

Shuttle Express

Issue 4: March 2008



The Bedfordshire Badminton Update

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CHAIR'S CORNER

You may recall that in my last contribution to Shuttle Express I made mention of Performance Centres. These are intended to increase competitive opportunities and raise standards for all players, however, they may take a variety of formats and your club will have been invited to be represented at a meeting to discuss and decide what's best for the County. The meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, 08 April 2008 at The Rufus Centre, Steppingley Road, Flitwick, MK45 1AH and will commence at 7.30 p.m.** – please do all you can to ensure that your club is represented at this important meeting. At this stage there are likely to be only five Performance Centres across the six counties of the East Region so it's important that Bedfordshire makes an informed decision on what it wants and what's best for it.

When last I wrote I also informed you that BADMINTON England had been successful in its bid to stage the 2011 Badminton World Championships in London.

I'm now delighted to be able to report that BADMINTON England's bids to stage the European Championships in Liverpool in 2009 and Manchester in 2010 were successful. As I've previously said, success in gaining so many events will present us with a unique opportunity to both; promote and grow our sport – so please make sure that your club is ready and able to cope with the interest that will be created. The 2008 Olympics and 2009 European Championships are not that far away in time, so please start to think how your club can take advantage of these high profile events.

Interest in badminton is high at the moment – seemingly at many different age groups. Ollie and I (together with dozens of others!) attended the Badminton Schools Finals for Bedfordshire and Luton at Luton Regional Sports Centre at the end of January. With players of all standards in attendance the level of enthusiasm and potential for development could not be faulted.

In addition to the enthusiasm of the young it would appear that those in mid-life are also keen to engage with badminton. Both the County Sports Partnership (through its "Get Back Into" initiative) and the Bedford Borough Council / Sport Bedford (through their "Re-Active8" initiative) have been pleasantly surprised by the number of 30-50 year olds who wish to come back to badminton again.



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The enthusiasm of the young (and the not quite so young!) to participate in badminton bodes well for our clubs but only if we're prepared to provide open and welcoming environments. I can't pretend that's always the case but we have to recognise the need to encourage new membership if our clubs are to have a future. Ollie, other Members of the Development Group and many others are working hard to promote our sport but that's neither rewarding nor fulfilling if our efforts lack support at club level.

Hopefully by now you'll have had an opportunity to discuss the future (if any) of the Club Player Tournament within your club (if not please do so) so that we can have an informed decision made about it at the County AGM. Talking of the County AGM, please get the date of that i.e. **22 May 2008** into your diary now. Whilst you have your diary open, you might also like to make a note of the dates of the County Restricted Weekend now – the dates shown for it in the BADMINTON England calendar are **27 & 28 September 2008**.

January saw the launch of SportsAid within Bedfordshire with a lunch at the Swan Hotel in Bedford. This raised almost £7,000 to support young people from Bedfordshire and Luton who have talent and an aspiration to succeed in sport. A further event is planned for later in the year (probably in Luton) so please watch out for announcements about it as it'll provide a real opportunity for you and local employers to support young sportspersons in a very tangible fashion.

I'm sure that all of our readers like a bargain and I'm pleased to be able to report that we're now registered with majorsparty.com. The majorsparty on-line store now has over 7,500 products and 100 brands covering a wide range of sports and leisure activities – so you can purchase far more than your badminton requirements. The Bedfordshire Badminton Association has been given a unique code (which is **16153574**) and quoting this will enable you to gain 10% discount on items that haven't already been discounted. Your purchases also benefit the development work of the Bedfordshire Badminton Association – so, hopefully, we're all winners! I have to say that I've "put my money where my mouth is" and already made a purchase; so I'm not encouraging you to do something that I wouldn't do myself. Looking at what's available costs nothing so please have a look at www.majorsparty.com to see the range of products one can purchase through this source.

Derek Batchelor - Hon Chair

National Schools Competition

Wednesday 31st January saw near on 200 children fill Luton Regional Sports Centre, for the County finals of the National Inter Schools Championships. The structure of the day saw teams compete in the following age groups:
Year 7/8 Boys
Year 7/8 Girls
Year 9 Boys
Year 9 Girls
Year 10/11 Girls
Year 10/11 Boys



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After 8 hours of play and 90 games, the results were:

Year 7/8 Boys:

Champions: Newnham
Runners Up: Bedford Modern

Year 7/8 Girls:

Champions: Leighton
Runners Up: Burgoyne

Year 9 Boys:

Champions: Bedford Modern
Runners Up: Biddenham

Year 9 Girls:

Champions: Dame Alice
Runners Up: Sharnbrook

Year 10/11 Boys:

Champions: Sandy
Runners Up: Redborne

Year 10/11 Girls:

Champions: Samuel Whitbread
Runners Up: Dame Alice

The year 9 and 10/11 winners now progress to the Regional finals, on the 10th April @ Sandy Upper School. I'm sure you will all join me in wishing them all the best.

GETBACKINTO

As Derek stated in his piece, the GET BACK INTO events, have been a great success, and I am happy to report that the event at Biddenham, has been at capacity, and that as of the Monday 17th March, there will be Queens Park Community Badminton Club, running out of Biddenham Upper School Sports Hall.

UNDER 21's

As many of you will be aware training & matches for our county juniors has traditionally ceased once they are over 17. However last season we entered a team in the 17-21 ICT at Milton Keynes and they finished a very creditable 8th out of the 12 counties taking part. This season we have played an under 21 friendly against Hertfordshire, which we won, have again entered a team in the 17-21 ICT & plan an under 19 friendly v Essex. Increasingly our young players are looking for further competition after 17 & would like to keep their training & matches going. Whilst they will be able to arrange some of this for themselves it would be great to have a co-ordinator to support them in this. If there is anyone out there who would like to get involved please contact one of the committee. I'm sure you will agree that all our clubs would benefit by retaining players in this age bracket.

Bridget Crossman

bridget.crossman@tiscali.co.uk

SUMMER PAY & PLAY & COACHING

For a second year summer 'Pay & Play' will be available at Bedford & County badminton club, Bradgate Road, Bedford. Commence Tuesday 13th May 7.30 – 9.30pm weekly until Tuesday 26th August. £3 per visit. Everyone is welcome, from those who want to keep playing whilst their club is closed for the summer, to beginners who would like coaching & players just looking to improve on a certain aspect of their game.



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It doesn't matter if you can only come along once during the summer season, we will be happy to see you.

Bridget Crossman
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COUNTY MATCH RESULTS

1st Team
Beat Leicestershire 3rds: 10 – 5
Lost to Surrey 3rds: 13 – 2
Lost to Suffolk: 8 – 7

2nd Team
Beat Norfolk 2nds: 9 – 6
Lost to Herts 4ths: 8 – 7
Lost to Suffolk 2nds: 10 – 5
Lost to Kent 3rds: 11 – 4

UNDER 12 TOURNAMENT

The Under 12 Team Tournament was played on Saturday 23rd February at Bradgate Road Bedford and this presented the organisers with something of a problem as we had more entries than we had anticipated! Nine teams entered – a total of 36 under 12's – which can only be good for the future of our Association.

Results:
1st – Bedford 'A'
2nd – Biggleswade 'A'
3rd - Bedford Modern School

Barbara Lincoln: Hon Match Secretary

Reviving the ladies' league!

Older players will remember that we used to have a ladies' league (and a mixed league) as well as the current medley and men's league.

The ladies' league originally had two divisions but was wound up as fewer clubs entered it.

Vauxhall BC have suggested reviving the ladies' league for the 2008-9 season and a proposal will be put forward at the AGM.

We're keen to see how much support there is for a ladies' league but in principle the league is supported by the general committee of the BBA, and we would like to re-introduce it for next season if we can get sufficient support to make it viable.

We're hoping that clubs will discuss the proposal now so that by the time of the AGM, we have a better idea of how many clubs would like to enter a team or teams.

The suggestion for the league is:

- 1 There would be teams of 4 (and the pairing for games would be the same as for the men's league).
- 2 We would try and be as flexible as possible to enable the league to succeed. For example, the County Under-19s girls' squad would like to enter a team and we'd encourage this, even though they're not strictly a club.

- 3 If possible, we'd have 2 divisions to accommodate players of all standards and keep the games competitive.

If anyone would like to make suggestions for the league and how it can be successful, I'd be very happy to hear from them. My e-mail is mhardy@pwhmlp.com. I'd also like to circulate any views we receive among the clubs so that everyone has an idea of what's being suggested.

Michael Hardy - League Secretary

COACH EDUCATION COURSES

BADMINTON Level 1 coaching course

Dates: 26th October, 9th November & 16th November 2008 (must attend all 3 days)

Venue: Cedars Upper School, Leighton Buzzard

Cost: £195 – subsidy may be available, please contact Ollie Jordan for more details.

BADMINTON Level 2 coaching course

Dates: 25th & 26th October, 9th November & 21st December (must attend all 4 days)

Venue: Cedars Upper School, Leighton Buzzard

Cost: £350 – subsidy may be available, please contact Ollie Jordan for more details.