



**MINUTES OF THE 2015 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HERTS SQUASH RACKETS ASSOCIATION
HELD AT BROXBOURNE SQUASH CLUB ON 8th JUNE 2015**

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| Present: | Martin Miller | Chairman |
| | Mark Blake | Secretary |
| | Paul Drakes | Treasurer |
| | Isobel Smith | Ladies Captain |
| | Mike Byrne | League Secretary |

1. **Apologies:** Peter Newman

2. **Chairman**

Martin Miller introduced himself as Chairman of the Herts SRA having been voted in last year. He started by thanking Ondrej Uherka and Rui Soares for a fantastic exhibition match played before the AGM.

Martin asked the meeting whether they had read the minutes of the last AGM which had been circulated. Mhairi Gritz (Nuffield) proposed the minutes and Jan Brynjolfssen (Melbourne) seconded them. Martin thanked the committee members for their help and support over the year, particularly to Mike Byrne for running the mens leagues so efficiently. He also thanked the team captains as it was a thankless task.

Martin gave a brief resume of the county results, the best result having been the Herts Ladies O50 team winning the National Inter County Championship in March. The team were awarded the Wilkinson Sword this year for their achievement and were presented with the Trophy by Phil Jenkins of Letchworth Squash Club before the AGM following a friendly match between Phil and Maureen Morrison from the team.

Racketball has taken off this summer with a new summer league being formed and Martin said that it would be good to see some more of the bigger clubs entering teams next year.

Martin mentioned that the committee are currently in talks with Chris Vine and England Squash to pursue an initiative to help clubs in Hertfordshire in obtaining more members, particularly juniors and women and to help coaches at clubs expand their roles within the club. This is an ongoing project.

Martin told the AGM that Herts Squash were pleased to announce the launch of a newly designed website located at the web address www.hertssquash.co.uk. The revamped site features many improvements:

- * Direct and quickest access to League fixtures and the Nine-Nil site
- * Information about Clubs, Coaches and the County Events
- * Responsive site for viewing on mobile phones and ipads
- * Up to date News, Videos and photos

Isobel said that a lot of work had gone into making the site easy to use and would be gradually built up with news and information over the coming months. Isobel urged everyone to make sure their team mates and club members use the official site. The aim is to keep the site fresh and as up to date as possible, this can only be done with others



providing material, photos to put on the website. There will be a launch competition for players that go on the site and subscribe. Two names will be picked at random and will win a Herts County Shirt. Isobel also mentioned the Hertfordshire Squash Facebook page which is gaining followers and asked that people share and like the page. This is a great way of keeping up to date with events and reaching people.

Phil Jenkins asked whether the old website herts-squash.org.uk could be taken down as it was confusing to have two sites running. Isobel and the committee will look into this.

3. Secretary's Report

Mark Blake told the AGM that the men's county players had sustained a good level of competition, particularly in the O35 and O45. The men's O35 team reached the finals but unfortunately did not have their full team. They were beaten by Sussex and were unable to field a team in the 3rd/4th playoff and therefore finished fourth. The O45 team are playing in Premier Division. They lost to Durham in semi final but beat Lancashire in 3rd/4th play off so came 3rd overall and remain in Premier. For the first time Herts put an O50 team in Division 1 and they did extremely well winning all their matches and gaining promotion to the Premier Division next season.

Mens 1st Team went to the play offs in May, which were held in Nottingham. The team was Chris Ryder, Nick Mulvey, and Keith Timms, Tim Dixon and Neil Waller. Unfortunately Adrian Waller, Angus Gillams and Joe Green were unable to play due to professional commitments and therefore the team had quite a challenge. They lost their first match but won their other two matches and remain in Premier Division.

Phil Jenkins asked how a player would get involved with the county teams if they wanted to play. Mark said that it is down to the captain of each team to be aware of who is available and select the best team. However it is very difficult to get players to take on the responsibility of captaining a team. If the best players are not available there is normally a pool of players that are called upon. It was suggested that we have ranking lists on the website and also contact details for the captain of each county team, so that a player can put themselves forward to play. The committee will discuss the best way to do this and also will put out a notice by email and on Facebook asking anyone interested in playing for the county to contact them.

5. Ladies County Report

Isobel started with a sad announcement that Janet Ingham had died aged just 59. Janet had been a central member of Herts Country Club in Welwyn Garden City for many years in 1980/90's and played for the ladies team in the Herts League; she was also a crucial member of the county squad helping Herts to many victories. Isobel said she had played many matches against and alongside Janet and was always an inspiration on how to give 110% effort on court, she will be greatly missed.

Isobel reported that the ladies 1st team avoided relegation and keep their place in Division 1 for next season. Great effort by the team who were Grace Gear, Ali Hemingway, Louisa Dalwood, Amber Marshall, Isobel Smith, Maureen Morrison and Libby Montgomery. The team is now strengthened by up and coming juniors Grace and Amber and it is a pleasure to have them playing for the senior team.. Also Isobel said that hopefully Brogan Lane will be



back playing for Herts next season which will again strengthen the team and hopefully give us a chance at promotion. Isobel thanked Herts SRA for sponsoring the team with shirts.

The Herts Ladies O40 Team was captained by Lesley Garner. The team was Louisa Dalwood, Isobel Smith, Maureen Morrison, Sheila Blake, Laura Taylor and Libby Montgomery. At the second weekend the team won both their matches, won the division and will be promoted to the Premier Division next season. Well done to all the players. Lastly the Ladies O50 team of Isobel Smith, Maureen Morrison and Sheila Blake made it to the play offs this year. They earned their place at the weekend by winning their Division and beating last year's winners, Kent on the way. The team played Essex on Saturday and beat them fairly comfortably 3-0. Their biggest challenge was to beat a very strong team from Yorkshire. With an amazing effort from the team they beat Yorkshire 2-1 and made it to the final. We had to play Surrey in the final and in a nice twist had ex-Hertfordshire referee and treasurer, Dean Clayton, marking our matches. The team won the final 3-0 and are now National O50 Inter County Champions. Isobel said she was very proud of their achievement as it has been the same three players throughout the competition.

6. Treasurer's Report

Paul presented the set of accounts for the year. He explained some of the items that may have been questioned but the minutes were proposed by Mhairi Gritz (Nuffield) and seconded by Owen Davies (Luton & Dunstable). The county had bought county shirts for all teams apart from Mens 1st team who received shirts the previous season. Paul also said that the county had set a president and had paid a couple of the professional players to play for the first team. This was discussed at some length as to whether the county should pay professionals to play for their county. There were arguments for and against this. Some thought that we should pay them to play to retain the prestige of playing in the Premier division others thought that they should play for their county to be loyal to the county. Other suggestions were that if the professionals cannot play, other players should be given the chance to play for the first team. Also would it be possible to put another Herts team in Division 1. These are all questions and suggestions that the committee will discuss the best approach to players being paid. Paul said that the county also matches any sponsorship money that the captain raises and this year it had contributed £500 to the 1st team. Phil Jenkins asked what a sponsor would get out of putting money towards a team. Mark said that it would just be the name on a t-shirt although the new website and facebook a company could also be advertised there.

Accounts attached.

7. Herts Closed

The Herts Closed Championship was held at Radlett Squash Club on 3rd - 5th October 2014 and was sponsored by Special Wear

Isobel thanks everyone who made the effort to enter the Herts Closed last year, which was held at Radlett Squash Club. There were 56 entries in all, it would have been more but unfortunately there were a few injured players who had to withdraw from the competition. Isobel thanked Special Wear, a new sponsor for the tournament this year. They made an incredible contribution to the tournament that was appreciated by organisers and players alike, particularly goodie bags and the videoing of the main finals.



Radlett proved to be a great venue for the tournament and with four courts backing onto each other, it gave spectators the chance to watch four matches at once! There were some epic matches in all categories of the competition. The most closely fought match was the Men's C Final, with 13 year old Owen Ledger just beating Peter Iszatt 3-2. Owen and his twin brother Jay definitely faces to watch for the future. We witnessed some breathtaking and entertaining squash over the weekend. The Men's A Final being a fantastic culmination to a weekend of squash. Congratulations to all the winners and runners up. For the first time ever Men's and Ladies finals were videoed and we will hopefully be making this a regular occurrence.

Full results are as follows:

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|------------|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|------------------|
| Mens A | Adrian Waller bt Joe Green 3-0 | 11/5 | 11/2 | 11/6 |
| Mens Plate | Tim Dixon bt Pedro Pinto 3-0 | 15/5 | 15/6 | 15/7 |
| Ladies | Ali Hemingway bt Isobel Smith 3-0 | 15/7 | 15/13 | 15/12 |
| Mens B | Dan Ludlam bt Tom Lo 3-0 | 15/9 | 15/9 | 17/15 |
| Mens C | Owen Ledger bt Peter Iszatt 3-2 | 15/8 | 20/22 | 13/15 15/7 15/12 |
| Ladies O40 | Isobel Smith bt Sheila Blake 3-0 | 15/5 | 15/12 | 15/12 |
| Mens O45 | Peter Newman bt Tony Stewart 3-0 | 15/7 | 15/7 | 15/12 |
| Mens O55 | David Wells bt Gary Spindler 3-0 | 15/13 | 15/8 | 15/8 |

8. Ladies League

Isobel said she had taken over running the ladies leagues from Fiona McClure who stood down last years. Isobel said that his was just a caretaker role, and if there was anyone who would like to take over the roll to contact her.

This year unfortunately Gosling had dropped out of the league but some of the players moved to Harpenden and created a new team and therefore there were still five teams in the league. There were some very competitive matches but Nuffield 1 came out as winners with their player Mhairi Gritz being best player for the season.

As always we are looking to get more ladies playing squash in Herts and are trying to encourage ladies to put teams into the league.

9. Mens Leagues

Mike Byrne reported that the leagues had all run smoothly with consistent number of teams. Summer leagues are slightly better this year.

League Presentations

Ladies Winter 2014/2015

Division 1 Nuffield 1 Best Player – Mhairi Gritz

Mens

Summer league 2014

Division 1 Potters Bar
Division 2 Harpenden
Division 3 Haileybury
Division 4 Broxbourne



Winter 2014/15

| | | | |
|------------|------------|--|------------------------|
| Division 1 | Broxbourne | Best Player – Joe Green (Broxbourne) | The Harry Faulkner Cup |
| Division 2 | Harpenden | Best Player – Joe Elfasi (Luton & Dunstable) | |
| Division 3 | Knebworth | Best Player – Tom Lo (Knebworth) | |
| Division 4 | Haileybury | Best Player – Grant Kleiner (Haileybury) | |
| Division 5 | Radlett | Best Player – Steve Hamblin (Radlett) | |

Herts Cup

| | |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| Junior Cup | Haileybury bt Knebworth 3-2 |
| Senior Cup | Broxbourne bt Potters Bar 3-2 |

9. Election of Officers

Martin reported that all the committee were willing to re stand and they were nominated en bloc. Proposed by Owen Davies and seconded by Jan Brynjolfssen.

Martin asked that anyone interested in becoming a committee member should come forward and that the committee would appreciate having some fresh faces on the committee.

10. Any Other Business

Peter Burdett asked whether the committee were considering using the Squash Ranking system that has been adopted by Middlesex. Mike Byrne is aware of this software and is currently in negotiations as to the way forward. England Squash are also pushing for all counties to using this ranking system.

Paul asked the AGM if there was anything the committee could do to get more players to attend the meeting. The exhibition match was very enjoyable but it had not attracted any more people. Other suggestions were having the meeting slightly later, or a buffet. A suggestion was made that not just one representative from each club would suffice, that perhaps a representative from each team of a club should attend and that it should be mandatory. It shouldn't be left for one person to represent a club that has five or six teams. The general consensus from the floor was that this should be made mandatory. Proposed by Mhairi Gritz and seconded by Manny Hopkins. With the new rule brought in last year whereby clubs that are not represented at the AGM will be suspended from the leagues and have to pay a joining fee to re-enter the leagues, the committee will have to discuss just how this new ruling will be enforced.

Manny Hopkins asked about etiquette in summer squash asking whether there were rules on how many courts you should use etc. The general thought was that as long as enough notice it given and the team captains agree then two could be used to speed the evening up.

Wilkinson Sword

This was award to the Ladies O50 Team for winning the National Inter County Championship.

The meeting finished at 9.30 p.m.