

ESSEX COUNTY BADMINTON ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting ('AGM') held at 8pm on Wednesday 10 June 2009 at Shenfield Parish Hall

1. Attendance

Vice Presidents: Mrs Y Harris, Mr J Havers

Officers & Committee: Eric Brown (President), Darryl Hardcastle, John Gardner; Clive Palmer, Helen Turrell and Carol Stammers.
Secretary - Karina Bryant (appointment to be approved)

Representatives from Clubs and District Associations: BADMINTON England, The Badminton Academy, Belle Vue BC, Chelmsford DJBA, Highlands JBC, Stanway BC, Frenford BC, Locallife BC, Five Lakers BC, St. Aidens Leigh BC, Leighway BC, Chelmsford Casuals BC, Chipmunks JBC, Trinity BC and Essex Junior and Senior Badminton.

Eric Richardson took the Chair.

The Chairman declared that it was 8.00pm and that a quorum was present. He opened the AGM of the Essex County Badminton Association ('ECBA'), welcomed all those present (especially John Havers of BADMINTON England) and introduced members of the Senior Committee to the Meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Paul Barber, Roy Lord, Peter Emptage, Denise French, Mike Tee, Alan Morris, Karen Turner, Colin McBain, Pat Ormes and Ken Leggett.

3. Presidents Remarks

a) *Essex Team and Individual Results*

Eric Brown reported that the various Essex teams had performed well throughout the 2008/9 season.

The veterans had produced some good results including winning the O45 ICC league title. The standard of veterans had improved significantly, with many senior county and ex-international players competing.

The Essex senior First team finished mid-table in Premier A and the senior Second and Third teams retained their places in divisions 1C and 5C respectively.

Essex juniors had obtained some very good results during the season. The U13 and U15 teams had reached both the Team Challenge and Shires league finals and, in the U17 ICT Championship, the Essex team were to be commended for attaining a top ten finish.

Eric Brown thanked everyone involved in managing each of the Essex veteran, senior and junior teams.

On an individual basis, U19 Sarah Walker had been selected to represent England in the Surdiman Cup and U15 Mina Clark had represented England in her age group.

Nora Perry had been elected to the Badminton World Federation Council, which was a tremendous achievement considering BADMINTON England had not been particularly popular overseas.

Eric Brown thanked all those seated on the ECBA Committee for all their hard work throughout the season. He gave special thanks to Eric Richardson, who had not had an easy year, but had continued to provide such valuable support to ECBA.

b) Performance Centres - Update

Eric Brown was pleased to report that applications for two performance centres in Essex had been accepted. The application process had been long and hard and there was still a long way to go, but those involved were to be congratulated on their achievements so far.

c) County Leagues

Eric Brown expressed concern over the lack of players involved in the senior leagues. Juniors, who could learn from more mature and experienced players, did not seem to be playing in senior league clubs.

He congratulated Leighway BC, who had reached the finals of the BADMINTON England Cup for the second year running.

4. Minutes of the AGM held on 11 June 2008

The Minutes of the AGM held on 11 June 2008 were reviewed. Following a proposal from Gary Webb (Carol Stammers seconded), the Minutes were approved as a true record.

5. Presentations

The following awards and trophies were presented by Eric Brown:

County Colours

Senior: First team: Atu Sagita and Ben Barber
 Second team: Andrew Brunning and Chris Dakin
 Third team: Leanne Debenham, Georgina Stamonova, Adam Southgate, Boris Hackett, Basil Tallah and Adam Parr

Veterans: Brian Mooney, Pat Lee, Trevor Rogers, Doreen Brown, Dave Spurgeon and Amanda Austin.

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The Boys Trophy was presented to Kamrun Robinson and the Girls to Emma Skingsley, both of whom had performed particularly well though out the season.

County League Trophies

Mens 1: St.Aidens Leigh 1
Mens 2: Five Lakers
Mixed 1: Leighway 1
Ladies American: Leighway 1
Combination: Leighway 1

6. Presentation of Reports

a) Junior Report

A report prepared by Helen Turrell was reviewed. Weekly training sessions were available for players in each junior age group. These were held at Bowers Park or Abbs Cross School.

In the ICT, the U17 team finished in eighth place after some particularly good performances from the team. Things were looking positive for next season, as many of the current team members would remain within the U17 age group. The season ended with four of the U17 squad achieving grade one status and six at grade two.

b) Senior Report

A First team report prepared by Karina Bryant was reviewed. The availability of Atu Sagita for Essex had strengthened the ladies singles and doubles events. Throughout the season, the county's top singles players had performed particularly well winning the majority of games. However, the mixed doubles performances had been disappointing with only three out of eighteen matches ending in victory. This was an area that Essex would need to work on in order to improve on the season's final position of fifth in the Premier A league table.

A Second team report prepared by Paul Barber was reviewed. Having won promotion to division 1C the team was expecting to find it tough at this new level, however, it turned out to be a better season than expected and the team finished in third position behind Surrey 2 and Sussex 1.

A Third team report prepared by Graham Lane was reviewed. Although the team finished the season in fourth place, many of the matches had been close and results could have gone either way. A wide selection of players had represented the team throughout the season, many of whom were juniors representing Essex for the first time at a senior level.

c) Veterans Report

A report prepared by Roy Lord was reviewed. Results had been varied in both the inter county league and championships. The O45s had recorded the best results of the season, finishing the season as overall champions in the league and second position in the

championships. Essex had a number of players representing England during the season and, based on tournament results, several players have finished the season ranked in the top ten in England.

d) *Essex League Report*

A report prepared by Paul Barber was reviewed. Newly promoted St. Aidens Leigh had won mens division 1 at their first attempt. In mens division 2, new club Five Lakers took the title with a young team consisting of several county juniors. In the mixed, combination and ladies divisions, Leighway won each title comfortably.

The county league had been using a new online scorecard system, which had proved to be reasonably successful, with some clubs utilising the technology more than others. Some enhancements would be made to the system over the summer with a view to all clubs using the system next season.

Paul Barber announced that he had completed his final season as County League Secretary and thanked all the players and clubs that had participated through out his tenure.

Eric Richardson thanked Paul Barber for all his support and asked whether there were any volunteers to fill the position of County league secretary. Help would be available if required.

7. Presentation of Accounts

John Gardner (Treasurer) reported a profit for the year ended 31 March 2009 of £1,581, much of which was attributable to the success of junior tournaments and sundries (events and projects held to develop badminton less official's travel). However, subscription income had been steadily declining with fewer players involved in county badminton.

The ECBA net worth equated to £14,018 as at 31 March 2009 (2008: £12,437) and turnover for the year was £56,610 (2008: £42,180).

John Gardner turned the meeting's attention to the Statement of Management Committee's Responsibilities contained within the Accounts. The Senior Committee of the ECBA were responsible for ensuring that ECBA maintained an effective system of controls in order to provide reasonable assurance that the financial information used in ECBA's affairs was reliable and that assets were safeguarded. Whilst a system of controls was in place, this could only provide reasonable, not absolute, assurance with respect to the preparation of financial statements and the safe guarding of assets. The key features of the internal controls were described in the Statement of Management Committee's Responsibilities.

Gary Webb enquired as to why there had been an increase in the cost of both junior and senior matches.

John Gardner explained that the cost of junior matches should be considered in conjunction with the profits made on junior tournaments, which had increased. Also, as a result of an increase in profits made on junior tournaments, the ECBA was able to support more junior coaching and development. The County First team played matches over three weekends during the season at different locations. ECBA paid hotel accommodation for the players. Although they had not

received any this season, the First team had been awarded prize money for coming second last season.

Following a proposal by Penny Hackett (Allison Pearson seconded), the ECBA Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2009 were approved and adopted.

7. Election of Officers

The following Officers were elected.

President:	Eric Brown
Chairman	Eric Richardson
Vice-Chairman	Vacant – no volunteers
Secretary	Karina Bryant (appointment approved by the meeting)
Treasurer	John Gardner
Auditor	Alan Gosling
Vice Presidents	Mrs J Brewster, Mrs J Chamberlain, V Chamberlain, Mrs H Cowan, Mrs Y Harris, J Havers, Mrs S Jackson, Mr R Lee, Mrs S McCoig, E Summers and Mrs S Tyrell.

It was noted that the positions of County League Secretary and Senior Match Secretary were vacant.

8. Any other Business.

a) Community Badminton Networks

Clive Palmer explained that BADMINTON England had recently been awarded £20.8m by Sport England for the 2009-2013 period. As a result, in order to achieve objectives such as increased participation; greater access to Badminton facilities; and consistently achieving world championship performances, BADMINTON England had set about strengthening certain areas of the organisation. With effect from October 2009, the role of Badminton Development Officer would cease to exist, to be replaced by the new role of Regional Officer. Regional Officers would focus on providing Community Badminton Networks for players of all abilities from age eight upwards. Further details on what this position would entail would be available soon.

Within Essex, seven after school clubs and one O50 club had been set-up during the season. However, senior league clubs were suffering as there was a lack of juniors competing at that level. Factors such as the success of veterans Badminton leading to a reduction in the number of older players willing to volunteer; an increase in the choice of sports available to play; and a certain amount of apathy had meant that new clubs were not being set up. New clubs could potentially provide juniors with a stepping stone into senior league badminton.

b) BADMINTON England - Update

Eric Brown reported that, as part of the strengthening programme mentioned by Clive Palmer, BADMINTON England aimed to recruit four Regional Officers for the Eastern Region. Individual Regional Officers would have a remit covering a particular aspect of the game, but would work with the others as a team.

BADMINTON England had made a £50,000 profit and received a good audit report for the year ended 31 March 2008. Membership fees for both ECBA and BADMINTON England would not be raised for the season 2009/10. A new category of membership would be introduced called 'no strings Badminton'. This category was available for individuals who did not play very often and would not be competing.

BADMINTON England had appointed a consultant to review the competition structure within the country, the results of which would be available soon. Discussions were also taking place on other initiatives, such as the development of separate national club and performance centre competitions. The various tournament circuits such as the Elite, Challenger, Satellite and Orbital were well established and proving popular. There had been some difficulty fixing the dates of tournaments due to the very tight and full timetable of events each season. For example, last season the Essex Orbital and Suffolk Satellite tournaments had been held on the same weekend, although this problem had been avoided this year. There was a plan for tournaments to be graded in a similar way to the rest of Europe, but there was no fixed template yet.

Should anyone have any points that he/she would like raised with BADMINTON England, Eric Brown would be happy to do so.

c) *Performance Centres*

Nationwide, 20 performance centres had been set up, two of which were in Essex. The two Essex performance centres were structured very differently. Setting up and running these centres was a steep learning process and one in which ECBA was involved. Pyramid schemes had been developed for players, the idea being that the youngest players started at the bottom and progressed upwards as they improved. One of the main difficulties was proving to be lack of commitment from players as they progressed and more of their time was required for both training and competition play. Allison Pearson was Head Coach for both performance centres. She reported that a three year plan was in place, one of the main objectives for which was to raise expectations and standards going forward. She emphasised that there was a long way to go, but a sign of success would be for Essex to produce players who would go on to represent England.

John Havers enquired as to whether a young athlete, who showed an aptitude for sport, but had never played Badminton, could enrol at a performance centre. Eric Richardson reported that sessions ('festivals') were available to children giving them the opportunity to try and play. Clive Palmer pointed out that a child with good Badminton skills would more than likely have good cricket, football, tennis etc skills, therefore commitment was the major problem facing the sport.

Eric Brown believed that the profile of Badminton was improving. Programmes such as 'Premier for Sport', whereby Essex Badminton was linked with West Ham and Tottenham football clubs had helped.

9. Date of next AGM.

The AGM for 2010 would be held on Wednesday 9 June 2009 at Shenfield Parish Hall.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed.