

## **BBC RADIO 2**

### **NIGHT TIME PAUSE FOR THOUGHT**

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2009**

Seeds and deuce and love.

It's that time of the year again.

Women's singles and mixed doubles.

You know what I'm talking about.

Game, set and match.

Yes, Wimbledon is upon us once again.

Even if you're not a sports fan you can tell when the famous tennis tournament is in full swing because on tennis courts in clubs and parks, and in imaginary centre courts in gardens and streets up and down the country, you notice an increase in the number of people of all ages, outdoors, swinging new or ancient racquets and perfecting their ace service... before the rain comes on.

I'm sure a satellite looking down on Britain these days would spot millions of little fluorescent bouncing balls through the clouds.

I still remember the first time I watched Wimbledon on TV. I was fascinated by the people of my age who seemed to play such a crucial role in the whole event - the ball boys.

I remember one day during the school holidays watching a whole game between Bjorn Borg and Jimmy Connors concentrating only on the non-stop work of the ball boys. This was one of the few jobs someone of my age could do that commanded great respect. Being a ball boy seemed a lot more important than my job of being a paper boy.

Even this week as I watch Wimbledon I notice how the ball boys and ball girls keep the whole game running so smoothly. They play a vital role. But they're so good at it, it's almost as if they're not there. While the watching world wonders at the stunning service of a legend on centre court, the ball boys and ball girls are almost invisible as they quietly play their part.

I know people like that - who modestly and quietly get on with it, without looking for thanks or recognition or a standing ovation on centre court.

Up and down the country this morning there are thousands of carers, who look after loved ones or friends who are ill, frail or have a disability. You may not realise it, because they often don't talk about it, but you probably work or socialise alongside a carer every day. They are unpaid, hidden and undervalued.

And right across the country today there will be thousands of volunteers who will give of their time selflessly to make their neighbourhood a better place. They are the glue that holds our communities together.

So when you notice the ball boys and ball girls quietly doing a brilliant job at Wimbledon this week, why not think on how you could recognise the volunteers and carers around you?

And acknowledge that these unobtrusive heroes are champions every day.