

**HERTFORDSHIRE BADMINTON ASSOCIATION (HBA)  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
2nd JUNE 2014**

Minutes of the meeting held at Birchwood Leisure Centre, Hatfield, commencing at 7.50pm with 27 members attending.

Acting Chairman, Paul Kempster (PK) introduced himself, and welcomed all present.

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from:

Jeff Armstrong; Gill Bartlett; Natalie Barton; Margaret Cooper; Angela Glew; Gareth Jackson; Byron and Lesley Perry; Geoff Thomas and Colin Walker.

**2. Minutes of AGM held on 4th June 2013**

These were approved and there were no matters arising.

**3. Presentation of the Executive Committee Reports**

**Acting Chairman and Badminton England (BE) Representative.**

PK reported that many clubs continued to struggle with declining membership, particularly with women and girls. Rhiannon Smith (RS) BE Regional Partnerships Manager for London and the East would be giving a presentation later at the meeting, outlining new opportunities for clubs, and what can be done to help arrest declining membership. BE planned to increase their fees to members, if given approval, at their AGM later in the month. This was considered necessary because their funding from other sources was being reduced. The BE Business Plan 2013-15 was available on their website. Planning had already been approved for the National Badminton Arena in Milton Keynes, but progress on the disposal of the existing centre was delayed due to wildlife issues. The National Badminton League (NBL) would be launched in October with six new franchise teams and a short dynamic match format. Fixtures will be played monthly and televised live by Sky Sports with broadcasts around the world via digital streaming.

BE had been conducting a review of the Inter County Competition (ICC) and proposed to change the structure for the 2015/16 season. The main points were that there would be just one top division with 12 teams and regionalised competition into leagues of 8 teams with these matches played across 4 weekends. The objectives were to reduce clashes with the NBL and International competition, reduce travel time and commitments for players, and enhance the attractiveness for players involved.

Block bookings of Birchwood Leisure Centre on Sundays will continue for 2014/15 from September 1. Priority was given to Senior and Junior County matches and tournaments, but there was considerable court time available and anyone interested in making a booking should contact the Treasurer, Colin Walker (CW).

PK concluded his report by paying tribute to Malcolm Fraser (MF) who stood down as Chairman during the season after a long, dedicated and informed chairmanship which went back to the 1960s. It was impossible to overstate his positive impact on the Association over the years and contribution to the sport as a whole, and we were extremely grateful to him for all his efforts.

PK, on behalf of the committee, thanked all those who give up their valuable time to run badminton clubs and help make Hertfordshire Badminton so successful, and he declared that, working together, HBA can continue to develop and grow.

Concern at BE's proposal to increase fees was expressed at the meeting and PK undertook to express these concerns at the AGM on 28<sup>th</sup> June

**ACTION: PAUL KEMPSTER**

### **Membership Secretary**

CW had taken over this role and he was not able to attend the meeting. There were no specific issues raised.

### **Chairman of Selectors**

Paul Widdicombe (PW) reported that an auction of players was being held for the NBL, but that only one Herts player, Emily Westwood, was involved. He expressed his concern over the new NBL and the effect it would have on county matches. He said that it was hard to get players to play full weekends away. 2013/14 had been a tough season, as expected, but the end result, where all 3 teams held their positions, was most satisfactory. There had been some outstanding individual performance, and he congratulated, in particular Helena Lewczynska, Gail Emms, Matthew Widdicombe and Cayleigh Bambrick who all won county awards. Helena Lewczynska had won a special award for remaining undefeated with 14 great wins in all three disciplines. A full report on the county teams was available on the HBA website.

PW was stepping down as Chairman of Selectors after over 20 years in this role. He expressed his thanks to all those who had supported him over this period, especially past Chairman Malcolm Fraser, and also his close family.

PK congratulated PW on the achievements this past season which had been a real success and thanked him for all his commitment and dedication over a long period which was much appreciated. He said that it was important for the county that someone came forward to take on this role as soon as possible.

### **Veterans**

Jeff Armstrong had sent a written report stating that, as well as the Over 40s and Over 50s teams, the county had entered an Over 55s team in the Veterans League in the 2013/14 season. He had taken charge of this new team, Kevin Maughan the Over 50s and Ed Lintott (EL) the Over 40s. The Over 55s finished 2<sup>nd</sup> to the usual dominating Essex; the Over 50s also doing well to finish 2<sup>nd</sup> again below Essex, and the Over 40s finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> in a very competitive section with Essex again winning the division. For the oncoming season Steve Willis had taken on the role of Herts Veterans co-ordinator which would be a great help to the team captains. EL reported that the Over 45s had won the Masters Tournament.

PK congratulated all those involved in the Vets on these good results.

Steve Willis said that he wanted to involve as many eligible club members in the Vets activities and he would be contacting clubs to give them more details.

### **HSBA**

Ken Winchester (KW) presented his report on behalf of the Schools Association. He was pleased to see from the Chairman of Selector's written report the photographs of so many players who had come through the Schools Association system.

He emphasised the huge sorrow he had felt at the departure of MF as Chairman. MF had been most helpful to him with his active support when HSBA was going through a very difficult period a few years back.

The past season had not been quite as successful but had still been a credible effort. Young squad players were coming through which should show results in the future. He was sad to see the departure of some of the key volunteers but very grateful to those who replaced them. All squads were now playing in the same venue (Herts Sports Village HSV) and that was making things easier.

He concluded his report by wishing PK good luck in his new role.

PK thanked him for all the work done at HSBA in developing and passing on good players to enhance the County squad.

### **Development Co-ordinator**

Dave Bartlett (DB) presented his report for the past season, which was available on the HBA website. He said that there was a very good structure in place for the development of badminton within the county. There were four Community Badminton Networks (CBNs): East Herts; Herts West; North Herts and Welwyn Hatfield. Their activities, procedures and concerns were brought to the Badminton Herts Development Committee (BHDC) which met three times in the season. Further details of the separate activities of the CBNs could be found in his report. It was sad to report the decline in the number of coaches on the register; currently 61 with 15 'Not Public' listed on Vision as opposed to 98 in 1998. Difficulty was experienced in getting sufficient numbers to run a Level 1 coaching course, although a Level 2 had been held with a resulting one new L2 for Herts.

He then introduced Rhiannon Smith BE Partnership Manager for London and the East. Her presentation "New Opportunities for Clubs" is available on the HBA website. RS outlined the various initiatives set up by BE to encourage new players to take up the sport and hopefully to join clubs. These initiatives included Smash Up; No Strings, and Battle Leagues. She encouraged involvement in CBNs as an opportunity to have a say on how BE funding is spent as well as gaining contact with other clubs, coaches and volunteers.

In response to a question she said that there had been no analysis of the declining club membership, but it was hoped that the initiatives outlined would help to provide new players. In a further response she said there was no tracking of players when they went to university, but that one solution, actively being taken up, was to have badminton development officers in post in the universities to encourage continuing play. It was agreed that it was vital for club viability to keep core players interested. PK thanked RS for her presentation which showed that a big effort was being made to attract new players into badminton.

He also thanked DB for the considerable effort both he and Gill put into development and for his enthusiasm and knowledge.

### **Coaching Co-ordinator**

Brian Jackson (BJ) said that this had been one of his busiest years with more requests for coaching from private individuals and schools. The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme had encouraged extra interest in badminton. Despite there being less coaches registered, those that were proved to be very active and diligent. He had been very grateful for youngsters supplied for the L2 course. He planned to organise a trip for coaches to the Badminton Centre in MK. In response to a question BJ confirmed that he is usually successful in finding a coach once a request has been made.

PK thanked BJ for all his hard work over the season.

### **County League Secretary**

PK reported that all had gone smoothly with the county league this past year, and the final match was played early in May. The County League Fixtures Meeting would most likely be held on 3 September at Birchwood but this had still to be confirmed.

HBA President, Bob Welsh then presented the trophies to the winning clubs:

Mens	1 : Ware 1	Mixed 1	: Ware 1
	2 : Comets 2	2	: Masters
		3	: Masters

Ladies 1 : Ware 1

Ladies 2 : Masters

### **Tournament Secretary**

Ed Lintott (EL) reported on a successful Open Tournament held on 31<sup>st</sup> August and 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013. This was a Silver ranked tournament open to rank 11 downwards and attracted a good number of entries, in particular with 72 in the Mens Singles. All had gone smoothly and fitted into the time and courts available. There had been a new referee and the tournament made a small profit. The Open Tournament next season would be held on 30<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> August weekend with electronic entries this year. EL expressed gratitude to his helpers.

PK thanked him for organising this tournament which was always successful.

### **Area League Representatives**

**Hertford:** Simon Carter (SC) said that the area AGM had been held and had been well attended. Club officials had administered the leagues well which had saved him a lot of work. The Fixtures meeting would be held on Tuesday 2 September. He said that it would be helpful if E Herts CBN could liaise with HAL and work together and this was agreed with representatives of E Herts CBN present at the meeting.

Colin Jackson had resigned as Hertford Area Representative on the HBA committee and Pam Newman (PN) had agreed to take on this role again. PN wished to place on record her appreciation of the work done by Malcolm Fraser for badminton in the county over a long period of time, and, in particular, in assisting her with HAL a few years back when most of the other officials had resigned and the future for HAL looked very uncertain.

### **North Herts and Letchworth**

Bob Green (BG) reported that the season had gone smoothly and the only negative point was that the league was reducing.

PK thanked both SC and BG for their reports.

**SW Herts:** No report

### **4. Presentation of Accounts**

Colin Walker (CW) had sent in a written report, and his Annual Accounts for the year ending 30 April 2014 had been circulated. HBA was in a very healthy financial position with cumulative funds of £20,811. The increase in funds of just over £2,000 is partly due to a grant of £1,500 from the Middlesex Sports Foundation and a donation of £250 from Welwyn Hatfield Sports & Physical Alliance to run Herts Wheelchair badminton tournaments. The net cost to run the 2013 wheelchair tournament amounted to £778 leaving a balance of £972 for future tournaments. During the year the small balances on the Barbara Stevens Fund and the Young Officials Fund have been transferred into the Ray Learney Fund, which also benefitted from a donation of £208 from Lingwood Badminton Club.

The profit for the year amounted to £1,339, up from £725 in the previous year and the main reason for this increase was the lower newsletter expenses as only one was published during the year. The increase in costs associated with running the county teams of £641 compared to a year ago was mainly due to the cost of purchasing shirts for the premier players to comply with BE regulations

In 2013 HBA signed a 3 year agreement with Birchwood Leisure Centre for the exclusive use of its 4 courts every Sunday. HSBA also agreed to participate and jointly 24 Sundays were used. After adjustments the cost per court hour worked out at £5.50, considerably lower than at other local sports centres. If any club or coach is interested in booking courts at Birchwood next season they should contact CW.

A question was asked as to what was going to be done with such a large balance. A reduction in fees could be considered. PK said that this, and any other proposals,

would be considered in committee. Thanks were expressed by those present for the award of £10 to each club represented at the meeting.

Further disquiet was expressed about BE's proposal to increase their fees and there was a request for the Junior rebate instituted by HBA last year to continue. It was agreed at the meeting that this had been much appreciated.

The meeting voted unanimously to adopt the accounts and appreciation was expressed to CW for all his work over the year.

#### **5. Subscriptions for Season 2014-15**

The proposal to keep HBA fees unchanged was passed unanimously by the meeting. PK would raise the proposal to increase BE fees at the BE AGM on 28<sup>th</sup> June.

#### **6. Election of Vice Presidents**

The committee proposed that Malcolm Fraser be made a Vice Chairman and he had agreed to this proposal. This was passed unanimously by the meeting as well as the re-election of all the previous Vice Presidents

#### **7. Election of Chairman**

Hilary Anderson expressed the grateful thanks of the committee to PK for stepping in as Vice Chairman following MF's resignation last September. The committee proposal that PK be elected Chairman was passed unanimously.

#### **8. Election of Executive Committee and BE Representative(s)**

Steve Willis had been proposed and seconded to join the committee as Vets Co-ordinator. The Executive Committee, including Steve Willis, and Pam Newman in place of Colin Jackson, were elected unanimously to stand for a year. The BE Representatives, Paul Kempster as Council Representative and Gill Bartlett as alternate, were also elected unanimously for the year 2015/16.

PK repeated that there was an urgent need for someone to come forward to take on the role of Chairman of Selectors. The job description was outlined and would be made available on the HBA website.

#### **9. Election of Auditor**

Albert Nicholas was willing to stand and was again elected as auditor.

#### **10. Review of BE Agenda**

PK outlined the agenda of the BE AGM to be held at Milton Keynes on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> June. All were welcome to attend. He would attend together with DB who was an Elected Member of the Council. He would circulate more information about proposed changes outlined in the agenda, if they were significant.

#### **11. Any Other Business**

The late cancellation of matches and the subsequent costs were raised. It was agreed that clubs should be reminded about correct procedures for re-arranging matches as agreed by individual leagues and this was generally done at the start of the season. Where possible Leagues should consider having published rules. Unavoidable late cancellations should be made in direct contact with the appropriate club official and not just by e-mail.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.55pm with thanks to all those attending.