

**MINUTES OF THE 2017 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HERTS SQUASH RACKETS ASSOCIATION
HELD AT NUFFIELD ST ALBANS ON MONDAY 19TH JUNE 2017**

Present:	Peter Newman	Chairman
	Paul Drakes	Treasurer
	Isobel Smith	Ladies Captain
	Mike Byrne	League Secretary
	Chris Vine	Development

1. Apologies: None

2. Chairman's Report

Peter Newman asked the meeting whether they had read the minutes of the last AGM which had been circulated and were also on the website. Mark Shattock (Berkhamsted) proposed the minutes and Laura Taylor (Nuffield) seconded them.

Peter introduced himself as the new Chairman. He reported that Herts had had a good year with several successes including the Leagues, Herts Closed, County teams and furthering development of Clubs and Coaches in Hertfordshire. The Herts Closed entries went up to 90 which was a significant improvement and what was particularly pleasing was to see the juniors competing; it gave the tournament a good spirit.

The Men's O50 team had become National Champions. Individual achievements were Louisa Dalwood (Nuffield) who was selected to play for England O40 in the Home Internationals and captained the team. Keith Timms (Broxbourne) was selected for O35 England Team in Home International and Dan Easton (Biggleswade) was runner up in the National Deaf Championships. Congratulations to all of them.

Peter thanked all the committee members for their help and support over the year: to Paul Drakes who did an excellent job keeping the finances in order, Mike Byrne for running the men's leagues so efficiently, and to Isobel Smith or 'Mrs Herts Squash' for running the website and organising the Herts Closed and Ladies Leagues. Peter asked the AGM to submit any reports etc. for the website to Isobel and she would put on the website.

Peter then moved on to discuss the Development programme in Herts. 18 months ago Herts secured a£2,500 grant for development. We set up a strategy involving a list of 15 projects across the county to utilise the money. 11 out of the 15 projects have been successfully completed and included coaching programmes in Herts schools, supporting young and promising coaches and Isobel had run two ladies events. The major initiative is the Herts Clubs and Coaches Academy. At a forum held in November at Herts Sport Village, around 25 Coaches attended enthusiastically and following this The Academy was formally set up. We have now submitted a bid to Sport England as the next stage and are currently awaiting the outcome. This is a huge opportunity to work with clubs and coaches and hopefully build up the presence of squash in Hertfordshire. Peter then handed over to Chris Vine from CSV Consultancy who it is intended will organise the initiative. Chris told the AGM what Herts were trying to achieve. Having carried out research in the

county, there were evident problems. There was a lack of coaches, a lack of development in clubs and not enough ladies or juniors playing. Chris, who is also an England Squash tutor, said that once a player had done their coaching level they are then basically left to sort things out on their own. Herts wants to support them, help them build up a proper business in coaching. Herts have put a bid in for £10,000 and hope to fund Workshops, outreach programmes to schools, coach recruitment. Herts have initially ear-marked five clubs for particular help and these are Tring, Active 4 Less Stevenage, North Herts, Harpenden, and Letchworth. Chris stressed that this help is for the Club and the Coaches and the two must work together to make the club more successful.

He then handed back to Peter who thanked all the players and particularly the captains as it was a thankless task. He reminded the AGM that It is essential for the Committee to have this communication with captains and their teams and we rely on them to circulate information to players.

3. Secretary's Report No Report

4. Men's County

Peter reported on the various county teams.

The 1st team who were relegated from Premier division last year, managed to win the play-offs in Division 1 and were promoted back to the Premier division. Team members were Adrian Waller, Nick Mulvey, Phil Waller, Tim Dixon, Keith Timms and Neil Waller. Apparently the first time three brothers have played in a county team together!

The O35 team unfortunately had to drop out in Stage 2.

The O45 won both stage 1 and 2 to get to the finals weekend. They then beat Cambridgeshire in the semi final but lost an agonisingly close Final to Durham & Cleveland 3-2. A great achievement and just pipped at the post. Team of Eamonn Price, Las Fernando, Peter Newman, Tim Bloomer, Andy Eilfield, Fred Cooke and Gary Raw.

The O50 however managed to go one better and the team made it to the National Finals and Won! Great achievement, the team members were Eamonn Price, Las Fernando, Andy Eilfield, Gary Raw, Martin White, Gehan Fernando and Steve Lloyd

5. Ladies County Report

Isobel reported the team members this year were Grace Gear, Brogan Lane, Cathy Abernethy, Louisa Dalwood, Isobel Smith, Maureen Morrison and Sheila Blake. During the season they had been unable to field all the juniors which would have most likely got them promotion. But the team managed to avoid relegation and stay in Division 1.

The O40 team members were Louisa Dalwood, Libby Montgomery Maureen Morrison, Sheila Blake, Laura Taylor and Isobel Smith; They qualified as best runners over the four regions and to the National Finals with Kent, Surrey and Yorkshire. Unfortunately, it was not to be and lost to the eventual winners Kent 5-0.

They also narrowly lost against Yorkshire in 3rd/4th playoff so came 4th overall. Congratulations for getting to the finals.

The O50 team members were Isobel Smith, Maureen Morrison and Sheila Blake. The team, who won the National Title in 2015 managed to get to the finals again this year. However, due to the changes in the way the inter county matches are organised, Herts managed to play Kent in Stage 1, Kent in Stage 2 and Kent in the final. Kent being the strongest team. Unfortunately, the team were beaten 3-0 but managed to beat South Wales in 3rd/4th play-off coming 3rd overall. Well done to them.

The British Open was held a few weeks ago. In O40 Louisa Dalwood had competed in O40 event but had lost her first round match. Maureen Morrison, Sheila Blake and Isobel Smith had all won their first round matches in O50 but all lost in their quarter final matches. Great to see Hertfordshire being represented in these events though.

Isobel then told the AGM that she had organised the ladies squash event on 20th May at Nuffield St Albans following last year's successful event. This year there were slightly fewer ladies with 30 ladies attending throughout the day. Winner of the event was Lea Moineau (sister of Arthur Moineau) who beat Cathy Abernethy 2-0. There was a fun competition and she also presented the winter league shields to the Nuffield Activeless Ladies.

6. Treasurer's Report

Paul presented the set of accounts for the year. These had been sent out to contacts via email for people to read through and had also been posted on the website. Paul said that a few years ago there had been an embarrassing amount of money in the bank account and that the committee had made a conscious effort to put the money back into the county. This has been done by starting up new initiatives, more prize money at the Herts Closed etc. The past year the county had spent £4,500 more than it had taken in and it has been a more successful year. A genuine effort to push squash in Herts has paid off even though it has cost more money.

Paul pointed out two items on the accounts. The first that an amount had appeared twice in the bank account. Paul explained that a payment had been made for county expenses and due to a bank error this had been twice, so the recipient then had to pay one of the amounts back into the account.

The other item that Paul highlighted for the large amount spent on league software Ninenil.

Last year the committee thought the cost was getting unreasonable and have been trying to source a different product that would suit the way we run the leagues, but unfortunately haven't found anything as yet. The committee will endeavour to get the amount reduced though. A comment from the floor suggested SportyHQ and Paul confirmed that Herts had looked at this product, which is free, but that the support is virtually non-existent and Mike had been unable to set it up with our current league system.

Another initiative has been to withhold county expenses until we have received a report for the website, which seems to be working.

Gavin Bone asked when the spending would stop, worried that we would run out. Paul said he would be able to keep up the current amount spending for another year and then he would take stock and reduce spending accordingly.

The accounts were proposed by Mark Shattock (Berkhamsted) and seconded by Gavin Bone (Allenburys)

Chris Vine also added that Richard Sutcliffe who was closely linked to squash in Herts worked for Herts Sport and if clubs needed some funding he would be the person to contact. They will complete the bid for you also.
Accounts attached.

7. Herts Closed 2016 & 2017

First Isobel said thank you to Kyri Costi and Radlett Squash Club for hosting the tournament again and supporting the event so well. Isobel thanked everyone who had entered the tournament held on 30th September to 2nd October. The Herts Closed was held at Radlett again last year. Happily, entries were up on last year to 90 players. The entry was boosted by some talented juniors who were able to enter due to the tournament not clashing with a silver medal event. It was a breath of fresh air to see the emerging talent from Hertfordshire.

The Plate Final was between Haasnaf Farooqi, certainly a junior to watch out for in the future, and Tom Lo, both who lost in the first round of the Men's A competition. A wonderful display of squash from both players, with Haasnaf winning 3-0 11/4 11/3 11/8.

In the Ladies Final last year's winner Cathy Abernethy was taking on talented junior Nyah Williams in the final. In a very entertaining game with some great squash, Nyah 2-1 up and looking like she could take the title. However, Cathy had other ideas on her mind and made a great comeback winning the fourth game 15/8 and finally overpowering Nyah in the fifth. Cathy won 3-2 15/10 10/15 15/17 15/8 15/3 retaining her title.

The Men's A this year was contested by Angus Gillams (world No. 67) and Joe Green (World No.112). With a large crowd watching the game they put on an incredible display of controlled, accurate, breathtaking squash. . Angus proving just too accurate for Joe winning 11/8 13/11 11/7.

Men's A Angus Gillams bt Joe Green 3-0
Ladies Cathy Abernethy bt Nyah Williams 3-2
Mens B Paul Cousins bt Alex O'Sullivan 3-0
Mens C Tom Elliott bt Thomas Horton 3-0
Mens O35 Ali Coker bt Jim Hilton 3-0
Ladies O40 Libby Montgomery winner in round robin
Mens O45 Peter Newman bt Mark Blake 3-0
Mens O55 Julian Craxton bt Paul Drakes 3-0
Plate Haasnaf Farooqi bt Tom Lo 3-0

Isobel said she was looking forward to this year's event. This year we will be holding the tournament on the weekend of 29th September to 1st October. Isobel had put posters out for people to hopefully take and put up at their clubs. Radlett have very kindly said that they would host again which is great.

8. Ladies League

In the Ladies Winter League we had five teams, Harpenden, St Albans, Activeless Ladies playing out of St Albans, Allenburys and Tring. It had been a very disjointed season this season. The winners were Nuffield Activeless team, The player of the season was Louisa Dalwood.

Isobel said that she was proposed a four-women team format for the coming season to see it would stop the number of walkover and teams not being able to field a full team. Maybe even get another team entering.

9. Mens Leagues

Mike Byrne reported that the leagues had all run smoothly with consistent number of teams. Summer leagues, there had been some late withdrawals and some late entries which had made organising the league difficult this year.

Dan Easton asked it was possible to keep captains in the loop when arranging the Summer leagues so that they know which division to put their team in.

League Presentations Ladies Winter 2016/2017

Division 1 Nuffield Activeless Best Player – Louisa Dalwood

Mens Summer League 2016

Division 1 – Nuffield 1
 Division 2 - Letchworth 1
 Division 3 – Nuffield 3
 Division 4 – Radlett
 Division 5 – Letchworth 4

Mens Winter League 2016/17

Division 1 – Nuffield 1 -	Best Player	Keith Timms, Broxbourne
Division 2 - Nuffield 2 -	Best Player	Nathan Derrick Letchworth
Division 3 – Knebworth 1 -	Best Player	Dennis Arthur, Knebworth
Division 4 – Nuffield 4 -	Best Player	Oliver Green, Nuffield
Division 5 – Nuffield 5 -	Best Player	Ian Taylor , Nuffield

Herts Cup

Junior Cup Radlett bt Tring 4-1
 Senior Cup Nuffield 1 bt Broxbourne 1 5-0

9. Development

Development covered in Chairman's Report

Peter told the AGM that due to the application to Sport England for the grant the committee had had to make certain additions to the Constitution to allow the bid. These were just updates to bring the Constitution up to the correct standard and make it legally correct. There were just two changes, the addition of 'also trading

under the name Herts Squash' to the organisation's title and also a non-profit Dissolution Clause was added.

Herts had also produced a Child Protection Policy which was now on the website. Adam Fuller was currently the Safeguarding Officer for Herts.

Paul added that the committee were going to overhaul the Constitution over the coming year and any changes would be put to the AGM next year.

10. Election of Officers

Peter reported that all the committee were all willing to re-stand. Therefore, Peter asked the AGM if they agreed that the committee be nominated en bloc. The proposal was voted on and approved unanimously by the AGM.

Peter asked if anyone would like to join the committee as new members always welcome.

11. Any Other Business

Wilkinson Sword

This was awarded to the Mens O'50 County Team for becoming National Champions

The meeting finished at 8.35 p.m.