

STEVENAGE BADMINTON LEAGUE 2008 AGM – accepted at
2009 AGM

www.stevenagebadmintonleague.co.uk

Held at Paynes Park Social Club, Hitchin
on Monday 24th June 2008 at 8.00pm.

Attendance: 26 (19 voting – 1 representing both St Johns A and B and 1 representing both Icarus A and B) including three committee members and 1 guest representing Vauxhall BC, a possible new club to SBL.

*(Non attendees: **Highbury (previously Gosmore), Saracens and Whitwell.**)*

Papers available; attendance sheet, agenda, 2007 extract minutes, 2007 draft minutes, balance sheet, Presentation figures etc, Marshall Trophy figures etc and Ladies Section, league tables.

1. Apologies. Chris Bullock (Committee member), Highbury (previously Gosmore), Saracens and Whitwell.
2. Opening address and 2007 AGM minutes Jan Macfarlane **thanked all those present** for attending and their work as organisers/fixture secretaries during the season, Committee colleagues – Ken for the organisation of the cup competitions, Chris for the Ladies Section and Ian for the finances. Jan welcomed as a guest and representative of Vauxhall BC (who have indicated their desire to join the SBL), Malcolm Jellows who is also Badminton Development Officer for Hertfordshire.
Ian confirmed the **sad passing of Carl Couzens**, a very popular player in local badminton, and who was a local and regional football official and Badminton England umpire. It was Carl who provided a clear and reassuring lead in discussions at the 2007 AGM regarding the move (or not) to the new rally point (to 21, from 15) scoring system. Carl's funeral was very well attended with many badminton and football friends present and Ian read a short extract from a press report about Carl.
[SEE POST MEETING NOTE.] **The 2007 AGM minutes were accepted.**
Ian drew attention to Gabor's suggestion at the 2007 AGM that the new scoring be reviewed after a year and a short discussion resulted in **unanimous agreement to continue with rally point scoring.** (It was noted that among local leagues, only the Biggleswade League had continued with the old style scoring in 2007/8 season and it was felt likely that they would move to rally point for 2008/9.)
3. Treasurer's Report. Ian reported on the distributed information which as usual includes income and expenditure for the complete (2007/8) season.
The **surplus** was mainly due to the excellent attendance at the annual Presentation Quiz Night. Following comments at the 2007 AGM, end of season and other medal costs had been reviewed and reductions sought from Marshall Trophies. However, with 4 divisions and more tournaments it was inevitable that there would be substantial expense incurred including these items. Also following suggestions at 2007 AGM, Barnwell School were approached regarding reducing court fees for the junior tournament, which they agreed. Because of the surplus and credit balance Ian recommended no changes for subscriptions for 2008/9.
The balance sheet(s) were approved. No changes to 2007/8 subscriptions.
4. Fixtures and 5. Results Jan reported on the distributed information (4 divisions, of 26 teams, 4 more than 2006/7 when there were 3 divisions). There were **no conceded SBL league matches.** Jan repeated comments on players' names on score sheets. With players from the same family involved in the SBL and to ensure accurate identities Jan asked that score sheets contain the FULL FIRST NAME AND SURNAME of players. To assist, the

usual **pre-season team registration form has a form on the reverse for team members and substitutes to be listed.** Hopefully both sides of the form will be completed before being returned for 2008/9 season.

Full divisional honours as shown on the website;-

Winners D1: Hitchin Town, Runners Up: Masters; Winners D2: Cam Gears B, Runners Up: Icarus A; Winners D3: Codicote, Runners Up: Onyx; Winners D4: Knebworth, Runners Up: Academy.

6. Ladies Section In Chris Bullock's absence, Jan read out Chris' short report confirming the **on-going enjoyment of 'ladies' afternoons'** on a monthly basis throughout the season with the Henriksson Tournament on the final afternoon.

The Ladies' Section runs very smoothly now, the matches are competitive, friendly and enjoyable and everyone looks forward to their monthly get-together – what more can I ask!

The league title was hotly contested with the Freshers team (Norton/Baldock players) finally beating Eradicators (Icarus and Cam Gears) into second place and Anne's Lassies (Masters) were a close third. Their standard of play was excellent throughout the season and was a pleasure to watch.

The Henriksson Tournament (our round-robin fixture) was as much fun as usual and was won by Freshers who pipped Eradicators to the title by just one game and therefore by only one point. Results tables in full are on the SBL web site.

Will each club representative please take an entry form back to their club ladies and encourage entries, because even if your club cannot field a complete team individual ladies are welcomed.

The first date for the 2008/9 season is 27/9/08 and all other dates have been booked at Barnwell School and would be on the website soon.

Chris was thanked once more for her organisation of this particular part of the SBL.

7. Plate, SBL CUP & TALOR CUP.

Ken Abbott advised that **19 teams** (up from 13 the previous season) entered in the SBL Cup with seeding on divisional basis and first round losing teams entering the Plate competition. There were 2 conceded matches. Sportsmanship during the competitions and high standard of play particularly in the finals were evident. A change of night for the finals and a 3-week gap between SBL Cup final and Taylor Cup final might have caused problems but it was all right on the nights!

Finals results confirmed:- Plate, Academy beat Strings A 5-1; SBL Cup Hitchin Town beat St Johns A 4-2; Taylor Trophy Masters (Holders) beat Hitchin Town 4-2.

8. Tournaments. Jan reported on a second successful Junior Tournament at which the **Denise Peat Prize** was awarded to Renu Dhall for her good nature and effort. 21 boys and 5 girls entered the tournament held in October 2007. Thanks to Gabor, Rob Wade and other clubs and parents who encouraged their youngsters to progress in playing. There were also 3 very successful tournaments, a men's and a mixed (with the ladies being catered for by the Ladies Section – see above) and in addition this year, a men's singles. The men's singles was the result of discussions at the 2007 AGM when a ladder was mooted. Although there was some interest, greater participation resulted after a men's singles tournament was proposed so the tournament took place and not the ladder. All results and some pictures are on the website.
9. Inter-league match – Marshall Trophy. Ian reported that because of the disparity in the number of teams between Letchworth (16) and Stevenage (26) it had been impossible to include all teams using the same format as in previous years. In a reversion to something similar to the previous format, the divisional winners and runners up were asked to provide teams for the Stevenage format (4 men, 2 ladies) with the following divisional matches:-

Stevenage	v	Letchworth
D1 Winners		D1 Winners
D2 Winners		D1 R/up
D3 Winners		D2 Winners
D4 Winners		D2 R/up.

The Marshall Trophy result was a **win for Stevenage**, 3-0 with D4 halved (3-3). This meant a 4-4 overall Marshall Trophy result in the 8 years it has been played for. (The 2002 result is incorrectly engraved!)

In discussion it was felt that including all clubs was something to be strived for with this 'fun event' allowing players to play with league colleagues who they would not normally play with. **Committee will look at the format again**, probably early in 2009 when there is likely to be the usual joint discussion/meeting re the Taylor Trophy and Presentation Evening as these are joint events. **ACTION POINT FOR COMMITTEE.**

10. Presentation Evening. Ian reported on a **greater success** over and above 2007 and several other years in terms of attendance (about 140) and surplus (£500 total) shared between both Letchworth and Stevenage leagues. In responses on distributed questionnaires on the evening, the usual quiz format followed by disco was also supported for the future. However, there had been, 'uninvited guests' who were known to the staff at the new venue, Arlesey Football Club, as they were 'regulars'. These 4 young men were somewhat exhibitionist and involved themselves in the disco and mingled among the attendees. Ian commented favourably on the behaviour of all who attended the presentation in that our good behaviour prevented any incident which it was felt might have escalated. In fact it was credit to all that good humour prevailed. However members of both league committees felt strongly enough to write to Arlesey FC and ask for reassurance that Arlesey FC personnel would prevent intrusion by 'outsiders' in future.
11. 2008/2009 Committee. Ian read a prepared description of the **current committee's roles** and additional help from Dave Hancock in relation to the website and Mark Cook's offer last year re Men's singles. Ian confirmed that Richard Adams had offered to assist in any area that may help SBL and Ian said that the Junior Tournament afternoon was one in particular that needed additional presence and asked if Richard could be available on that day, already booked, Saturday 4th October. Richard was pleased to confirm his offer and Committee expressed their gratitude accordingly. The Committee confirmed their willingness to continue and it was **agreed that Ian, Jan, Chris Bullock and Ken Abbott would remain the SBL Committee**. Words of appreciation came from Janet Dinsey and others, followed by applause from those present for the work done by SBL Committee.
12. 2008/9 divisions Jan believed that yet **more teams might be entering the SBL** for next season. Also it was unlikely that Highbury (previously Gosmore) and Purwell B would continue. After discussion it appeared likely that there would be a 'net gain' of 2 teams (with likely additions from Academy, Knebworth and Vauxhall -2). As usual '2 up 2 down' depends on the number of/teams re-entering and at what level. Ian suggested that previous winners of Men's tournaments Tony Wood and Julian Edmett and the girls at Highbury/Gosmore might be looking for new clubs to join and it would be good if they could continue playing in the SBL.
13. Any Other Business
 - (i) SBL rule 8 Jan raised an issue relating to the **ranking of teams from the same club**. In 2006/7 Cam Gears A were in a position to be demoted from D1 and Cam Gears B were to be promoted from D2. Under SBL rules, for 2007/8 the team in D1 would be Cam Gears A and the team in D2 would be Cam Gears B. Because Cam Gears had

decided that the individuals in the 2006/7 teams wished to continue to play in the same teams for 2007/8 the SBL rules indicated that the names of their teams would have to change ie the promoted B team would be called A and the demoted team A would be called B. It was greatly appreciated not only during pre-season discussions but also at this 2008 AGM that Cam Gears had done and had seen to be done, the ‘nice thing’ – giving the chance to their promoted team players the opportunity to play in D1 and the demoted players the opportunity to gain promotion back to D1 (which indeed happened). As Gary said, on some occasions it took an explanation regarding why he and other players were playing in D2 but it was accepted that the actions by Cam Gears and players were in good faith. There was a lot of discussion relating to this because the number of clubs with more than one team was increasing. Roger and Ian both recalled circumstances in the past where clubs with several teams may not have operated with the friendly nature of the league and abused the rules by putting better players in lower ranked teams enabling them to play in both their own team and as a substitute regularly for a higher team. The substitution rule was originally introduced because of that but was dropped some years ago. Richard asked about the designation S (on the score sheet) regarding substitutes. The designation S on a score sheet now is more for checking that the team originally nominated is usually the team playing the matches in order to keep a reasonably consistent team throughout season than for checking the number of times a substitute plays. HOWEVER, Jan emphasised that there is still a substitute rule in the Cup whereby a player can only substitute twice in the season, to avoid ‘ringers’ being brought in to strengthen the cup team.

Discussions continued and Roger proposed that a rule be devised to allow individual clubs to resolve any similar situation and follow the honourable lead from Cam Gears. Something like “ *...under normal circumstances this rule stands but with the consent of the Committee they will have discretion ...* ” to ensure the club/s concerned acted in a fair and proper manner as in the spirit of the league. This met with general approval.

ACTION POINT FOR COMMITTEE. SEE APPENDIX A below.

(ii) Score sheet – order of players. Pat Miles asked about the order of players as per the score sheet and in particular, players’ strength ie should the Men 1, 2, 3, and 4, be nominated on the score sheets so that Man 1 is strongest and Man 4 weakest? Jan referred to the rule (11), *Team captains are not obliged to nominate players’ status (1st, 2nd, 3rd) but should follow the arrangement of pairs in accordance with the official result sheet. Team lists should be written out before play begins and swapped simultaneously.* It discussion it was indicated that the best man in men’s’ doubles may not necessarily be the best man at mixed doubles so the different strengths may mean that Man 1 was not obviously the strongest in every team.

(iii) Website. Jan said this is being used more and more and although a pack of papers are distributed at the beginning of each season with all the necessary fixtures, contacts etc, thereafter communication is via website/email. If any club contact wants postal information then it would be accommodated.

(iv) Online results. Gabor asked if SBL would follow the Letchworth league in providing this facility – ability for each club to nominate players via the website, put the match result which then prompts the opposition to confirm so within a very short time a confirmed result can be displayed. Jan advised that SBL Committee are considering this and had followed the progress of the Letchworth initiative. There appears to be a need for supporting documentation for checking purposes and of course with all electronic information, paper copies should be maintained. SBL have devised a nomination sheet and would like those returned in the first instance so all players can be identified as playing for only one club. (This was a problem with online nominations for Letchworth.) Jan advised that results have been appearing on the SBL website fairly quickly and to improve this further she is willing for scanned score sheets to be sent as email attachments. But Jan urged for paper copies to be retained (as did Letchworth league) for

checking/confirmation purposes and as above if the electronic system should 'go down'. Jan hoped that a trial system might be in place during the year.

(v) Refreshments Thomas asked about refreshments to be supplied by the home team and Great Ashby, as new to the league had also been unsure what to provide. Some teams were known for quality and quantity. Jan suggested that **the minimum provided should be a drink and light refreshments such as biscuits.**

In cases of more than one court the matches were sometimes not as sociable when there is only one court with longer sit-outs. On those occasions it is good to be able to offer a warm drink and also perhaps a little more substantial food.

(vi) Score sheet Sarah of Great Ashby asked if the **size of the score sheet** could be improved to allow more space for writing. In discussion it was pointed out that some score sheets were not used correctly to display match results. Sometimes games totals are shown when it should be rubbers, ie 4-2, 3-3 etc.

ACTION POINT FOR COMMITTEE.

14. Close. There being no further business, **NEW PRE-PRINTED (WITH TEAM'S NAMES ON) PRE-SEASON ENTRY FORMS** (PROVIDING FOR DISCOUNTS FOR 2007/8 TEAMS WHO WERE AGM ATTENDEES AND 'SECOND TEAMS') WERE DISTRIBUTED TO THOSE PRESENT (FOR RETURN WITH FEES BY FRIDAY 11TH JULY 2008). Ladies Section forms were also available. (** On the reverse is a pre-printed blank listing for team nominations which will hopefully be completed and returned at the same time as the entry forms – BY 11TH JULY.)**

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

POST MEETING NOTE: The Treasurer will be making a 'personal' donation **in memory of Carl Couzens** and will write to Carl's family that the donation is on behalf of the SBL. If the 2009 AGM agrees then the Treasurer will ask for reimbursement from SBL funds at that time.

APPENDIX A (See 13. (i) above)

PROPOSED RULE CHANGES

Rule 8

- a) Where a club is represented by more than one team in the SBL, the highest ranked team shall be called the A team, the second highest called the B team etc. This rule shall prevail except in circumstances mentioned in 8(b).
- b) Where Committee deem "exceptional circumstance" (eg when end of seasons positions would promote a lower ranked team above a higher ranked team, and the players in the lower ranked team wish to remain together as a team) the original names of the teams may be retained at the discretion of the committee.

Rule 9 Nominated players and substitutes:

- a) All teams are required to nominate 6 players (4 men and 2 ladies). Where a club has two teams their best 12 players must be nominated and team selection made with the intention of the strongest 6 players being in the higher ranked team. This is to keep within the spirit of the friendly nature of the League (Rule 1).

NOMINATIONS MUST BE WITH THE FIXTURES SECRETARY BEFORE THE FIRST MATCH IS PLAYED.

Rule 9 b) etc continues unchanged

*ISM
July 2008*