	818	817	36	0	0
CVC3	11	5	6	17	21	671	621	33	0	0
St. Philips (Men 2)	11	2	9	8	27	540	610	21	0	0
Bury Bees	12	0	12	5	36	396	827	11	(-6)	0

League Table - WOMENS 2025-26										
Team	Pd	W	L	SF	SA	PF	PA	Pts	FF	SS
CLVs	12	12	0	36	0	758	461	60	0	0
CVC Tigers	12	10	2	30	9	749	562	52	0	0
CVC Junior Mixed	12	6	6	22	20	758	753	40	0	0
Rhinos Rhinettes	12	6	6	21	25	829	804	39	0	0
CVC Panthers	12	4	8	15	27	698	785	31	0	0
Bury Cats	12	4	8	15	28	686	817	31	0	0
St. Philips (Women)	12	0	12	6	36	565	861	18	0	0



Coach's Notes

by Hamid Sanami

As we wrap up another incredible season, I want to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude to everyone who poured their time, energy, and passion into making our club thrive.

Watching our teams compete in the league this year has been an absolute privilege. Standing on the sidelines, I saw 100% effort in every single match. While a few close losses brought visible disappointment, that heartbreak only proved how deeply you care. Your passion on the court/field is exactly what defines the spirit of St Philips.

I will not be highlighting individual players from our men's or women's teams, because as far as I am concerned, every single person gave their absolute best this season. I also want to extend a massive thank you to Mitesh Patel and Carrie Hodgson, who stepped up seamlessly to manage the teams during the matches I unfortunately had to miss.

Inspiring the Next Generation

Our junior section continues to be a massive source of pride. We have an incredibly dedicated group of young athletes who have made brilliant progress. What impresses me most, however, is their culture of inclusivity. They support, encourage, and lift each other up daily. My philosophy from day one has been to introduce this beautiful game to youth, and these players are the future of our club. A special thank you goes to Carrie Hodgson and Owen Varley for their invaluable help with junior training. The youth players thoroughly enjoy your presence and leadership.

The Backbone of Our Club

An organization is only as strong as its leadership, and we are blessed with the hardest-working committee around. For years, I worked hard to keep St Philips running, but as I have gotten older, I have been incredibly fortunate to hand over the reins to this wonderful team. Without their sacrifice of time and energy, this club could not function. Thank you to Mitesh Patel, Carrie Hodgson, and Maike Steindel. I must give a special mention to Mitesh Patel, whose leadership ensures we are all moving in the same direction.

Looking Forward: Expectations for Next Season

As we look toward the future, we must establish a clear foundation for next season to ensure harmony and success:

- Flexibility: All registering members must maintain a flexible mindset regarding team placement and scheduling.
- Coaching Authority: Match selection, including substitutions and playing time, rests solely with the coach on duty. These tactical decisions must be respected by all players.
- Inclusivity First: My coaching philosophy prioritizes participation over winning. While we always play to win, my primary goal is to ensure players are never sidelined based on ability alone.

Thank you all for a memorable season. Let's carry this positive momentum into the next!

Player Highlights

As captain of the Women's team, I've really enjoyed playing alongside my teammates. The second set in our final match against the CVC Tigers was a real highlight for me. We showed great team spirit, had them scrabbling to score points, and it was very satisfying to have them use both of their time outs!

- Carrie Hodgson -

I have thoroughly enjoyed all the great experiences and memories made at the club this year. A special thanks to Hamid; for being an awesome coach, Mitesh; for being a great chair and Carrie for her fab organisation. Games have been a highlight this year!

- André Costa Zubko -

Leaving my comfort zone, I signed up as first referee for matches this season and found I really enjoyed these experiences. I'm very appreciative of the club members who signed up as second referee, or as line referees, and supported me in my decision-making as first referee. There was a lot to keep track of, but the view from the referee stand can't be beaten!

- Carrie Hodgson -

I'm mainly proud of the overall growth in numbers and performance as a whole club, despite seeing some members coming and leaving. I am proud that as a club we had good training sessions, encouraged to see all teams and especially the women's team grow as a team, in performance and had many close set wins which reflects on the good coaches we have in both Mitesh and Hamid.

On a personal note, want to say thank you to everyone in team that has helped me with my personal growth this season, through advice on performance, working on accuracy and keeping faith and confidence on specific skills sets and it's been a fun season exploring as an outside spiker player and sometimes setting, so thank you Coach Hamid, Mitesh and Carrie for all the hard work and support in this season to everyone from performance tutorials, all the trainings and support coaching given during in all home and away games. Super excited to see more growth with all teams for the future upcoming new season.

- Beatrice Kpaku -

Other Highlights

Executive Committee Role Vacancies If you're interested in applying for one of the roles below, please contact committee.spvc@gmail.com. Treasurer - Looking after the club finances (including overseeing transactions and invoicing members) - Attending Executive Committee meetings Assistant Chair - Shadowing Chair and learning their role - Attending Executive Committee meetings	Sub-Committee Role Vacancies If you're interested in applying for one of the roles below, please contact committee.spvc@gmail.com. Social Marketing - Taking opportunities for any media updates, and maintaining Instagram account - Reporting to Executive committee Website - Maintain club website - Reporting to Executive Committee
Season 2024-25 Prizes Overall Player of the Match (Men's 1) - Sheffin Joseph Overall Player of the Match (Men's 2) - Oscar Barr Overall Player of the Match (Women) - Rogie De Leon Most Improved Junior - Owen Varley Most Improved Player - Kamaal de Silva Coach's Choice Award - Sana Rashid Men's 1 Team - Fidelis Mutio, Martin Weber, Mitesh Patel, Pedro Ochsendorf Portugal, Sheffin Joseph, Sunoj Nelson Men's 2 Team - Anthony Akum-Nyemi, Chenfu Shi, Diogo Barqueiro, James Yu, Kamaal de Silva, Oscar Barr, Owen Varley Women's Team - Beatrice Kpaku, Cams Narag, Ceeline Chewables, Maïke Steindel, Pinelopi Papanastasiou, Rogie De Leon, Sana Rashid, Silvia Glont Awards for other Supporters/Volunteers - Michelle Varley, Mr Glont and son	Level 2 6v6 Head Coach Pass Congratulations to Mitesh Patel passing the Level 2 6v6 Head Coach Award! He is now a certified head coach, qualified to lead training sessions and strategy matches. Player Highlights (Past and Present) - Wishing Owen Varley the very best with his further studies at university - Thank you to Owen Varley, Fernando Cross and Carrie Hodgson on their volunteering efforts at Junior Club If you have any highlights to share for future newsletters, please let us know at committee.spvc@gmail.com.
Sponsorships and Donations Join our easyfundraising page: https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/spvc Interested to sponsor or donate to our club? Please contact us on committee.spvc@gmail.com.	Outdoor Season Once the indoor season has completed, we will be hosting outdoor volleyball at Nightingale Avenue Park until mid-September. The outdoor events will be advertised on the Spond app, to give you the latest information regarding any change of times, cancellations due to change of weather or last minute changes. Ensure that you are signed up on the Spond app (Download and register the FREE app: https://group.spond.com/QLGYO or if you're on Spond, add a group with the ID: QLGYO.

Pictures: Season 2025/26



Pictures: Season 2025/26 (continued)

