

STEVENAGE BADMINTON LEAGUE 2007 AGM – accepted at
2008 AGM

Held at Paynes Park Social Club, Hitchin
on Monday 25th June 2007 at 8.00pm.

*Attendance: 24 (17 voting – 1 representing both Purwell A and B and 1 representing both Icarus A and B) including all four committee members.
(Non attendees: Gosmore, Saracens and Whitwell.)*

Papers available; attendance sheet, agenda, 2006 extract minutes, 2006 draft minutes, balance sheets, Presentation figures etc, Marshall Trophy figures etc and Ladies Section report etc, league tables.

1. Apologies, Gosmore, Saracens and Whitwell (*received before meeting*).
2. Opening address and 2006 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.
It was confirmed that St Johns were D1 Runners-up for 2005-6 season (match played after 2006 AGM.)
The 2006 AGM minutes were accepted.
3. Treasurer's Report. Ian reported on the distributed information which as usual includes income and expenditure for the complete (2006/7) season.
The deficit was mainly due to the cost of subsidising a new Junior Tournament and end of season trophies and engraving. In addition to the usual cup competition/s there was also a plate competition for teams losing their first match in the SBL Cup. The supplier of medals etc, Marshall Trophies, after a few years of benevolence had this year charged more realistic prices in particular for engraving – back to the level of about 5 years ago. Jan advised that discussions with Marshall Trophies had commenced about SBL not affording the same level of expenditure next season. Discussion took place about this matter and Jan suggested that next year might see less engraving on individual medals that are presented. On the suggestion of Caroline **it was agreed that Committee decide on appropriate medal provision/engraving with particular attention to affordability/cost.** Brendon Lee was thanked again for being the original contact for Paynes Park and we have again paid for the 2007 AGM but Paynes Park is a good, value for money venue. Ian recommended no changes for subscriptions for 2006/7.
The balance sheet(s) were approved. No changes to 2006/7 subscriptions.
4. Fixtures and 5. Results Jan reported on the distributed information (3 divisions of 22 teams, 1 more than 2005/6). Teams had done well as this season all matches had been played with most of the changed dates advised to Jan before being played and secretaries/contacts/players were thanked accordingly.
Jan commented 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 at least once – the second rubber for each player could be abbreviated for example to first name only (but it should be clear who is playing).

Jan reminded the meeting of the friendly nature of the SBL and asked that teams/captains observe the listing of players on score sheets and exchange BEFORE matches commence and if this is not possible because for example a player has not arrived then team captains should be courteous and open about the situation. Also Jan asked team captains to inform their team members exactly who they were playing for as some younger players 'just turned up' and played whenever they were asked. This was important in relation to registration of players for one club only and insurance.

Full divisional honours as shown on the website;-

Winners D1: Masters, Runners Up: Hitchin Town; Winners D2: Broadway, Runners Up: Cam Gears B; Winners D3: Whitwell, Runners Up: Purwell B.

6. Ladies Section Chris Bullock referred to distributed information including League Results, Henriksson (end of season) Tournament, Venue, and Finance. It was another good and enjoyable season with 8 squads and 50 ladies. **The first date for the 2007/8 season was likely to be Saturday 8 September or Saturday 29 September, at Barnwell School.**

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

7. SBL CUP & TALOR CUP.

Ken Abbott advised that 13 teams (1 up from previous season) entered (but 2 forfeited games) in the SBL Cup with seeding on divisional basis and 5 first round losing teams entering the new Plate competition (as suggested by Simon Carter at the 2006 AGM). Finals results confirmed:- Plate, Lingwood beat Whitwell 6-0; SBL Cup St Johns beat Cam Gears A 5-1; Taylor Trophy Masters beat St Johns 5-1. Ian confirmed the high standard of play and courtesy shown at the finals.

8. Tournaments. Jan reported on a very successful inaugural Junior Tournament at which the **Denise Peat Prize** was awarded to Steven Barnes for his overall ability, good nature, support of his partners and tireless enthusiasm to keep running all afternoon. 14 boys and 6 girls entered the tournament held in October 2006 and thanks went to Gabor, Rob Wade and other clubs and parents who encouraged their youngsters to progress in playing. There were also 2 very successful tournaments, a men's and a mixed (with the ladies being catered for by the Ladies Section – see above). All results and some pictures are on the website www.stevenagebadmintonleague.com.

Jan reminded the meeting of the 2006-7 possibility of a Men's Singles Ladder that was set up but initial positive responses did not result in enough entries to progress. Because of this there is an additional question on the pre-season Entry Forms for clubs/teams to complete regarding the Men's Singles Ladder &/or a Men's Singles Tournament. Mark Cook who was willing to assist with the ladder is also willing to assist with a tournament.

9. Inter-league match – Marshall Trophy. Ian reported on the now 'usual' format whereby teams in both the Stevenage and Letchworth leagues were invited to nominate players to play in this end of season 'for fun' match. For the first time the new rally point (to 21/30) scoring system was used with experienced/willing scorers available to assist those not yet competent.

Even with the leagues not having the same number of divisions (Letchworth, 2 and Stevenage 3) efforts by both committees (particularly Jan and Bob Green) and clubs have produced 3 'sections'/matches in the Letchworth, 3 men, 3 ladies format and all who have taken part seem to have enjoyed playing. In this year's match played at Knights Templar leisure centre the Letchworth league retained the trophy by winning 2 (division/sections) - 1. As per the last two years it was an extremely exciting finale and the last best of 3-game rubber in division/section one, being won by Letchworth. If Stevenage had won it they would have won the Marshall Trophy – ie it was again, all on the last game of the last of the 18 rubbers!

10. Presentation Evening. Ian reported on the success again of the (joint – with Letchworth league) 2007 Presentation which repeated the previous years' format of a Marathon and 5-round quiz in the first half then presentation followed by a disco. There were again over 100 people but with nearly 30 less than 2006 the profit to each league was obviously reduced. The venue was, as in 2006, the Baldock Community Centre and Ian thanked his 'joint committee' colleagues, in particular Simon Bygrave who provides among other things, rounds for the quiz, Diana Meakin, Bob Green and those who helped move tables etc at the start, middle and end of the evening. Committee would be pleased to hear of suggestions for 2008.
11. 2007/2008 Committee. The Committee confirmed their willingness to continue and it was agreed that **Ian, Jan, Chris Bullock and Ken Abbott would remain the SBL Committee. A vote of thanks from Carl and words of appreciation and support for continuity came from Caroline and others.**
12. 2007/8 divisions Jan hoped that based on conversations she had had during the season more teams may be entering the SBL for next season and if so then it may be possible to have 4 divisions (an increase from 3 (with 22 teams for 2006-7) that have been in place for some years). In discussion it was felt that less games in more divisions would cause less strain to get all matches played and may encourage more teams to enter the SBL Cup. If 3 divisions continued it is **likely to be '2 up 2 down' but as always it does depend on the number of/teams re-entering**. If a 4th division was formed the teams in it were likely to be some from the current 3rd division and some new teams but the likely standard of those teams would be taken into account and contacts made with those teams before decisions were made. Generally it appeared that 4 divisions of 6 teams in each division would be acceptable – each team having 10 league matches. If that should be the situation for 2007-8 Roger raised the 'problem' of an early season drop out of a team leaving only 8 league matches accordingly.
13. Any Other Business
 - (i) Scoring Carl was invited to give his 'professional' (scorer's) view. He said Badminton England had trained umpires and it was unlikely to revert to the old system (games to 15/17 points). International and County matches and many juniors had been playing the new format for a year and although there may be a modification, again no major change or going back to the old system is likely. It was felt that the 'one minute interval' at 11 points could largely be disregarded.

The Biggleswade League had voted at their recent AGM to retain the ‘old system’ but this was only on the casting vote of the Chairman after a 7-7 tie. After a discussion of about 15 minutes **it was PROPOSED by Pat Miles and SECONDED by Carl Couzens that the SBL change to the new rally point scoring system.**

The voting was recorded as FOR, 14; AGAINST, 2; ABSTENTION, 1.

Gabor asked for a review and re-vote next year.

Further discussion took place about the possible difficulties when beginning to play the new system but those that had played it reassured others that it would become easier. It was generally agreed that swapping about ie playing old scoring in Biggleswade matches and new in other matches would be the most difficult aspect. It was hoped that the Letchworth and District League would change to the new system and it was felt this was likely as it was a Badminton England affiliated league – Biggleswade and SBL are not. It was felt that the Ladies may have some early difficulties and if competent scorers were available this would help. **Carl offered to send Jan/SBL a new ‘score pad’ to assist.**

(ii) Service Rule/s It was brought to the meeting’s attention that the service rule’s had changed last year and in particular “Rule 9. Service” which can be found on the Badminton England website. It was recognised that there are many different serving styles and that while players should know the rules, the friendly nature of the league should continue. This discussion led on to ‘calling’ and foul shots being briefly discussed. This has been an item of debate for many years but not generally seen to be a major problem; if anything players are sometimes over-generous in ‘calling’ their own shots when for consistency’s sake it may be best to call nothing. Opposition teams may often influence how teams call shots – or not. If players feel unhappy with their own shots ie that it is illegal then ‘call’ it but don’t be unhappy if opponents don’t appear to behave similarly. Again the friendly nature of the SBL was stressed

(iii) Men’s Singles Ladder SEE ABOVE

(iv) Refreshments (during rubbers) Jan said that there had been cases of home teams leaving courtside at the end of a game (with at least one game still to play in the rubber) to go and get refreshments without the courtesy of offering opponents refreshment or even telling opponents where they were going. Please would teams ensure this matter is addressed.

(v) Website Jan apologised for the recent difficulties because the website email facilities had not been working (and senders were not aware that emails were not being received) but should be ok now. Also more details might have been available regarding the Presentation arrangements. However Committee members’ telephone details are on the website so calls to Committee members were encouraged in such circumstances. **Jan asked that clubs who wished links to their websites to be displayed on the SBL should let her know.**

John Thompson asked about browser compatibility and Jan said she would advise John after making inquiries.

(vi) Affiliation Simon Carter asked about SBL league affiliation to Badminton England. Jan advised that there are clubs/players who are not affiliated and because SBL wanted to encourage people, particularly youngsters to play badminton in the first place did not want to seem to be putting any obstacle in place beforehand. Once established encouragement was given to become affiliated. John Peat agreed that this principle was absolutely right to ensure youngsters and others were given as much encouragement early on without any seeming deterrent or additional expense. Jan reminded the meeting of the SBL insurance which in addition to 'member to member liability' cover provide insurance for league/club organisers in relation to SBL matches etc.

(vii) Expenditure Further thoughts were expressed regarding saving costs/ increasing income – an offer of engraving by Gabor, an additional charge 'per match' and requesting Sport England for a grant towards court costs for the Junior Tournament and also asking Barnwell/court provider for reduced rates for Junior Tournament court costs. Committee will consider these as well as approaching Marshall Trophies.

14. Close. There being no further business, **PRE-PRINTED (WITH TEAM'S NAMES ON) PRE-SEASON ENTRY FORMS (PROVIDING FOR DISCOUNTS FOR AGM ATTENDEES AND 'SECOND TEAMS') WERE DISTRIBUTED TO THOSE PRESENT (FOR RETURN WITH FEES BY FRIDAY 20TH JULY 2007) and also Ladies Section forms were available.**
The meeting closed at 9.50pm.

*ISM
AUG2008*

The website address is www.stevenagebadmintonleague.co.uk.