**MSDBA League Secretary Report**

**2017 – 2018**

In my first year as the MSDBA League Secretary, I would like to summarise the events of the last season and report back on the new MSDBA website, which I have helped set up and administer.

Before I do, it is important to acknowledge the huge contribution made by individual club match secretaries and those that have assisted in arranging for games to be played. Without the efforts of those who take time out of their own busy lives to arrange games on our behalf, the league simply would not exist and so I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you all.

This year, some clubs were forced to reduce the number of teams they entered into the leagues for various reasons. This resulted in us eventually setting up three Men’s divisions and two mixed combi divisions. A lack of Ladies teams meant it was difficult set up two separate divisions and so we opted for just the one, albeit slightly on the large side.

We did welcome two new clubs, Holbrook who entered both a Men’s team and a Mixed team and Brighton Bats who entered a team in the Ladies league. We hope that you have both enjoyed your first season with us and that we will see you again next year, and who knows, even with more teams?

This year also saw the introduction of the new ‘feeder divisions’ for both the men’s leagues and mixed combi leagues. Due to the number of teams being entered, it was not practicable to have a feeder division in the Ladies’ league. The purpose of the feeder divisions was to provide a platform for those who did not feel confident enough to play competitive matches, both inexperienced players and those who felt they were no longer able to play competitively in the higher divisions. As we were unable to run a ‘Junior’ league this year, it was also an opportunity for clubs to enter a Junior team to encourage our youngsters to begin playing competitive matches.

From the feedback I have received, and having spoken with Nick Saunders, I would say that the feeder divisions have proved successful and I would propose that we continue with them in the same format for next season. I would also propose that where ‘Junior’ teams have been successful and would normally be promoted upwards, they should be given the option to either do so or remain in the feeder division. The rationale being that the players in the junior teams can change quite frequently and that playing at a more competitive level can be a little intimidating and we would not wish to deter our younger players from taking part.

Trophies will be presented shortly but I would like to add my own congratulations to all of our winners who are listed below. It has once again been an enjoyable and competitive season and their victories are thoroughly deserved.

**Winners**

Men’s Combi Div 1 – Lewes A

Men’s Combi Div 2 – Hassocks B

Men’s Combi div 3 (Combi) – Holbrook

Ladies Combi – Lewes A

Mixed Combi Div 1 – Hassocks A

Mixed Combi Div 2 (Feeder) – Dolphin A

One slight disappointment was the amount of matches that had to be cancelled this year, which was significantly higher than in recent seasons. I know that none of us would not want to play games and the reasons were genuine but I would remind all clubs of the regulations, particularly those that relate to notifying your opponents of any cancellation in good time. There is of course an option to play by fielding an ineligible player to make up the numbers. Whilst the win will always be awarded to the opposing team, at least the game goes ahead and people’s evenings are not wasted. (Just a thought).

I turn now to the new MSDBA website, which has been running for a year now. Special thanks to Andrew Craig who help design the site and has agreed to administer it for us.

Overall, I think the new website has worked well. We have explored the possibility of clubs being able to enter their own results as they did previously but this is not feasible, according to Andrew, without giving administration rights for the whole website.

That said, the inputting of results has not been overly time consuming and I believe there are benefits to having forthcoming fixtures being published for everyone to see.

The real benefit of the new website is that we are able to put our own updates on it (as opposed to having to ask the previous administrator) and use the site to spread news and information to both members of the MSDBA and beyond. This ‘tool’ is currently underutilised but it is open for all clubs to take advantage of. As well as advertising your clubs and your contact details, if you have an upcoming event, whether that be a social event or an open evening at the club to attract new members, please drop me an email and I will publish something on your behalf. I am also trying to get our ‘Facebook page’ spread further. If you have not signed up to it yet, please do so, simply search for ‘Mid Sussex & district Badminton Association’ and please spread the word to your ‘Facebook Friends’.

Brian Hobbs

MSDBA League Secretary