

Norfolk Bowls Association



Hon. Men's Secretary Report
to the Men's Annual General Meeting
on 11th December 2016

Introduction

I have pleasure in submitting my first report as your Hon. Secretary having taken the position from acting Secretary, David Naunton at the 2015 Annual General Meeting.

Sponsorship

Our partnership with Hansells Solicitors & Financial Advisers continued during 2016 and I am pleased to report they have agreed to continue for a further year, though at a reduced level. This will mean their sponsorship will have run for 15 years and I must on your behalf express our grateful thanks to them for their past and continued support of our Association. The financial benefit this has given to us over this period cannot be underestimated and has allowed us to maintain affiliation & other fees at a sustainable level.

One result of the reduced level of sponsorship mentioned means that we now meet the full cost of the County Supplement/Handbook and hence the cover charge has had to be increased for the forthcoming season to £2.50 to meet the printing costs.

We are exploring other sponsorship opportunities and I hope to be able to report further on these in the New Year.

Hon. Treasurer

As you will know Stan Allcock has had a very difficult year with illness & then a car accident. Both he and Cherry are now on the slow road to recovery but Stan has advised me that with great reluctance & disappointment he will not be able to continue as our Treasurer. Stan has been Treasurer since 1998 and during that time has kept our finances in excellent order. He will be a very hard act to follow and I am sure you will all join with me in wishing both him and Cherry well and that both have full & speedy recoveries.

The Treasurer position is of vital importance to the Association and at the time of writing your Management Committee is taking steps to fill this position and I will be able to give an update at the AGM.

Membership

The retention of members and the attraction of new members to our Clubs continues to be a concern with overall numbers continuing to decline. Our governing body, Bowls England in conjunction with the Bowls Development Alliance have introduced various initiatives to attract new members and I urge all Clubs to look at their websites for details.

I do not at this stage have our current membership numbers but these will be available in the New Year when all Club Annual Returns are processed and we submit our returns to Bowls England.

Affiliations for the 2017 season are now being processed but I can confirm at the time of writing both Harleston Rec & Sheringham Morley will not be affiliating in 2017.

Officers, Management Committee & Executive Board

The Management Committee met formally on five occasions through the year and I would like to place on record thanks to them for the work they carry out on your behalf, much of it unheralded.

I have already mentioned our Hon. Treasurer, Stan Allcock but there are three other long standing officers not seeking re-election, namely Tony Dunton (Hon. League Secretary), Derek Talbot (Hon. Assistant Match Secretary) and Ken Adey (Child Protection Officer) and I would like to thank them for the work they have carried out for the Association over many years.

The overall affairs of the Association are handled by the Executive Board, which includes representatives from the Ladies Section, and the Board met in March & October where John George was appointed County Administrator and Dennis Cousins Chairperson. These positions will be up for re-election in March 2017 when an AGM of the Association, in accordance with Constitution, will be called. At this AGM an update to our Constitution to properly reflect how the Association operates will be presented to the membership for approval.

Clubs Meetings

Meetings with Clubs were introduced this year prior to start and at the end of the playing season to allow your Officers to inform clubs of ongoing matters and for Clubs to raise any points and issues that may have. The meetings were well attended, seemed to be of benefit to the Clubs and it is intended that these will continue next year. I would ask Clubs if they do have any matters that you wish discussed to let me know in advance of the meetings.

County Tour

The 2016 County Tour hosted by President Richard Church was based in York and the 2017 Tour hosted by incoming President Colin Brown will be based in Bournemouth.

Annual Luncheon & Prize Presentation

This was held at the Holiday Inn Norwich Airport in October and was well attended. The 2017 Luncheon will be held on Sunday 8th October once again at the Holiday Inn.

Website

Once again we are indebted to our Webmaster, Allan Covell for keeping the website up to date and to all contributors of information that enabled Allan to do so. Should Clubs have any information they wish to have published on the website then please provide me or Allan with details.

Press & media

Once again the local press has published our news & results on a weekly basis and we have nurtured a close relationship with BBC Radio Norfolk who readily broadcast interviews & results as well as giving live coverage to some of our events.

Bowls England

We as an Association are governed by our National body, Bowls England. To most Clubs and their members they are a distant body but they do run the sport of bowls in England on behalf of us all. They do provide services to Clubs and I would urge all Secretaries to view their website to see details of the many services that could be of benefit to them.

As your delegate to Bowls England I attend various meetings with them and the other County delegates where matters of common concern and interest are raised and discussed and where these directly affect our own bowling matters the views of our county are put forward.

I will now turn to bowling matters covering the 2016 season.

Middleton Cup

The Middleton Cup was once again disappointing. Having opened with a convincing victory over Suffolk we then suffered single shot defeats in each of the following three matches so failed to qualify for the quarter finals. Without doubt we have the talent within the County with many promising younger players coming through and hopefully this will bear fruit over the next few years and we can again become a County to be feared.

Eastern Counties Bowling Association

Unfortunately we were unable to retain the League title won last year, finishing fourth in the league with a record of played six, won three, lost three. Once again there were separate championships for Under 30's and Officers and as with the Senior League we finished in fourth place. Going forward the format of the Eastern Counties League is now under the review and at the ECBA AGM in January it is likely that the league will revert back to its original overall six rink format including an Officers rink.

In the individual championships we were represented by our County winners but none managed to reach the finals held at Sandy Conservatives BC.

County Friendly & President's Invitation Matches

Once again these were well supported & enjoyed by all those who were selected and Match Secretary David Naunton will be reporting separately on these.

Touring Teams

Our Visiting Tourist Liaison Officer Richard Banks has once again ably managed the incoming tour parties and has provided details in his report. Richard has held this position for a number of years now but has indicated that he will be standing down at the 2017 AGM.

County & Bowls England National Championships

Once again the County Championships were a success and on your behalf I would like to record thanks the Hon. Competition Secretary, John George and the Group Competition Secretaries, Charlie Boon, Mick Harvey, Malcolm Struthers & Roger Preston for the efficient manner in which these were run. Competitors can help the Secretaries by ensuring that all results are notified to the relevant Secretary immediately after each match, something that currently does not always occur.

I would also like to thank all the Clubs who readily put their facilities at the County's disposal for the play-off matches in both the individual & club championships.

This year's individual County finals were held at Wymondham Dell with pride of place going to John Ottaway who lifted the Singles title for a record 10th time. Recognition must also go to North Walsham who took both the Club Championship (Bales Cup) & Lord Fermoy Cup titles.

The results if the finals were as follows:-

Junior Singles	winner – Daniel Seabourne (Freethorpe BC) runner up – David Smith (Freethorpe BC)
Two Wood Singles	winner – Vernon Hudson (Wootton Park BC) runner up – Max Harrison (Downham Market BC)
Singles	winner – John Ottaway (Wymondham Dell BC) runner up – Jake Willgress (Norfolk BC)
Pairs	winner – Barry Flatt & Gary Goodrum (Wymondham Dell BC) runner up – John Tufts & Wayne Willgress (Norfolk BC)
Triples	winner – Jake Lesley, Tom Segolo & James Segolo (Norfolk BC)

	runner up – Max Harrison, Jack Wells & Peter Boldero (Downham Market BC)
Fours	winner – John Tufts, Neil Moulton, Jake Willgress & Wayne Willgress (Norfolk BC)
	runner up – John Gooch, Colin Gathercole, Gavin Cater & Peter Chestney (Downham Market BC)
Club Championship	winner – North Walsham BC
	runner up – Wootton Park BC
Lord Fermoy Cup	winner – North Walsham BC
	runner up – Downham Market BC
Jermy Cup	winner – County Arts BC
	runner up – St. Lawrence BC

In 2017 two new County Championships have been introduced namely a Junior (Under 25) Pairs and Senior (Over 55) Fours with the winners of qualifying for the National Championship finals at Leamington Spa. The required changes to our rules to include these new competitions will be submitted to this AGM for approval.

As for Competition rules, following discussions within the Management Committee and with Club delegates at the September Meeting changes to our rules permitting the wearing of Bowls England approved shorts will also be submitted to this AGM for approval. The wearing of shorts is subject to the Bowls England guidance note that has already been issued to Clubs and this provides that Clubs have the ultimate sanction on whether shorts may be worn at their Club.

Hansells County League

Once again the league was successfully run by the Hon. League Secretary, Tony Dunton. Tony will be standing down from this position at the League AGM and on your behalf I would like to place on record thanks for all he has done over the years. I am pleased to report that Mark Elliott of Acle St. Edmund BC has been nominated for the position of League Secretary for 2017 and I am sure you will give Mark your full support. Clubs can assist the Secretary by ensuring that League results are submitted immediately following each match so that up to date League tables can be published on the website and in the local press.

The Premier League title was won again by Norfolk BC, for the fifth year in succession and Martham lifted the WP Baker Cup and will be playing in the Premier League for the first time next year.

The Hansells Cup was won by Shotford BC with Shouldham BC 'A' the runners up.

The finals WP Baker Cup and Hansells Cup were held at Thorpe Rec BC & Norfolk BC respectively and I would like to thank them for allowing us use of their excellent facilities.

The winners of the League Zones were:-

North 1	RG Carter Group BC 'A'
Central 1	Mundford BC
Central 2	Shipdham BC
South 1	Norfolk BC 'B'
South 2	Shotford BC
West 1	Hunstanton BC 'A'
West 2	Shouldham BC 'A'
East 1	Martham BC
East 2	Freethorpe BC 'B'

Summary

This has been my first year as your Hon. Secretary and I cannot say it has been entirely straightforward. If I have slipped up then any mistakes made have been genuine with the best interests of the County, Clubs & members at heart. I would like to thank all my fellow Officers, Club Secretaries, Officers and all members for their help and assistance over the year and I look forward to serving you for the forthcoming year.

In conclusion I submit this report to the Meeting.

John Ottaway
Hon. Men's Secretary
1st November 2016