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NEWSLETTER OF WEST BRIDGFORD HOCKEY CLUB

Making Haste Slowly.....

A Step Into the Unknown

The main news on the playing front is that the mens' Midlands League has been completely re-organised while the Notts Womens' League has also been changed, albeit less radically. Later on in this newsletter are details of what division each of our teams will be gracing this coming season.

So far as actual hockey is concerned, our mens' teams had a good season, on the whole, the exceptions being the 1sts, who narrowly avoided the threat of "relegation" into the new structure and the 4ths, who despite a seemingly poor record actually improved significantly as the season went on.

The 1sts are mainly suffering from the loss of our main goalscorer, meaning that despite playing well in a number of games, we ended up losing by the odd goal. As in many previous seasons, we improved considerably after Christmas, losing only to the top 3 teams and shading games by the odd goal instead of losing them. Following relegation the previous season, the 2nds and 3rds both performed much better and both finished 2nd in their re-

spective leagues. The 2nds were the club's top goalscorer beating 100 for the first time in a while. The 5ths started very strongly but fell away due to injuries and the problem of rearranged fixtures while the 6ths got better as the season went on, with the younger players improving all the time. The 7ths, 8ths and 9ths all had similar seasons, on paper, while the 10ths were 2nd in their league and scored far more goals than usual, courtesy of club top scorer Dave Taylder and latterly 13 year old Ollie Keays. The 8ths, with their juniors improved through the season, while the 9ths brought a number of juniors such as Ryan Bloodworth and Alex Rudkin, who helped their performances to such an extent that they were promoted into the 8ths as the season went on!

On the ladies side, all the teams performed well with the exception of the 1sts who suffered relegation back into the Notts League. The 1sts never really got going, suffering from the lack of a regular goalscorer, the loss of captain Alice Lineker and injury to new cap-

tain, Aimi Dickinson, and poor availabilities, although they did put in some good performances, notably in the pre Christmas games against Loughborough Univ and Mkt Harborough. The 2nds got better as the season went on, scoring lots of goals after Christmas, the 3rds were the opposite, their pre Christmas form having been excellent - they actually suffered from trying to help the 2nds get as high up the table as possible, often going to games with only 11 players. The 4ths, 5ths and 6ths all got better through the season as the juniors, in particular, got used to playing adult hockey and improved accordingly, the 4ths ended up by achieving promotion within the revised league structure. I umpired games for all the ladies teams during the season and was struck by the improvement in standard of both ourselves and the opposition from when I stated umpiring them, nearly 20 years ago. Some great hockey was played by all the teams. Great credit should be given to Emily Fox and her 6th team, in particular, as they performed brilliantly in their 1st season after being formed.

Playing Record

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Men							
1	22	5	7	10	44	57	22
2	22	14	4	4	102	40	46
3	22	16	3	3	79	31	51
4	20	2	2	16	25	90	8
5	20	7	3	10	49	56	24
6	20	8	6	6	43	39	30
7	20	10	2	8	48	62	32
8	20	9	3	8	39	46	30
9	20	9	3	8	36	32	30
10	20	16	1	3	79	27	49
Ladies							
1	18	3	3	12	21	53	12
2	22	11	6	5	68	30	39
3	23	9	2	11	41	45	29
4	19	9	7	3	30	18	34
5	20	11	4	5	48	23	37
6	20	11	3	8	50	31	36

The club tournament took place on a lovely day and was enjoyed by all. The **Mike Price Challenge** match, was won, as per tradition, by the Doug Stuart XI and we were delighted that Mike's son, Chris, in Joan's unavoidable absence, was able to attend and present the trophy. The annual Grizzlies v All Stars, was keenly contested as usual, although the Grizzlies eventually ran out comfortable winners. On the ladies side, we once again managed to put a development team of juniors, Back to Hockeys plus a couple of ringers together and they did well against the 5ths, although it never looked like anyone would manage to score. Highlight of the day on the ladies side was the inventive fancy dress efforts of our various teams!

Now is the time for my broken record to be put on the turntable, however! Once

again, we have struggled to put consistent teams out every week - sometimes, any teams at all! Partly this was to do with the snow, which caused a fixtures pile up towards the end of the season, but we still suffer from poor availability in general and players not letting captains know they can't play until the last minute. We need everyone who plays for our club to play your part. Don't forget, our club officials, including our chairs of selectors and team captains all do this in our spare time! Please try to be available as much as possible during the league season - all mens' fixture dates and oppositions are already on the MRHA website, www.mrha.co.uk so you can plan your holidays, marriages, births, etc, around this, while ladies fixtures will be on the fixtures live site www.fixtureslive.com soon - it's a nightmare for captains to have to promote and then drop players through no fault of their own, it's also really difficult for captains to have to deal with last minute cry offs, which were also far too common last season - if you say that you are available, please make sure that you are!

Next Season our teams will feature in the following leagues/divisions:

Men	
Midland League	
1	Mids Premier
2	Mids 3
3	NE Premier
4	NE 1
5/6	NE 2
7/8	NE 3
9/10	NE 4

Ladies

Notts League

- 1 Premier
- 2 Championship
- 3,4 Div 1
- 5,6 Div 3

On the mens' side, matters are further confused by the re-naming of the 9ths as the 10ths and the 10ths as the 9ths! nb I will be testing your understanding of all this in the bar as the season unfolds.

Team Captains

Here is the list of team captains for the forthcoming season:

Men: Ben Farrar, TBC (2nds), Matt Alvey, Mark Johnson, Richard Smith, Ian Freegard/ Jon Wells, Jon Cockcroft, Mike Barnes, Chris Garnham, Mike Walsh/Richard Bonsall.

Ladies: Becca Dornan/Lee Reynolds, Ellie Davis, Sarah Tunney, Boo Smith/Sara Green/Sharon Cheetham, Liz Abba, Emily Rooke/Ritty Wan. Firstly, a big thank you for all you have done to everyone who has stepped down, secondly please support your new captain on and off the pitch this coming season. It's not an easy job, particularly if you've not done it before!

Committee

Congratulations to **Paul Sibley** who has been elected Club President - a deserved recognition for a terrific contribution to the club on and off the pitch.

Geoff Bail continues as Club Chairperson. Thanks to every-

one who has stood down for your service to our club. Geoff was slightly nonplussed to be appointed a Life Member of the club at the recent AGM - a fitting reward for efforts the have gone well beyond the call, to a great club servant. Other main posts are as follows:

Secretary: Martin Ebsworth, Liz Abba;

Treasurer: James Cashmore;

Social: Sean Gauton, Caz Gates;

Fixtures: Mark Johnson, Nic King;

Juniors: Bob Douglas, Nic King;

Welfare: Sarah Aaron, Ali Lewis;

Publicity: Michael Hart.

Don't forget that we also elect committee members part of whose role is to make sure that our committee truly reflects the views of all club members and who would welcome your input. This season they are Fiona Lambourne, Faye Sibley, Phil Elliot and Jon Clewes.

We now have two **Welfare Officers**, Sarah Aaron, who is in overall charge and looks after the ladies and the juniors and Ali Lewis, for the men. New captains and anyone else needing DBS (formerly CRB) cover needs to get in touch with Sarah (sarah.aaron@yahoo.co.uk) as soon as possible. The actual process is surprisingly simple!

Finally, the AGM elected Sharon Cheetham to the new post of Membership Secretary. As well as trying to keep up to date with our extensive membership, one of her key roles will be to help our treasurer and team captains to collect fees in promptly - something

that is surprisingly (and disappointingly) difficult.

Congratulations

Well done to all club award winners - these were presented at the AGM and the End of Season Tournament

Club Personality of the Year - Marc North;

Top Goalscorers - Liz Taylder, Dave Taylder (is it something to do with their cornflakes?);

Players of the Year - Jo Davis, Ali Lewis, Becca Dornan, Lianne Meek, Erin Smith, Charlotte Hooper-Taylor, Jennah Stuttard, Amisha Patel, Bryony Brown;

Goalkeeper of the Year - Andy McCarroll;

Junior Players - Holly Robson, Harry Wells;

Most Improved Players - Olli Brewill, Lola Smith.

Members News

Best wishes to Faye and Paul Sibley and Rich and Lorna Bonsall, who are expecting additions to their respective families and to Ben and Jade Farrar, who are expecting their first in the New Year.

Congratulations to Ellie Howatson (and Brodie!) on the birth of Xavier. Also congratulations to Alice Peto and Chris Collison who tied the knot recently.

Best wishes to a number of members who are fighting off the big C - Ian Johnson, Steve Bean and Tony Johnson - we're thinking of you all, as we are of Lee Palmer (Diamond) who continues his recovery from the

horrendous injury he suffered last season. Also to Peter Whitehead, one of our junior coaches, who is recovering from an emergency operation as I type.

Good luck to the many of you who are off to university in Sept/Oct and thanks for all your efforts both on the pitch. Particular thanks to those of you who have helped with Sunday coaching, especially Emmy Walsh, Niralee Patel, Jasmine Goddard and Abi Hart.

Apologies to all those whose news I have undoubtedly missed.

Family Hockey

Once again, we are running a series of Family Hockey nights on Tuesdays from July 10 until August 14, 6.30 to 7.30 at Becket School. These are designed for parents to bring along their (primary age) children so that everyone can play - youngsters on one half pitch, parents on the other. We first organised this as an Olympic year event, but it has worked so well, we have repeated it since, with up to 60 attending sessions last summer. This year, we are also trying out Walking Hockey, for those with limited mobility/fitness (ie me!) as part of these sessions. ps These sessions are now under way - great to see club members bringing their youngsters down and also Martin West, who lost a leg in a horrendous accident on Trent Bridge, taking part (very ably) in the Walking Hockey.

Get Back Into

Once again we will be running "Get Back into Hockey" sessions for ladies from September 5th, 6.30 to 7.30 at WB School, more details will be on the website. The focus is on enjoyment rather than preparation for matches, but if last season is any guide, we may encourage some quite handy players to reconnect with our sport. If you know anyone who might enjoy coming along, please tell them about it and encourage them to do so.

School Links

We are once again looking to link up with local schools to promote hockey to youngsters. If you have connections with any other of our local schools, please let them know that we are happy to work with them to help promote junior hockey.

Fixtures

Early season fixtures start in September as follows:

Ladies

Friendlies from Sept 1.

All leagues starts Sept 29.

Men

Friendlies from Sept 1 including development games for our next crop of juniors.

All league starts Sept 29.

Please make sure that you complete your availabilities asap (preferably online) - as a club we are committed to playing as many games as possible, so if you say you are available, we will try to make sure you get a

game, even if your normal team isn't playing.

Social

Our social secretaries, Jo Batten and Sean Gouton, did a great job last season. Jo has been replaced by Caz Gates for the new season and she and Sean both need your help to make this season even better. To start with, please try to make their lives easier by putting these dates in your diaries - and by letting them know if you have any ideas for further activities.

The first **Quiz with a Curry** will take place on Oct 20 and our main **Beer Festival** will take place from Thursday, Nov 8 until Saturday, Nov 10.

Other dates that are to be confirmed are the **End of Season Tournament**, including the Mike Price Challenge on April 13, the **Dinner Dance** on April 27, **Beer Festival 2**, March 7-9 and **Curry and Quiz 2**, Feb 2. Please keep an eye on the website for confirmation of dates, etc, and then make sure you put them in your diary!

Training

Mens training will be lead by Ali Lewis on Mondays, starting August 6th as usual, from 7.30 to 9.30 through August and then in September from 7.45. Mens 1st team training (for 1st team squad members and others by invitation only) starts from August 9th.

Junior boys from Y8 to Y11 are from 6.30 to 7.45 on Mondays, from Sept 3rd, led by Glyn

Abba and Jon Wells. As last season, we are keen to coach the U14 and U16 squads together so that we can prepare them better for the competitions that we enter. Where appropriate, the coaches will be selecting squads through September.

Ladies training is on Tuesdays from August 7th from 7.30 to 9.00. Training then moves to Wednesday nights from the beginning of September, Girls training (Y7 and older) is from 6.15 to 7.15 and Back to Hockey 6.30 to 7.30.

Don't forget that there is no mens' training Bank Holiday week.

Juniors

The revised starting times worked quite well over the past season, but we are seeking to improve our coaching further by changing again, so that we can reduce coaching group size. This means both starting a further group on Sundays and also limiting the age of children attending on Sundays which should ensure more attention for each junior.

For the coming season, therefore, the Sunday coaching groups are as follows:

Yr 2-3: 9.00 to 10.00 led by Sarah Aaron;

Yr 4-5: 9.00 to 10.30 led by Ben Lambourne

Yr 6-7: 10.30 to 12.00 led by Jon Wells and Ian Freegard,

Yr 8- 9: 10.30 to 12.00 led by Phil Elliott and Mike Walsh,

Goalkeepers from 9.00 led by Lee Reynolds and Andy Cooper.

These age groups match the age groups of all the competitive and friendly games that we play and will make it simpler to select sides while making sure - as far as we can - that everyone available gets opportunities to play matches.

We have slightly increased our junior fees for the new season and they are now:

Membership £25.00

Sunday training £3.00 per week or £50 (ie £75 in all) for the season

Monday/Wednesday training is covered by membership and match fees, so no additional charge.

Over 13s starting to play adult hockey also need to pay a shirt contribution of £20 for two shirts - ie a bargain!

Once again, you can pay by cash, cheque or BACs. For junior BACs payments please use the junior account, details are 08 92 99; 65374409.

Everything starts with a registration session from 8.45 am on Sept 2nd - we will also have a further registration session the following Sunday. Anyone can join in subsequent weeks, it's just easier to do it right at the start of the season. Registration forms are on the website (via a button bar in the juniors section) and it would be helpful if you could fill one in and bring it along with you.

Our Becket Sunday coffee mornings will be continuing this season. Alison Devlin did a great job last year, please let

her know if you can help with them.

We also offer coaching on Wednesday nights to older girls from Y7; and Y8 boys and older on Monday nights all from the start of September.

We will be entering all the usual competitions and leagues and we would be grateful for any help you can offer, either Sunday/Monday/Wednesday coaching or managing teams - you won't be dropped in it if you offer to help and it is surprisingly good fun! Please let me know if you think you could help.

Finally, well done to the many juniors who have achieved county honours last season (too many to mention individually), to Sam Frost and George Wells, who have been invited to join the East Midlands U15 performance centre following successful trails in June and to all the teams who have done the club proud in games and tournaments - especially the boys U14s who ended up playing off the U14 championships in cheshire in May and the girls U12s who put 2 teams into the county tournament, both performing more than creditably,

Sunday Funday

On Sunday Sept 2nd, this event takes place at Bingham Market Place, from 12.00 to 4.00 having been at Rushcliffe Country Park for a number of years. As South Nott'm are based in Bingham, they have been invited by Rushcliffe BC to attend, so we get a year off!

Hockeyday

The Hockeyday will take place at West Bridgford School on **Sunday, Oct 7th (probably, tbc)** from 11.00 until 1.00. For those who haven't ever taken part, this is an opportunity to bring youngsters along to "have a go" at a few hockey related activities, in the hope/expectation that they will catch the hockey bug. Please let your friends, colleagues and/or neighbours know about it and we may then unearth the next Helen Richardson!

Requests

Please help us keep in touch with you through the season by making sure that your details are up to date on the club database - and also please check that you are content with our Data Security policy.

Getting Involved

We are still very keen to get more younger members (for me this means Under 60s!) involved in helping with the running of the club. It's a big club and maybe the idea of taking over from us old stagers is a bit daunting. However, please bear in mind that none of us knew much about our roles when we took over and have learnt (not much in some cases!) as we have gone along. Most of what we do is fairly straightforward, and is easiest to get the hand of working alongside someone who has done it for a while. So, it would be great if a few younger members could do just that - take on part roles, help out, etc, and find out that they are well qualified to help run our

club. Remember, we all do it in our spare time, so it can't be too bad!

Finances

After a difficult year financially (all the postponements were a big headache, for example) and further increases in our costs, we have increased the subscription to £120 for full members, (£20 discount for payment on or before October 31st) £60 for student/unemployed (£10 discount if paid on or before 31st October and £25 for juniors. Anyone struggling to make payment in full in one go just needs to talk to either James Cashmore, our treasurer, direct or their team captain or Sharon Cheetham, our Membership Secretary.

Match tax is due to be discussed at the next committee meeting in September, it is currently £10, £5 and £3 respectively.

There is also a further charge of £20 for new members and for juniors starting to play for adult sides, which pays for your home and away shirts - ie it's a bargain!

Finally, thanks to Paul Sibley, our new president, we are getting some much needed practice in fund raising, albeit in a fairly small way. Please support his efforts as this is a habit we need to be getting into!

Discipline

With the Notts Hockey Association increasing fines and penalties for cards, please remember that we have a duty to behave in an appropriate manner, both on and off the pitch,

to umpires and opposition players. Aside from this, the club will not tolerate any verbal or physical dissent shown to Club umpires, whether playing at home or away.

Social Media

The Club is planning to increase the use of its Facebook and Twitter pages over this coming season, so please sign up and post items of hockey interest, fixtures, scores, photos, etc with coordinators Paul Sibley and Robyn Wiles. Please remember that all comments and content must be acceptable to a wider public!

The Future

As those who attended the AGM in May will realise, the future is made rather uncertain by a number of factors affecting our pitches and other facilities. A small group, led by Club Chairman Geoff Bail, is actively looking at options, mainly based on the fact that we have the offer of a piece of land to develop from a friend of the club. For this to work, we would need to have a number of 3rd parties on board - the borough council and other sports clubs in particular. However, at time of writing, there are no done deals and there are plenty of possibilities to explore - in the meantime, we are going nowhere and we need everyone to help maintain our clubhouse and pitches the best standard we can - you can help by clearing your own water bottles, picking up those left by others, clearing up spillages in the clubhouse, as the advert says, "every little helps"!

Have a great season!

Bob Douglas bob@wbhockey.co.uk