

**MINUTES OF THE 2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HERTS SQUASH RACKETS ASSOCIATION
HELD AT VIA ZOOM MEETING ON MONDAY 22nd JUNE 2020**

Present:	Kim Mansfield	Chairman
	Paul Drakes	Treasurer
	Isobel Smith	Secretary/ Ladies Captain
	Mike Byrne	League Secretary
	Adam Fuller	Junior Representative
	Paul Main	Junior Representative

Kim welcomed everyone to the first (and hopefully last) Herts AGM via zoom. Kim introduced himself as the new Chairman for Herts Squash having joined the Committee after the resignation of Peter Newman in December 2019. He thanked Peter for all the good work he had done as chairman particularly in gaining grants for Herts and also development. He explained the way in which the meeting should vote for a proposal using zoom and informed the AGM that all voting items would be conducted first as the meeting was only scheduled for 40 minutes.

Before commencing the meeting Kim briefly outlined the current situation with getting back to playing squash. He confirmed that the committee were relying on England Squash taking guidance from the government and that at the moment grassroots community sport could return at the beginning of July at the earliest. Kim said that his personal belief was that squash would not be up and running before 1st October. The winter league will hopefully be able to go ahead but clubs will still have to confirm how many teams are available and also players will need to get fit to play squash again.

1. Apologies: None

2. Agree Minutes of 2019 AGM

Kim asked the meeting if they accepted the Minutes as true record of the 2019 AGM and asked them to vote with a 'thumbs up' button on their computer. The minutes were accepted unanimously.

3. Treasurer's report and Approval of Accounts

Showed on screen, Paul Drakes went through the accounts for the year and explained about the grant that Peter Newman had originally secured and how it had been spent on development and that a further grant had been obtained and had been used to promote squash via 101 sessions through various clubs. Also, Herts had applied for the enhanced rebate, which involved all players in the league joining England Squash. Although this had been time consuming in the end this had provided further income for the county. The Herts Closed had been generously sponsored by John Apthorpe again, which had enabled the county provide t-shirts and reduced entry fees for the tournament.

The meeting was asked to vote if they approved the accounts and they were accepted unanimously.

4. Election of Officers

Kim proposed that the current committee were willing to stand again and asked if the meeting would vote to elect them en bloc for the coming year. The committee were unanimously voted in again.

5. Chairman's Report

Kim reported that the year had started pretty well, with a grant from England squash of £4,300 to promote squash through the Junior 101, Squash Girls Can and Squash 101 programs.

Herts strategy, lead by Adam Fuller was to engage the club coaches by offering them the opportunity to run these programs and earn some money at the same time. The committee came up with a formula to pay coaches a fixed rate based on the hours they put in to the program.

This worked pretty well with 183 new Hertfordshire players signing up to the England squash APP – and the coaches earned extra money at the same time

Unfortunately as the committee were about to prepare the next grant application, the virus hit, but they will be ready for the next round of funding

Kim explained that a few years ago, Hugh Dunford and Adam Fuller took over the portfolio of promoting junior squash and they formed a sub-committee with its own funds. This has worked pretty well but Hugh has now moved to Thailand and Adam has now asked to disband the sub-committee and move the portfolio back under the main committee.

This has been done and the committee have been lucky to have Paul Main join the them with the portfolio of promoting junior squash. Paul is a very active member of Berkhamstead club and he has two daughters who are keen squash players. Paul would be doing a presentation on his plans for junior squash later on.

The committee will be making junior squash activities a focus area for the forthcoming year

With regard to Inter County fixtures, as you would expect - following Government advice England Squash cancelled the Senior Inter Counties Finals 2020 and the Masters Inter Counties 2019-20. This means that the 2019-20 season has been declared null and void.

England Squash is still hopeful that they can reschedule a couple of the major events, with the Masters British Open and the Home Internationals, maybe happening later in the year. Several Herts players were successful in being selected for the England teams, these being

Keith Timms for O35, Eamonn Price O55, Louisa Dalwood O45 and Isobel Smith O55. Hopefully they will get the chance to play later in the year.

Kim finished by saying that some players may be wondering where their trophies were for winning the summer and winter league.

The committee assumed that nobody would actually be looking for trophies, so instead made a donation of £800 worth of surgical masks to three deserving causes in the Hertfordshire county. The committee sent packs of surgical masks to :

The Sue Ryder home in Hitchin,

The St Francis Hospice in Berkhamstead and

The Coln Practice in Richmansworth

These were distributed by Antony Di Blasio of Special Wear who sold them to the committee below cost price and also distributed them for Herts, so thanks go to Antony for helping Herts Squash out there.

We have also received letters from the recipients thanking us for the donations.

Also Thanks to Paul Main, the county had received some good press covering this donation

5. Herts Closed 2019 & 2020

Isobel reported that The Herts Closed 2019 was held back at Radlett Squash Club. It is a great venue and Isobel thanked everyone at Radlett for their help and support during the tournament. The courts had been newly refurbished which all made for a great playing experience for the competitors.

There was a good increase in entries last year spread out over the different competitions and Isobel was pleased to say that Racketball had been added to the list of categories. Although only seven entrants, this proved a great addition to the Herts Closed and it is hoped there will be more entrants this year

On a sad note, one of the regular players at the tournament, Mike Moore, a member of Radlett, always first to enter the competition had died very suddenly in September just before the tournament. Our sympathies were sent to his family.

There were still a few withdrawals and injuries throughout the weekend but this didn't dampen the mood and there were some very competitive matches. Thanks to everyone who entered the event and made it such a great weekend of squash.

The results were as follows:

	Winner	R/up	
Mens A	Adrian Waller	Rui Soares	3-0
Mens B	Vig Gunasegaran	Ryan Fitzsimon	3-0
Mens C	Nick Cooper	Daniel Wolfson	3-1
Mens O35	Ali Coker	Andy Duckworth	3-0
Mens O45	Eamonn Price	Marvin Rust	3-1
Mens O55	Eamonn Price	Phil Jenkins	3-1
Mens O65	Peter Quarman	Keith Ragg	3-0
Ladies O40	Isobel Smith	Libby Montgomery	3-2
Ladies	Nyah Williams	Jo Preston	3-0
Racketball	Amber Marshall	Mark Godfrey Evans	3-1
Mens Plate	Mark Godfrey Evans	Shadow Lilico	3-0
Mens Age Plate	Kim Mansfield	Paul Drakes	3-1

Isobel said that the Committee were still hopeful that the tournament could be held this year but that they were waiting until August to make a decision and to see what the government guidelines are at that point.

6. Ladies League

Isobel was pleased to report that a new ladies team from Letchworth had joined the league making six ladies teams. As last year, the teams were allowed to field 3, 4 or 5 players without being penalised and conceding walkovers. This worked well again and helped teams that were struggling for players. The teams played each other three times in the season. Colleen Shelley said that if only three ladies for a team then perhaps some other clubs could field a team. Jan from Melbourn said that he would ask at his club.

It was a very close finish this time between Tring and Activeless, with both teams finishing on 179 points. However, on countback Activeless had won two more matches overall and had also beaten Tring and therefore Activeless were the winners.

Player of the season was Jo Preston from Tring who won 12 out of 14 matches played and wins the Jan Ingham trophy.

Mens Leagues

Mike Byrne reported that the leagues had all run smoothly with consistent number of teams. He reiterated that there would be no trophies as the money had been donated to provide PPE in the county.

Mike said that unfortunately that the finals of the Herts Cup had obviously been cancelled but he was still hoping that they might be played later in the year. The finals were in the senior cup Tring v Bishops Stortford and in the junior cup Nuffield v Haileybury.

Mens Summer League 2019

	Winner	RU
Division 1 –	Radlett 1	Tring 1
Division 2 -	Stevenage 1	Letchworth 2
Division 3 –	Gosling 1	Ickleford 1
Division 4 –	Nuffield 3	Gosling 2

Mens Winter League 2019/20

Division 1	Bishops Stortford 1	Best Player Nick Mulvey (Stortford)
Division 2	Harpenden 2	Best Player Mark Godfrey-Evans (Harpenden)
Division 3	Radlett 2	Best Player Ryan Fitzsimon (Nuffield)
Division 4	Letchworth 2	Best Player Jason Gollaglee
Division 5	Gosling 3	Best Player Dan Gaskel

8. Juniors

Paul Main introduced himself and said that he would be devoting his time to rebuilding the programme and structure for juniors in Herts. At the moment there are approximately 240 juniors playing in Herts, 22 at grass roots level, there is currently no data for juniors playing in clubs and there are on 28 at county level. Paul is looking to have a junior ambassador from each club in the county that he can contact and exchange information with regard to junior progression, events, etc.

Paul reported that according to England Squash data there are 100+ coaches registered in Herts. He sent out a request to all of these asking who was actively working with juniors and would be happy to help. There were only 7 coaches actively engaged at present. There are 19 clubs in Herts but on 7 have active junior programmes.

Paul gave a power point presentation on he hoped the junior structure and programme would work. This all depends on getting the foundations set and this means interaction with every club in Herts and building data.

The conclusions were that

1. Lack of comprehensive data
2. Lack of engagements/communication at all levels
3. Lack of strategy
4. Poor conversion of players into the pathway at all levels

Paul's recommendations were:

1. Each club nominates a "Junior Champion" at the primary point of contact for Juniors at their club
2. Build comprehensive player database
3. Build comprehensive activity database
4. Build comprehensive coach database
5. Build comprehensive parent volunteer database
6. Consult with parents and coaches to develop performance targets
7. Develop the draft strategy to meet targets.

9. Any Other Business

Wilkinson Sword - Not awarded this year.

The meeting finished at 8.40 p.m.