

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BADMINTON COMMITTEE OF THE WIMBLEDON RACQUETS & FITNESS CLUB HELD ON WEDNESDAY 17th April 2019 AT 7.15PM

PRESENT: Ms H. Nicolson; Ms. J. Wadey; Mr. S. Di Nardo; Mr. R. Debidin; Mr. W. Fannin for items 039/19 to item 047/19.
Ms. C. Baker (Club Manager) for items 039/19 to item 042/19.

APOLOGIES: Mr. B. Beckman; Mr. R. Wheeler; Ms. C. Wu; Mr. K. Manro.

039/19 Appointment of Chairman: Ms Helle Nicolson was re-appointed as chairman.

040/19 Minutes of the meeting of 13th March: Minutes of the meeting of 13th March 2019 were confirmed approved.

041/19 Report from Manager:

- a) Computer System: The new club computer system continues to cause problems and staff members have been struggling. A complaint has been issued to the supplier and an IT person has been helping to solve problems. Some issues have been resolved, but a lot of problems are being had with the booking system.
- b) New Assistant Manager: The new assistant manager, Mark Adkins, has now started in his position, and has been helping other staff members with the computer system.
- c) Emails to Club Members: CB noted that the problems with members not receiving club emails is being solved, and that mainly it is due to members having inadvertently unsubscribed.
- d) Senior Gold Tournament: CB has thanked the organisers for running this event.
- e) Session Night Courtesy: It has been noted by staff that they are experiencing less problems with players vacating courts at the end of session nights.
- f) Court Cleanliness: Courts are noticeably cleaner now, following communication with coaches on this issue.
- g) Shuttle collection for Saturday Junior Sessions: It was noted that used shuttles were not being collected, but taken by members or left on courts, following session nights. CB to speak to Carol about the collection and storing of shuttles for the Junior sessions (**ACTION CB**). RD to remind session reps of shuttle collection for juniors (**ACTION RD**). The BC decided to appoint RD as new Session Rep. Representative (previously Peter Friel, now Board member).
- h) Friday Daytime Session: Following the request of members, the session time has been moved to the earlier time of 12.30-2.30pm (previously the session ran from 1.30-3.30pm). A member has requested that the club organises a communication platform, in order that members can ascertain attendance numbers in advance of these sessions, which have been poorly attended. CB noted that this was not feasible, but that contact details of interested members could be collected in order that the group could arrange amongst themselves via whatsapp group or similar. BC members agreed, but also noted that the session should be better advertised to help it grow.
- i) New Court Sweep: A new court sweep has been purchased.

- j) Website: Jerry Cheng and Mark Adkins (assistant manager) have been working on updating the club website. CB requested pictures of BC members to be added to the website (**ACTION HN**).

042/19

Report from Match Secretary:

- JW reported that 3 matches had still to be played, including the Senior (A players) and Junior (B+ players) Hybrid Cup Finals, on Friday 17th May at Ebbisham. To date, 111 matches has been played. Surrey League: Played 100; won 64; lost 36. Sutton and District League: Played 11; won 4; lost 5; drew 2; conceded 1. Four teams in the Surrey League have won their divisions: A Men's Team; top of division 2; played 10; won 10. The team will be promoted back into division 1; A Mixed 1st team; top of division 1; played 9; won 9. One match still to be played, but result will not alter top position; B+ Ladies; top of division 3; played 10; won 9; lost 1; B+ Mixed 2; top of division 5; played 8; won 6; lost 2. The two B+ teams should be promoted to the divisions above.
- JW noted reported that a WRFC team had failed to show for a match in the Sutton and District League, due to a misunderstanding. The club has sent apologies and compensation of £40 to the manager of the other team.
- It was noted that the BC may not be able to sponsor the A 1st teams in the coming season, as the monies allocated by the BC for this did only cover one season. Discussion ensued on possibilities of finding sponsorship for the teams to cover the match fees. SDN suggested setting up a Linked-In page for club members, to be useful if looking for members interested in sponsorship. SDN to discuss with club manager (**ACTION SDN**).
- The committee discussed potential incentives to encourage new members to join the club and/or play in the teams. It was decided to put a proposal forward to the Board, to trial a reduced (half price) 1st year membership to all new members, and to see this if this would encourage new members to join and stay following their introduction year (**ACTION HN**).

043/19

Report from Head of Badminton: Report received from BB was noted and discussed. High level Summary as follows:

- a) Review of Funding Criteria for Elite Players: Senior Criteria to include doubles and mixed doubles players. New Junior criteria to apply only to players on an England programme.
- b) Easter Camps: The Easter Camps were a big success and exceeded the targets for players to ensure the sessions broke even. Players were offered a broad range of on court and off court training sessions, to experience what it is like to be an elite player. BB would like to thank Georgina Bland for organising the camps.
- c) Regrades: BB has spoken to all, except one member, potentially affected by the regrading at the end of the season. BB will speak to the member concerned later this week (**ACTION BB**). Final decisions will be made at the end of April and affected members consulted again (**ACTION BB**).
- d) Issues between session members: BB reported some issues raised between session members and session reps. These were discussed by members of the BC and believed to be resolved with no need for further action.

- e) Friday Daytime Session: Session time changed to 12.30-2.30pm to accommodate members on school runs. Email addresses of members regularly attending have been shared (with permission) between members, to help them communicate with each other on their attendance each week.
- f) PC Sessions for Next Term: PC sessions have been priced for the first half term of the summer term, due to potential changes later in the term.
- g) Saturday Coaches: A whatsapp group has been created for ease of communication between coaches. BB has contacted a number of potential new coaches for the sessions, but has only heard back from one. BB will push to get more people involved in coaching the sessions after the Easter break (**ACTION BB**).
- h) Wimbledon Gold: Congratulations to WRFC members Zoe Hallam (ladies and mixed doubles semi-finalist), Alex Green (men's doubles semi-finalist), Ben Hunt (men's singles runner up) and Georgina Bland (ladies' singles winner). Also, former WRFC members Andrew Heinemann (men's singles semi-finalist) and Sam Lyle (men's singles winner). BB would like to thank Jenny and Judith for organising this event.
- i) Club Mark Accreditation: Most documents have been uploaded and are pending approval.
- j) Yonex: BB has spoken to the representative from Yonex about potential ways in which Yonex could help our club and coaching team. HN has since emailed the representative as well to follow up, but is awaiting reply.
- k) Court Cleanliness: BB has emailed all coaches about making sure courts are swept and left clean following training sessions.
- l) Juniors in Club Champs: A few parents have asked about the rules on this. BB will confirm the decision to the parents (**ACTION BB**).
-The committee agreed that juniors graded B or above can play in the tournament regardless of age, but that juniors entering C and C+ events must be over 14 years of age (ACTION HN to confirm to BB).

044/19

Disability Badminton: Summary of report received from Lorraine Brydie: New PD disability sessions still to go ahead as planned, starting end of April. LB has provided a projected *Income and Expenditure* spreadsheet for the Disability sessions which are to receive funding. Despite funding being less than expected, the sessions still look to break even. A taster session for SEN schools have been organised for Friday the 8th November and will also receive part or full funding. In addition, LB has been successful in an application to the Wimbledon Foundation 'Get Set, Get Active Fund, for disability renewal of racquets. A grant of £540 has been awarded for this. Emma Stoner, SL4 Para Badminton Player gave demonstration at the All England Badminton Championships and will be playing at the Fazza Dubai Para Badminton International 2nd-7th April.

045/19

General Topics:

- a) Regrading: BC members expressed concern that a session member has yet to be consulted of potential regrading (**ACTION BB**: to consult member asap). All members affected are to be communicated final decisions prior to the beginning of the summer season.
- b) Friday Session: As noted above (see Manager's and HOB reports) the session has been moved to an earlier time to accommodate members.

- c) 'No Strings' Sessions: Sessions planned to start from Sunday 12th May, running Sundays from 7-9pm, for a trial period over the summer. Two courts to be allocated to start with, until the session grows. Session to be priced at £4.00, and using plastic shuttles. RD to be in charge of organising and running the sessions, including advertising. RD to contact Claire for the contact details of previous attendees of the beginner course, to encourage interest in the new strings sessions. **(ACTION RD)**
- d) Developing Coaching Team: HN reported that she has been in contact with BE relationships Manager Chris Evans, about funding opportunities for coach development schemes within the club, to help build and secure our coaching team for the future. It was noted that Individuals can apply independently for BE coach bursaries of up to 50% of course fees for level 1 and level 2 qualifications. Affiliated Clubs who are looking to grow their coaching teams and sessions, can also apply for coach bursaries in combination with a club support grant/club investment funding, in order to help cater for new sessions and session growth. HN is considering how the club can submit a successful application, and benefit from these opportunities, in order to develop and improve sessions.
- RD noted that he has spoken to some of the coaches of the Saturday Junior sessions and learned that they were still short of coaches in the sessions. RD has offered to help, but nor heard back from BB on this **(ACTION HN to consult BB)**.
- In order to help build our coaching team it was also decided that the Committee would 'sponsor' members interested in gaining coaching qualifications, in return for the fees being paid back through hours put back into the club. It was agreed that any club funding would be reserved for members with a long- term commitment to the club.
- e) Elite Funding Criteria Review: A revised funding criteria for senior elite players was discussed along with a new additional junior funding criteria. The aim is to provide a new simple criteria, incorporating senior doubles players as well as junior players on BE programmes **(ACTION HN)**.
- f) Club Kit Sponsorship Proposal: It was decided not to pursue a proposal from a member to set up an online WRFC kit shop with an online clothing company. The committee considered that the kit was too expensive, and that there would not be enough interest from members. It was also considered that it may conflict with the clubs' current sponsorship agreement with Yonex. The BC will look into alternative areas for sponsorship opportunities, including club tournaments and club teams. **(ACTION HN to inform the member of the decision)**. New BC member Sergio Di Nardo agreed to take a leading role in looking into sponsorship opportunities.

046/19

Complaints and Communication with members: It was noted that a court booking error had caused issues between members on a session night, and that a match was delayed due to the error. The committee considered the error may have been caused by the computer booking system.

047/19

Tournaments/Events:

- Wimbledon Gold Report (summary) from Judith Fisher: JF reported disappointment with the number of players entering the tournament this year, as well as with the overall standard of the competitors. In addition, 25 entrants withdrew from the event (many of them after the draw was published). Congratulations to Georgina (ladies'

singles winner) and Sam Lyle (men's singles winner). JF would like to thank Jenny Lacey and John Herdman, as well Claire baker, kitchen staff and the BC members helping during the tournament. JF hopes that a revised date will bring a more respectable entry next season.

- Cranbrook Singles: The Cranbrook Singles Tournament was cancelled due to insufficient entries.
- Club Championships: Starting April 30th (finals day Saturday 18th May). Final preparations were planned and discussed, including BC duty rota, prizes and social media coverage of the events. HN to find out how which junior events will be played on the finals day (**ACTION HN**). Draws to be done on Wednesday May 24th.

048/19

BC Focus:

- Report on Board meeting of 27th March (HN): As the club AGM has been held since the last Board meeting, and attended by the members of the committee, all committee members are well aware of the important issues occupying the Board, and the challenges now facing the club and its future (see AGM reports for more information).
- Restructure and Academy: The Committee is still waiting for final confirmation from the Board, in order to proceed, but is very much hoping to be in a position to help move the club forwards soon with these exciting plans. An information meeting is planned to be held with parents, as soon as in a position to do so. Until then, the existing performance sessions will continue to run as normal.
- Sponsorship and fundraising: Potential possibilities for gaining sponsorship for various areas within the badminton sector were discussed. SDN has started some research into this and will be exploring potential options further (**ACTION SDN**).
- Application from A session member to join the BC: The committee is pleased to be able to welcome A session member Freddy Birks onto the Badminton Committee (**ACTION HN** to contact FB and confirm his appointment).

049/19

Action Points for Club managers/Board/Other Pending: The committee to request from manager/reception a list of entries for each event, in preparation for the club champs draw (**ACTION HN**).

050/19

Confidential Matters/Any Other Business: Nil.

*Date of next meeting to be confirmed (**ACTION HN**).