

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE BADMINTON SENIOR ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held at Chilwell School on Monday 1st July 2024

Present

Officers :- President John Briggs, Chair Paul Adcock, Sion Severn, Mark Attewell, Andy Shaw, Caroline Bartliff, Geoff Davison, Yves Mackenzie, Steve Farey, Andrew Longton, Alison Bexon, Andy Tyas, Jenny Abbot, Janet Pickering

Representatives from the following Clubs :- Arboretum, Beeston Fields, Beeston Valley, Bingham, Bilborough, Carlton, Chilwell, Crusader, David Lloyd Ashley, East Leake, Forest, Mapperley Park, North Notts Social, Radcliffe Knights, Rushcliffe Arena, Safari, St Giles, Woodborough

1 Opening Address

John Briggs welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited those present to stand for a minute's silence following the recent loss of Alan Hunt. Alan has been involved in Notts badminton for many years in many roles and will be sadly missed.

2 Apologies for Absence

Committee members Rod Tyler and Trevor Witts.

3 To Approve the Minutes of the last Meeting on 3rd July 2023

The minutes were approved.

4 Matters Arising from those Minutes

Paul and John thanked Mark Attewell and Andy Tyas for their hard work in arranging the Centenary event in December, whilst Paul thanked John and Maureen for their part in arranging the event which all agreed was highly successful.

Paul noted other items from last years AGM which had taken place – the move over to online banking; and the introduction of the Tournament Software. Regarding the building of the new Chilwell school the first formal meeting of the staff and the Government was due to take place in the Autumn. The NBA will become involved at a later stage to ensure our requirements regarding the floor, lighting, colours etc are incorporated in the new build and to confirm the arrangements for our lease and use of the Sports Hall are in place.

Moving forward Paul commented on what was to come this year - the changes to badminton rules coming in from BE, to be discussed tonight, and the rewriting of the Association's constitution to bring this in line with the modern game in Nottinghamshire.

5 Acceptance / queries on this year's reports published on the website

No comments were forthcoming.

6 Any reports not published on the website

Sion informed the meeting that the Financial Report was still to be added to the website.

7 Election of Officers

Paul informed the meeting of some changes to the Senior Committee following resignations during the Season and he introduced the newcomers, Vice Chair Yves Mackenzie, Hall Secretary Caroline Bartliff, League Secretary Andy Longton, and Treasurer Trevor Witts.

The post of Tournament Secretary was still to be filled. This post concerns the arranging of the Nottinghamshire Open and Restricted Tournaments and the Knock Out Cup. Dave Martin offered to assist the new post holder. Potentially if it is not filled Notts will not be able to host the Open which is sad as it has been played since 1926 with only a few years missing, during the Second World War, and in 2020, during Covid.

Paul explained how the committee has tried to make the roles on the committee more streamlined with the introduction of new systems and technology. He asked Clubs to consider whether they might have

members who could fulfil the roles and invited anyone interested to contact Committee members for further information.

John invited nominations for any of the current posts. None were forthcoming and he invited members to therefore approve the current committee en bloc. There were no votes against.

8 Committee members to attend the Executive Committee AGM

Mark Attewell will continue to do so.

9 Main Discussion Item – changes to Classification regarding male, female and transgender play

Paul introduced the changes to play which have been introduced by Badminton England and as an affiliated County Association Nottinghamshire will need to adopt the new arrangements. He has sought advice from our Insurance Company who confirm that our policy is provided on the basis that Notts BA complies with the rules of our Governing body. To refuse to adopt the changes would require an entirely different insurance policy the cost of which would be prohibitive.

Paul and Caroline Bartliff have made enquiries with other sports groups and other County Associations, and this suggests the BE policy will have major effects on the Ladies league in particular. Caroline explained how the policy was designed to allow transgender and non-binary players the opportunity to participate in a league or competition that felt appropriate to them. However, the new Open category has led to Ladies wishing to play on a level platform with men in the Open category which in some County League play has resulted in Ladies leagues being depleted. There were some questions and comments from clubs to clarify how this might affect Nottinghamshire league play and some clubs felt there needed to be some attempt to protect our Ladies league.

Other Sports have struggled to implement similar changes and Sport England have warned that cooperation will be required in order to secure their funding. The Political parties have also commented on their intention to look again at these requirements so further changes could be made following the General Election. Paul has discussed with BE adapting the eligibility criteria to provide some protection for the Ladies league and this was approved and accepted by Badminton England as a

12 month trial which will be reviewed after that period. It is likely that further discussions will be required as the year progresses. John therefore invited Clubs to vote between the two options – Follow the BE policy or Adopt the Notts BA change to the eligibility criteria. The meeting voted overwhelmingly to adopt the Notts. Route, only 3 members voting for the BE criteria.

10 Proposals from Clubs

Beeston Fields proposes the Ladies League teams should consist of 2 pairs instead of 3 as currently in Rule 6. Kim on behalf of the Club explained this would help clubs who are short of women to field teams and ensure more of a club's ladies to get a game. Some clubs felt this would work against them, stronger players playing in teams lower down the leagues. It was suggested that clubs should only field the number of teams they can be sure of fulfilling and could rotate players to enable all ladies to play in matches. Beeston Fields pointed out that clubs would want to be competitive and play their strongest players. One club had managed to find new ladies following a committed recruitment campaign, but some clubs had been unsuccessful despite such efforts and remained short of numbers. Andy Tyas pointed out that matches with 2 pairs could be drawn. He confirmed that any extra team would need to start at the bottom despite the strength of the players. He was in favour instead of reducing the number of players in a team being starred which would also assist clubs to field a team. Sion was concerned about whether the Tournament Software could be adapted to a 2 pair format. This proposal was not approved, just Beeston Fields voting for it.

The Second proposal from Beeston Fields was to star only the top 3 players which also assists the clubs in fielding a team. There was some concern about better players being used in lower levels and it doesn't necessary help if players are in very short supply whether temporarily or permanently. However, this change to Rule 8 is more easily incorporated into the results software. This proposal was agreed by a large majority only 3 voting against.

Chilwell BC also raised a proposal to change Rule 8 to bring in a penalty for not informing the League secretary that they were unable to play their starred players in the required 2 of the first 3 matches. This request has

come about following a number of clubs breaching the rule with no penalty forthcoming. There was a long discussion about the spirit of this rule and the integrity of clubs accepting the guidance which promotes fair play. Some members are aware of blatant breaches of the rule with the strongest players not being starred so they can be used in matches lower down. Sion is aware of a few rules not being kept to and the Tournament Software system provides an account of individual results showing clearly the strengths of players which can be seen alongside the players starred. Paul felt we had to be careful how such data is used, and penalties are against the spirit of fair play at League level. Chilwell's point is that a rule is pointless unless it is adhered to. Other members were concerned about 'punishments' being used. Andy wonders whether the League Committee should allocate starrings as evidenced in the statistics, but some clubs feel they should be allowed some flexibility and the opportunity to honestly star their best players and use the rule, as it is currently, to inform the League Secretary if there are problems. One club suggested the starred players could play in 2 matches, not necessarily from the first 3. There was a comment that the penalty should relate to honesty when choosing the best players, not the communication aspect of notifying the League Sec. Some thought Clubs might get it wrong from lack of understanding or experience.

John suggested it was time to vote and the proposal was overwhelmingly against, just 6 in favour.

11 Any Other Business

- Mike Nettleton requested clarification of the rule about confirming matches within 7 days. One member pointed out the cost implications if matches are cancelled last minute. Andy Tyas confirmed this rule was not needed since the dates of all matches are on the data base for all Clubs to check. Any changes should be discussed between the 2 clubs and last-minute cancellation is covered in the rules where costs should be shared. Disputes can be discussed with the League Secretary who can intervene where necessary.

- Sion has some contacts if any clubs wish to have names printed on T-shirts.
- Andy brought the League shields if clubs would like to have them.
- Andy informed Clubs of a new team in the League made up of players with disabilities, including some in wheelchairs. They are very aware of the practical difficulties they may face but are very happy for the opportunity to play competitive badminton. Standard rules will apply to these matches. Paul felt this was a welcome addition to our League which supports the thriving disability badminton being played in the County.

John Briggs reminded Clubs to sign in to obtain the discount to County subscriptions. He thanked all for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.50pm.