Northants County Badminton
Committee Meeting Minutes

17th May 2024 at 6.30pm – Part 1
11 Hunsbury Close
West Hunsbury
Northampton
NN4 9UE

22nd May 2024 at 6.00pm – Part 2
Via Microsoft Teams

1. Apologies

Hon Lee Wai, Lucy Sturgess

2. Minutes from previous meeting

No changes required.

KES sent to Mel to sign and then they needed to be added to the web site

3. Matters Arising (if not agenda related)

None

4. Chair Persons Report

Badminton England Meeting

- Counties complaining that there is no communication of the coaching courses that are taking place in the areas. Badminton England have taken this on board hopefully this will change.
- Hon Lee Wai to be asked if he would like to do Level 1
- Zach Sturgess to do Level 2 – Get this booked after A levels as we can get the funding
- Do any PE teachers want to get on the course?
- Badminton England are now stream lining the management structure – there is a new chairperson for BE and for BE GB.
- Jenny Clark and Nick Rimmer have resigned and proposals have gone to the board to ratify and then the positions will be advertised - President and Vice President's positions are available.
- Their AGM is 22nd June 2024
- Sue Storey is looking to set up a Badminton England Charity to raise more funding.
- Olympics this year and the only players who have qualified are Ben Lane and Sean Vendy (Mens Doubles and then Kirsty Gilmour (no one else qualified)
- Paralympics – there are 4 players who have qualified
- All England has had a new branding - Courts are grey and the signage is neon blue and green. They sold over 40,000 tickets this year. There was a Kids for a Quid for school kids in Birmingham.

- There was a real emphasis on social media. Revenue from the All England was £832k.
- BWF are now creating a subsidiary company to try to raise more funding and prize money.
- Mike Reid has been working with a school in Gloucester and they have an all signing and all dancing facility. They do not lose the courts during exams.
- Cannot rely on government funding but have to use local funding. This means that we are on our own.
- National Schools Championship was a real success this year and hopefully next year will be even better.
- New Membership Manager called Kate and they want to improve the communication for all.
- Counties are being asked what members get for their affiliation to the county. We need to discuss this at the AGM.

5. Country Junior Squad

Head Coach Report
23rd May 20024

Season update,

Our first full competitive season has come to an end and its been great to see player development on court and on a social level.

Nine players played badminton overseas in Denmark last summer before the season started (after trials)

Ethan Feakin continues to press for a place on the England pathway by winning Gold medal in Gold Singles events – We look forward to seeing his progress over the coming year.

We also welcomed back Hayden Feakin to competitive badminton again and he made a large contribution to the team on his last junior badminton year.

I have a few players I would like to acknowledge for outstanding contributions to Northants badminton.

Ethan and Vivian for best boy/girl ICT for effort and team performances during the week.

Alfie Rimmer and Beatrix Ngan for best overall development across the year and for results

Alfie Rowley for his positive attitude and his conduct after his non selection for ICT. I know it was very hard for him, in all my years in badminton I have not seen such positive behaviour when dealing with disappointment. He will be a great asset to the senior teams in the future.

This was the first year since pre pandemic that we have competed in the shires league. I would like to thank players and parents for supporting this process as its important for players to compete in a team environment as well as BE individual tournaments.

Training has remained focused on developing skills and mastering technique as I am aware many of these young players are not getting this outside of our county sessions.

Merging the U19s into the later Wednesday group created a mixture of positives and negatives.

The group became full and it did not allow some of the players to move up to higher group and this was frustrating for coaches and players. I think we lost a couple of players due to this but they may have left anyway.

It has left group 1 with a lot of potential and with players that are keen to progress, but Its hard to get the progress needed with only 1 session a week however there are very good signs going forward.

We have tried to focus developing the girls in group 1 as we need more options in the future to fill teams and create competition.

I believe more competition within the girls at training is a priority and it makes the improvements within this group to date more impressive but we cant rely on this long term.

We have healthy training environment within the boys age groups and this has produced better players and competition for places.

Managing parent expectations of progress is something we as the coaching team are continually managing as we delve into matches against established counties.

At the moment it feels okay to be the underdog in battle.

The focal points of the season are Trials, Shires, ICT. This past season this was a new experience for many of us but all players have stepped up well to all these challenges.

ICT

The team selected to represent us improved on last year's results and for a moment we dared to dream of a top half place. However, on reflection progress in small steps is a much better approach. There was a fine line between us and our opponent and some very close matches against strong established counties. It shows we are on the right track for the future.

Eight of the ten players are eligible to return next year as well as potentially a new injection of players waiting in the wings.

Looking at the other counties at the recent ICT, many teams will have to rebuild next year, due to players that are too old to return for 2025 and I feel we can capitalise on this next time. There could be a huge shift in the results next year.

I believe a top half finish must be our ambition for 2025.

To achieve top half, we need to encourage more of Northants players to enter BE tournaments in all three events and to support them and help build their confidence to enable them to persevere and to better deal with pressure.

I would like to thank the coaching team and all the troops in the background that work behind the scenes. Positive parental support and trust in our plan is vital. And thank you to the players for stepping out onto court and to keep showing up, chasing shuttles.

Stephen Willis

- We would like to put forward to the ICT committee that the Mixed becomes the last event to play to reduce the pressure on the girls participating
- Ask if Vivien would like to do her Level 1 coaching

Under 15

There were 30 teams in the U15 age group and Northants came 25th. We played 6 games winning one of the matches and losing the other five.

Teams in our section were Warwickshire, Sussex, Middlesex, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Kent. We beat Sussex 12-8 which was a great result.

Under 17
There were 33 teams in the U17 age group and Northants came 27th. We played 6 games winning one of the matches and losing the other five.

Teams in our section were Worcestershire, Nottinghamshire, Hertfordshire 2, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Norfolk

We beat Worcestershire 14-6. Well played team.

Under 19
There were 29 teams in the U19 age group and Northants came 29th. We played 6 games unfortunately losing all the matches.

Teams in our section were Suffolk, Hertfordshire, Nottinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Bedfordshire.

The score against Cambridgeshire was 10-10 but we lost out by points in this game.

End of Season Bash
- Saturday 15th June 2024 for an Awards and Games presentation
- Agreed that we will buy "caps" for the players who have played 5 or 10 games

Sachin to do poster and then KES to send out

6. County Seniors

- 1st team were demoted which was very disappointing and will therefore be playing in Division 3 next season. We have to nominate players by 31st October 2024
- 2nd team won one game beating the third team
- 3rd team lost all their matches
- We need to decide if we keep the third team or not
- We need to see what we can get as the commitment from the Seniors
- See if we can do two Sunday's per month for the Senior squad – training
- Notification out to all Seniors as to who wants to commit and this will determine what teams we put in

7. County Masters

- Need to look to see if we can enter the Masters league for next year
- Would we be able to enter the ICT Masters?

8. Northants League

- Mens Division 1 winners were Soaring Shuttles
- Mens Division 2 winners were Towcester B
- Ladies winners were Kettering
- Mixed winners were Kettering
- Doubles winners were Kettering

- We will get trophies for the leagues as we cannot find where they have all gone
- In order to try to balance out the divisions more that the combined AGM, there will be a rule change presented where two teams go up and down
- We want to look to see if we can get a third Mens Division
    - Bugbrooke to put second team
    - Apollo to put in second team in Mens
    - DK Way to put in team in Mens and Ladies
    - Oundle to enter a Mens Team
- £5 to enter a team in the league
- We have not yet got the accounts from the league but hopefully they will be presented at the combined AGM

9. Social Media and Web Site Update

- Social Media is all going well and Badminton England have even started to follow us
- We have 222 followers
- Engagement is a little less as we are not posting as much at the moment
- Link between Li Ning and Northants makes us look more professional
- Rob Cunnliffe is going to do a new Web Site for County and the League

10. Past Events

- Badminton Festival – There were 56 players and many schools turned up
- Oundle won all the trophies
- It was a good start and the players loved the T Shirts

11. Trophies

- New League trophies to be purchased

12. Financial Matters

Junior Accounts

INCOME EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31/05/2024

		2023/2024		2022/2023	
		£		£	
INCOME					
	Squad & match fees	£ 24,196.52		£ 4,824.00	
	Bank/Card Fees	(191.28)			
	ICT Players fees	£ 1,750.00		£ 1,715.00	
	NBA ICT entry contribution				
	Local Tournaments	£ 241.00			
	NSSF Affiliations	£ 930.00		£ 630.00	
	Savings account interest	£ 332.53			
	Other - shuttle sale			£ 196.00	
	Shirts Income			£ 740.00	*added shirts income and printing
	Printing Income			£ 150.00	
	Senior County Income less refunds	£ 2,321.00			
		£ 29,579.77		£ 8,257.00	
EXPENDITURE					
	Hire of Hall	£ 12,743.70		£ 1,386.84	
	Coaches expenses	£ 5,742.50			
	Additional coaching resources				
	Affiliation/Entry Fees	£ 1,143.00		£ 200.00	
	ICT accomodation	£ 3,130.40		£ 2,856.00	
	ICT Expenses	£ 2,560.00	Shirts & Minibus	£ 850.00	
	Trophies & Engraving	£ 1,380.47		-	
	U15/U17 BE Tournament Expenses			-	
	Entry Fees	£ 439.35	Shires League, Herts Team Challenge & Paypal fee		
	Shuttlecocks	£ 1,370.00		-	
	Coaching course contribution			£ 250.00	
	Summer Fairs & festivals	£ 787.53			
	Subscriptions	£ 374.79			
	Admin, Post and Insurance			-	
	Parents evening			-	
	Website	£ 194.07		£ 219.98	
	Tournament support			-	
	Refunds	£ 56.66		£ 44.00	
	Misc	£ 297.96		-	
	Shirts	£ 2,212.50		£ 1,415.00	*shirts for county and ICT - inc printing
		£ 32,432.93		£ 7,221.82	
NET TO/(FROM) RESERVES			£ (2,853.16)		£ 1,035.18
RESERVES					
Opening		£ 45,681.61		£ 29,680.22	
Movement		£ (2,853.16)		£ 1,035.18	
Closing		£ 42,828.45		£ 31,540.40	
Represented by:	At bank	£ 44,572.72		£ 31,090.40	
	Paypal??	£ -		£ 12,291.21	
	PSA account	£ 2,300.00		£ 2,300.00	
		£ 46,872.72		£ 45,681.61	

Notes

1. First year fully running and the set up costs were always going to exceeded the income. We were aware of this and with healthy reserves, this wasn't soemthing we were concerned about. If we manage to collefct all outstinding fees, then our projected end of year accounts would have been in surplus.
2. Coaching staff is now being paid for coaching, against 2022/23 accounts.
3. Shirt costs for the year 2024/25 will be greatly reduced due to the 2 year term of shirts.

4 Would suggest that we change the collection of the fees to the start of the season, as its clear player/parents seem to think that this is a pay as you go, and we cannot run a county on this basis. At the time we broke the membership fee into monthly payments for affordability,however this is taking up a lot of admin time. County players need to make a commitment for the year. County fees are non-refundbale.

5 understand that this will be a difficult process and I don't want this to damage the reputation of the county but it isn't fair for those that have paid and continue to pay. Parents need to be more aware of what is included in the membership fee - not just training sessions.

6 We have had major issues with the bank and hand over: its taken 6 months to sort the address out and the new mandate signatoires. So Karen and Melissa have managed to keep the accounts ticking over and pay our creditors on time to enabel the smooth running of the junior county.

7 We have an U15 Bronze tournamwtn scheduled for the 5th October. We can always run two next year (2025) and make these a regular annula event. We will need volunteers to help run these events and learn how.

Debtors:

Ben Edmead	£	226.70
Georgia Atkinson	£	56.72
Karmen Kong	£	249.96
Kira Kong	£	340.02
Charlie Burnett	£	396.68
Trisha Chauhan	£	283.36
Adam Hoang	£	396.68
Cheryl Chung	£	170.04
Henry Pitt	£	283.36
Tymoteusz Cieslik	£	170.04
Ashwin Ramani	£	113.38
Roshan Ramani	£	113.38
Dakshan Premkumar	£	226.70
Kaidyn Kong	£	283.36
Libby Thompson	£	56.72
Benjamin Thomas	£	226.70
Isaac Li	£	56.66
Zachary Dicks-Jones	£	56.66
Elina Bhundia	£	56.66
Krishan Bhundia	£	56.66
Jian Huang	£	340.02
An Huang	£	340.02
		-
	£	4,500.48

- We discussed and agreed drawing a line under this year and move forward but ensuring that the letters of invitation cover all queries raised this year
- Some payments should come in as DDs were pending
- £200 received from Ombudsman
- Committee asked for the accounts to be presented at each committee meeting:
  - Income
  - Expenditure

Seniors

INCOME EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31/05/24

			2023/2024			2022/2023	
			£			£	
INCOME							
	Memberships	£	2,879.97		£	2,649.27	
	Senior Squad	£	30.00		£	485.00	
	Masters Squad				£	-	
	Tournaments	£	459.65		£	497.00	
	Other	£	29.50		£	268.00	
	Bank Interest	£	78.57		£	33.65	
		£	**3,477.69**				£ **3,932.92**
EXPENDITURE							
Senior	Court Hire				£	199.76	
	Shuttles		£ 1,266.00		£	-	
				* from 2022/23 -			
	Entry Fees	?	£ 2,475.00	BE invoice	£	1,500.00	
	Training/Coaching				£	430.00	
	Expenses		£ 60.49				£ 2,129.76
	Shirts		£ 1,890.00		£	-	
	Printing		£ 210.00		£	-	
					£	-	
					£	-	
							£ -
Tournaments	Court Hire				£	691.20	
	Shuttles ?				£	488.75	
	Trophies		£ 2,793.95		£	71.96	
							£ 1,261.91
NBA Activities	NSCBA				£	-	
	Handbook & Website				£	-	
	Admin		£ 20.00		£	10.00	
	Others				£	430.50	
							£ 440.50
			£ **8,715.44**				£ **3,832.17**
NET TO/(FROM) RESERVES				£ **(5,237.75)**			£ **100.75**
RESERVES							
Opening			£ **22,210.35**				£ 22,109.60
Movement			£ (5,237.75)				£ 100.75
Closing			£ 16,972.60				£ 22,210.35
Represented by	At bank		£ 19,348.56				£ 22,210.35
	Paypal		£ -				
			£ **19,348.56**				£ **22,210.35**

1 **Note :** restricted court hire hasn't been passed over to seniors due to admin issues with Juniors.

2 All income from restricted is in the account

3 We have modernised and replaced the masters trophies for the Masters restricted and this has been big expenditure for this season and an investment for the future. We look forward to a growing restricted masters tournament.

- Karen and Mel now have access to the Senior Account. This has only just happened in the last few weeks

Expenses policy

- Need a written expenses policy to ensure that the committee is covered
  Karen S to draft this and then committee to discuss

13. Coaching

Covered above

14. Safeguarding and Welfare Update

- The Safeguarding officer should have their photo on a poster so players and parents are aware who our Safeguarding Office is.
- All members on committee to have a DBS certificate. Coaches are already covered
- Key tags to be given to all the children so that they can scan it to see safeguarding information. This takes you to BE safeguarding web site
- We need to ensure that we a First Aid box and a qualified First Aider at every session
- We should report all low level incidents all the time – keep log / write down
- Guidelines on parents dropping and picking children up from the hall and not the car park to be written up. Include in next seasons letter

15. Any other business

<u>Review of ICT</u>

- We discussed the selection and communication of those successfully chosen for ICT this year.
- Lody did not receive her letter and final confirmation of selection until after all the other players and Becky felt that this was not fair, badly handled and unprofessionally. The impact on Lody was negative. These sentiments came from Nick as a parent and Becky as a Committee member
- Stephen explained that the selection was done with agreement from all. The letter had been prepared and was ready for Lody when she was able to prove her fitness
- Steve, Simon and Mel spoke to Lody and asked Becky to attend. Mel attended so that Lody was not with 2 males only
- Becky stated that Lody was not carrying an injury
- Becky disagreed with the statements that had been made previously regarding the Eligibility policy for ICT and stated that all players were eligible. It did not need to be changed.
- Becky was unhappy about the fact that at the previous committee meeting that we had agreed that there was to be no request for special dispensation for the Aplin twins but this had been requested my Mel
- Mel stated that this was not for ICT but in relation to a safe guarding issue
- The following timeline of events from Becky was added to the Northants Committee WhatsApp as Becky had to leave the meeting due to other commitments

  9th Feb committee meeting. Stephen & Melissa asked the committee to apply for 'special dispensation' for the Applin twins to move from Bucks to Northants to be allowed to be selected for the ICT team. This was denied by the committee.

  10th Feb (10.42am) Mel proposed to suspend the eligibility criteria via a WhatsApp poll due to not enough of the the current Northants players satisfying the criteria else we'll have to withdraw from ICT.

  11th Feb Committee returned votes to suspend criteria 6-9 on the grounds to be able to submit a team.
  Mel then emailed ICT to apply for a 'special dispensation' for the Applin twins to move to Northants.
  Mel then emailed parents of 9 boys & 7 girls to "attend match training sessions to allow selection team to decide on the ICT team" ONLY from these selected. The email stated "The team will be selected in March & notified by post"

12th Feb ICT competition team acknowledged request from Northants County.

17th Feb player nominations deadline for ICT although the email invitation from Northants county made it clear this selection could be changed right up until the start of ICT.

4th March ICT competition team rejected the 'special dispensation' request

7th March Northants County confirmed to ICT they would respect the process of NO route of appeal. However during this time the parents of the Applin twins sent ICT a lot of communication trying to make an appeal.

13th March ALL PLAYERS except for Lody was told yes or no for ICT selection.

17th March Becky chatted to the Applin twins mum who told me Stephen & Melissa had been great helping her with an appeal for ICT putting in a complaint. Stephen & Melissa told me (20th March) it was "a safeguarding concern that I wasn't privy to that went straight to the top of BE"

20th March Becky spoke with Stephen and was joined by Melissa after county training to ask for a decision on ICT selection (ICT only 2 weeks away) and I didn't think it was fair or good for her welfare being singled out & left hanging on. This led to a full scale argument.

Summary below:
Becky was told to "seriously consider your position on the committee" several times by Mel.
When asked why they are waiting to tell Lody Stephen replied "I'm getting a lot of feedback making me feel uncomfortable and under pressure" "she was off for a bad back" (back in Dec/Jan) "she's only played 1 tournament and that's the conditions" "I haven't seen her for a month" (we went on a planned ski holiday for a week!)
Mel said "Why don't you spend your energy in making Lody work harder rather than having me & Steve changing our decisions all the time" "if this hadn't happened tonight she probably would've been told tonight" "you need to remove yourself from the committee"
When asked are you holding out for the Applin paperwork to come through Mel replied "a) we couldn't get it done in time if we wanted to & b) they've (Applin girls) already played for Bucks this year so even if we wanted to" Then Mel admitted an application had been submitted subject to a serious complaint at BE. (Even though Mel put a special dispensation in 11th Feb straight after the criteria was suspended)
When asked why she hadn't told the committee about applying for a dispensation Mel replied "I don't have to" she said the twins wouldn't be playing for ICT because they're not old enough at 12 years old
When asked why did they ask the committee to apply in the first place Mel replied "to give us options" Mel said it was "Bang out of order" that I accused her of going against the committee. I asked BE and they sent me the information on this time line as fact.
Meeting ended with me saying sorry they both got upset and that it wasn't my intention and left. I just wanted a decision for Lody yes or no. It shouldn't have come to this and needs attention for next year!

22nd March 5pm post Lody received a letter offering her a place to ICT 10 days after everyone else!

In addition I've checked the eligibility criteria against each player and everyone who was finally selected for ICT satisfied the original criteria before we suspended it. (Except Jo Bryant) Therefore it wasn't actually necessary to suspend to form a team. This needs to be written out and checked properly not done in a rush over a WhatsApp poll.

- Becky felt that this had an impact on the welfare of the children, was very poor practice and wanted to see an apology sent to Lody
- Steve felt that the county is where is now due to the hard work and effort that they have put in and that sometimes we make mistakes and tread on people's toes. We cannot get everything right and apologised for that
- On reflection, Simon felt that we did not handle it in the right way and was sorry if we did not get this right and apologised to Becky
- There was a lot of discussion and points made by all committee members debating this issue
- Letter of apology to be sent to Lody and Becky/Nick

Extra coaches

- We need to get more coaches on board

AGM Preparation

- There are 500 members affiliated to Northamptonshire
- We need to get 25% to AGM

Forms and criteria for 2024 / 2025

Trials

- 9th June 2024
- So far response has been good and new players have signed up

Affiliation fees

- £10 affiliation fee – more junior players in the county to then fill into the clubs

Future Committee Meetings

- Agreed that the Agenda will be sent out 2 weeks before the meeting
- Reports 1 week before the meeting so that they can be read
- Meetings to then cover any questions

Council and BE – Purpose built facility

- Leisure Centre at Weston Favel is being rebuilt
- BE – agreement is that 2 nights per week this can be used and they are putting money into this building
- We need a 5-10 year plan
- Look to see if we can get our own plot of land so we can have our own facility
- The land near Sixfields is to be sold so that the football club can get money back for the stand to be built
- See if we can get other hall – CCS – NSB - NSG
- Jonny to see if we can get a metal dome

Code of conduit

- Re-issue BE code of conduit to all members of the committee

Meetings closed:
Friday 9.30pm
Wednesday 8.30pm

Signed: **Chairperson:** Melissa Gentle	**Date:**
Signed: **Secretary:** Karen Sturgess	**Date:**