

HERTFORDSHIRE BADMINTON ASSOCIATION (HBA)
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
4th JUNE 2013

Minutes of the meeting held at Birchwood Leisure Centre, Hatfield, commencing at 7.55pm with 18 members attending.

Malcolm Fraser (MF), Chairman, welcomed all present.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from:

Jeff Armstrong; Natalie Barton; Margaret Cooper; Angela Glew; Melanie Grenyer (Masters BC); Brian Jackson; Penny Jones (All Saints); Megan Lumb; Eddie Lintott; Pam Newman; Lynne Parker; Byron and Lesley Perry; Joan Walters; Heather Warne and Ian Woodall.

2. Minutes of AGM held on 12th June 2012

These were approved unanimously.

3. Matters arising from last AGM

There were no matters arising.

4. Presentation of the Executive Committee Reports

The Chairman reported on behalf of the **Badminton England (BE) Representative, Registration Secretary and Secretary.**

MF said that membership had continued to grow slowly, although many clubs were still struggling for members. The change to the start of the badminton year to November had continued to help clubs to finalise their membership and pay their fees in time. He continued to press Badminton England (BE) to improve the membership system (Vision) but there was, as yet, no real improvement to club users. He asked clubs to continue to inform him of difficulties with the system so that he can take these up with BE. The BE governance changes had been completed and a new Board of Directors were now in place. It was hoped that more professional marketing would give greater appeal to companies to invest in the game, as it is clear that less funding will be made available from government. Problems continued at international playing level as some players had given up and opted out of national training. We have seconded the nomination of Martin Dew to join the Board of Directors and Nick Ponting has also been nominated. Both played for Hertfordshire and the hope is that their international experience can help resolve any problems that exist with our international players.

Development in the past year had been unsatisfactory as the county had been without a Development Officer for most of that time. However, the new BE system was now in place, funds amounting to £18 million over the next 4 years had been secured from Sport England, and development is now focussed on getting more people to play badminton on a regular basis. Part of the change had meant the promise of access to the No Strings players, who, it was hoped, could be converted into club members. With the BE Whole Sport Plan in place MF reported that we were keen to develop the game in Herts. The four Community Badminton Networks (CBNs) would become more important, some funding would be given against targets, and new players, adults or children, would be found.

Planning permission had been granted for a new national Badminton Centre and this would provide world class headquarters with the ability to host events for badminton as well as other sports. The £20 million price tag did not come from any monies that might otherwise be invested in the game.

MF concluded his report by thanking all those who gave up their valuable time to run badminton clubs. Even in hard times he believed that the future of badminton in the county was positive and if we could embrace the new Community Badminton Development we would continue to grow and prosper as a badminton playing county.

Chairman of Selectors

Paul Widdicombe (PW) presented his report on the 2012/13 season, which was available on the HBA website. Four key players had been unavailable throughout the season, two because of pregnancies and two because of a ban on players in the German Bundesliga playing for another league in Europe. He was pleased to confirm that BE had been successful in having this ban lifted. The loss of these players had made for a difficult season. However all three teams had managed to retain their places in their respective divisions. He thanked the respective team managers: Andy Walden; Chris Holt and Liz Austin for their hard work. It was a disappointment that BE had cut the travel grant for counties and scrapped the 17-21 competition without consultation with the counties. He welcomed Nigel Abdullah who had taken on the role of County Match Secretary and he concluded by thanking all those who had played in the county teams.

MF thanked PW for his considerable achievements in a difficult year.

Veterans

The over 50s team had again come second to Essex in the overall league positions. There were no other reports.

Herts. Schools Badminton Association (HSBA)

HSBA Chairman, Ken Winchester (KW) reported on a difficult year due to the loss of key committee members, However, thanks to the work put in by MF, it had still been a successful and busy year for the juniors. Two new squad managers, Mike Newlove and Dave Brown, had been appointed, and they had contributed greatly to the successes achieved this year. He also expressed his thanks to Pat and Colin Walker for their invaluable assistance. The demise of the Team Challenge event was greatly regretted and he hoped BE would reconsider this. He was pleased to report that there were at least 8 players in the squads who could hold their own at the highest level and this was encouraging for the future of badminton in the county. The HSBA AGM would be held on Wednesday 19 June and all were welcome.

MF thanked KW and his team for all their hard work with the juniors. KW had dealt with difficulties throughout the year despite facing serious health problems, and he was pleased to see that he was making a good recovery. He said that, following agreement, the clash of Wednesday night HSBA squad training with junior training at the local Performance Centre should be resolved for the season 2014/15

Development Co-ordinator

Dave Bartlett (DB) presented his report for the past season, which was available on the HBA website. He highlighted some of the key development work being carried out in the county in particular under the auspices of the four CBNs. Two of these had been chosen for an initial pilot of funding and support. The Herts Youth Games had again been very successful with 10 districts and 250 children participating in the coaching run-up, and about 80 on the day. He thanked all those involved with development in the county.

MF thanked Dave and Gill for their very considerable contribution to the success of badminton in the county.

He then introduced Matthew Warren (MW), BE Regional Manager who was standing in for Paul Bickerton and gave a presentation on the BE Whole Sport Plan.

MF observed that much of the funding available for badminton rested on the number of people responding to telephone enquiries by saying that they played badminton regularly and he urged those present to encourage friends and family to stress the importance of badminton to them. He thanked MW for his informative presentation.

Coaching Co-ordinator

Brian Jackson (BJ) had sent a written report, saying that although there had not been any requests for coaches from schools he had been able to find a coach for Oaklands College for Further Education in St Albans. There had been a number of requests for one-to-one coaching that he had been able to satisfy and he had also helped players find clubs to play badminton. Lee Bent (previously BDO) had organised a level 1 and a level 2 coaching course at North Herts College, Hitchin, both finishing in the past few months. It was disappointing that very few of the candidates were based in the county. He attended the level 2 assessment where, due to a breakdown in communication, there were no young players for the candidates to coach. They had to coach each other which was slowing the process down considerably. He would work more closely with the Coaching Department at Milton Keynes to make sure that this does not happen again. The next level 1 and 2 courses are planned in Herts to start in February 2014 at North Herts College, Hitchin. Herts Sports Partnership had been very supportive and provided courses and training for coaches of all sports. The CoachMark system was now well established and a rolling programme of events and courses continued.

MF expressed his appreciation of the work done by quietly and in the background by Brian. There was much demand for more coaches and some funds available to help with cost of qualifying.

County League Secretary

PK reported that all had gone smoothly with the county league this past year. The final match had been completed on 27 May, which was well beyond the deadline, but for understandable reasons. The season was fairly full-on for some clubs and any re-arrangement, for example because of the weather, gave rise to considerable problems. He thanked club officials for sending in results efficiently and for returning the trophies as requested. The feeling amongst club members was that trophies were still valued and should continue to be presented at the HBA AGM. He would be suggesting that winning clubs may wish to send in a photo of their successful team and this could be placed on the HBA website.

The County Fixtures Meeting would be held on Wednesday 28 August in the Wellfield Room, Birchwood Leisure Centre.

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

Mens	1 : Ware 1	Mixed 1 : Ware 1
	2 : Hawks	2 : Ware 3
		3 : Wizard

Ladies 1 : Ware 1

Ladies 2: BSCA

MF thanked PK for continuing in this role. He also reported that Hatfield Town Council had offered HBA the opportunity to book all the courts at Birchwood on Sundays throughout the season at very advantageous rates. All county and HSBA matches would be played there and there would be some availability for county league matches, particularly where re-arranged matches were difficult to arrange. Further details would be publicised to clubs once they had been finalised, and a co-ordinator would be required to organise this.

Tournament Secretary

Ed Lintott (EL) sent in a written report. The Herts Open Tournament which took place at HSV on 1st/2nd September had been well supported. Over 200 players took part, coming from all over the country. Hertfordshire was well represented with both juniors and seniors looking to get tournament practice early in the season. The mens and ladies singles were played on the Saturday using all twelve courts to start. In the mens singles Dinuka Karunaratne from Middlesex beat Chris Evans from Surrey who was unseeded. In the ladies singles Tsui-Yee Lau from Bucks beat Nicki Chan-Lam from Yorks. Sunday started with the level doubles again on all twelve courts and as the day progressed the mixed doubles were started. 91 games were played during the day with the last final coming off court at 8.30pm. Mens doubles winners were Dean George (Sussex) and Chris Tonks (Warks); Ladies doubles winners were Viki Williams (Hants) and Lydia Powell (Sussex) and the Mixed doubles winners were Joel Gayle and Caroline Westley (Essex).

Overall it was another successful Herts Open Tournament and EL expressed his thanks to all who had helped to run the event.

Area League Representatives

Hertford: Simon Carter (SC) said that the area AGM had been held on 13 May and conducted very speedily! The only issue was the loss of the Results Secretary and the lack of a replacement. It was hoped that clubs would be able to input their fixture dates as well as results and this would leave much less work for whoever takes over. The results of matches were posted on the HABL website. The Fixtures meeting would be held on Monday 2 September. It was hoped that the same number of teams would enter and the charge of £5 per team would remain. New recruits to the committee would be very welcome. Consideration may be given to running a tournament at the end of the season possibly using the facilities at Birchwood.

North Herts and Letchworth

SC also reported on the North Herts and Letchworth Area League saying that the loss of one committee member had increased the volume of work for the others. One club had been lost from the league and they fluctuated between having two and three divisions.

MF thanked SC for his two reports.

SW Herts: No report

5. Presentation of Accounts

Colin Walker (CW) presented his report on the accounts for the year up to 30th April 2013. HBA remained in a healthy financial position with cumulative funds of £18,795. The increase of just over £2,000 from a year ago is mainly due to a donation from BE of £1,520 to develop community badminton networks across the county and 2 donations for the Ray Learney Fund totalling £700. HBA have a number of specific funds which are ring fenced and kept separate from the general reserves. The majority of the funds were held in the bank in a savings or current account. The debtors and creditors were much higher than a year ago but this was due to several items relating to the financial year 2012/3 which only came to attention after the year end and had now been cleared. The profit for the year before extraordinary items amounted to £725, a little higher than the previous year. After adding the donations less awards and expenses relating to these funds the overall surplus for the year amounted to £2,031. The net cost of running the county teams amounted to £2,146, down £685 compared to a year ago. The reduction is due to the county running one less senior team and one less vets team, partly offset by the additional costs of running training sessions throughout the season.

In response to a question from PW CW agreed that the interest of £4 was a derisory amount on a balance of £18K and he would investigate alternative accounts. The meeting voted unanimously to adopt the accounts, and CW was thanked by MF for all his work throughout the year.

6. Subscriptions for Season 2013-14 (BE and Herts. Badminton)

MF explained that BE had discontinued the system whereby Junior Clubs paid a set fee of £53 and now expected clubs to pay £5 for every junior member. As well as the administrative difficulties this involved it would also be very expensive for large junior clubs. This had been taken into consideration when reviewing the county fees and it was proposed by the committee that the senior county fee remained unchanged at £3.70; the junior county fee should be £1, and a rebate of 50p per child be given to former JJC clubs by HBA. Junior clubs would be asked if they wanted copies of the HBA Newsletter for their junior members and, if so, how many. Junior clubs should be responsible for distributing these copies to their junior members.

The proposal was passed unanimously by the meeting.

7. Election of President and Vice Presidents

Bob Welsh had completed his second period of three years as president and he was prepared to stand for a further three years. He is a very active, involved president and the meeting agreed unanimously that he should serve a further period. The committee proposed the election of the current vice presidents and this was passed unanimously by the meeting.

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

The Executive committee, all of whom were prepared to stand for a further year, and the BE Representatives, as listed on the Notes to the Agenda, were elected unanimously. MF thanked everyone who served on the committee, and helped to make Herts one of the most successful badminton counties.

Election of Auditor

Albert Nicholas was again elected as auditor.

9. Review of BE Agenda

MF outlined the agenda of the BE AGM to be held at Milton Keynes on Saturday 29th June. All were welcome to attend. He said that the meeting was usually short and that a question and answer session followed. He proposed to press for improvements to the membership system and was willing to raise any other issues brought to his attention. In response to a suggestion by PW he agreed that it was a good idea for the meeting to be streamed and he will suggest this to BE.

Any Other Business

Gill Bartlett confirmed that the deadline for copy for the next issue of the Newsletter was 15th June. She would be grateful for as many contributions as possible as these were what involved the readers most.

DB informed the meeting the Scobe Juniors had closed after around 40 years and the Chinnerys were to be congratulated on their considerable contribution to junior badminton. It was hoped that other clubs in the area would take over the current members. He also drew attention to support, including funding, that was available from Community Games for sporting events that were open to the general public. MF drew the attention of the meeting to the Badminton Grand Prix event to be held at the Copper Box on 1 October. Tickets were already on sale.

MF thanked all those present for attending, and the meeting closed at 9.35pm