

## AGM MINUTES

### 1. Members present

In person: Alan Matthias (Rossett), Peter Williams (Llanferres), Duncan Church (Llanferres), Jamie Noble (Eros), Owain Astley (Eros), Ant Welch (Llanferres), Mikey Parr (Llanferres), Sheila Palmer (Eros), Dave Markey (Eros), Alex Mutch (Buckley), Jack Morris (Buckley), Steve Hodgson (Prestatyn), Martin Gould (Prestatyn)

Online: Fiona Reid (Eros), Steve Eltham (Buckley), Ben Betts (Buckley), Lara Griffiths (Llanferres), Callum Sant (Buckley), Paul Jones (Holywell), Simon Brennan (Prestatyn), Ann Hipkiss (Connah's Quay)

### 2. Apologies

Jane Liddle (Rossett), Rob Pullen (N/A)

- ❖ Confirmation that there have been no safeguarding or health & safety issues reported.
- ❖ Due to the resignation of the entire Committee last season we had no minutes to review from the previous AGM.

### 3. Report of:

#### a) Chairman – Ant Welch

##### *Introduction*

*The 2022–2023 season is the first year NEWBL has run with a completely new committee following the resignation of the entire committee at the AGM in 2022. A full year of competitive plays has been completed, the presentation evening has recently been successfully held and an end-of-season tournament brings this year to a close on Saturday, the 27th of May.*

*Feedback, both anecdotal and written, has been positive and I would like to congratulate and formally thank all volunteer members of the committee, league players and clubs for their support.*

##### *Organisational overview*

*The NEWBL committee has run at full capacity throughout the season and any posts that require appointing following any announcements at the AGM will be advertised accordingly.*

##### *Key achievements*

*Competitive play has resumed.*

*Discussions taken place to positively move forward with junior badminton.*

*Successful presentation evening.*

*AGM facilitated.*

*End-of-season tournament planned for the 27th of May.*

*Overwhelmingly, play and administrative arrangements have supported positive participation throughout the season.*

*Financial performance*

*The treasurer will provide a separate report.*

*Participation and membership*

*The league has been made up of two divisions with seven clubs in each division.*

*Any disputes/issues that have arisen have been dealt with according to the league rules.*

*Proposals are being tabled at the AGM to review the league structure.*

*Media and marketing*

*Feedback, both written and anecdotal, has been positive about the developments in sharing and celebrating the events throughout the season.*

*Both the website and social media have been used to provide timely updates and the fixture outcomes have been updated regularly.*

*Governance and compliance*

*All matters conducted throughout the season have followed league rules.*

*Proposals to consider any amendments to the rules will be tabled at the AGM.*

*Community engagement*

*This is a potential area to develop – particularly in relation to promoting junior badminton.*

*Challenges and future plans*

*All teams have been asked to provide feedback in relation to the league structure and playing format, this will be considered at the AGM.*

*Suggestions for new ideas and/or improvements are invited from clubs.*

*Junior development is an area to focus on in the coming season.*

*Conclusion*

*Again, I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to all members of the volunteer committee, all players and clubs in the league and look forward to ongoing, positive participation in the next season.*

Martin Gould also thanked the committee for getting things restarted and bringing things more up to date. This was reiterated by Peter Williams who said that the season was a brilliant success and well done to the volunteers for getting it organised and back up and running.

## **b) Match Secretary – Ann Hipkiss**

*This has been the first full league season since Covid and with just 2 divisions as well as the league and fixtures being visible online.*

*Firstly, thank you to the teams for your patience over the season and for sending over the score sheets in a timely manner and rearranging matches, there may have been a few hiccups but we got there!*

*In Division 1, Eros came out as winners; however there were some close matches on the way.*

*In Division 2, Hawarden narrowly beat Prestatyn A – apologies for the delay in confirming this, it came down to the difference in games for and against – I finally understand F & A!*

*Finally, the team registration for next season will be sent out to clubs following this meeting with an extended deadline for completion, please look out for it in the next couple of days.*

Everybody recognises that this is the most time consuming job on the committee and Ann received a round of applause in the room!

### **c) Treasurer – Mikey Parr**

Mikey supplied a detailed break down of the accounts (Appendix 1).

*There was very little to put in the accounts as the NEWBL financial year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March and there was nothing from last season to include. It looks like we made a profit for the Presentation Evening and we are forecasting a profit for the league handicap tournament also, both of which will go into next year's accounts, so although it looks like we made a loss this year, that isn't really representative of the true position.*

*The committee have not had access to the bank account until very recently due to issues changing the mandate as the whole of the previous committee signatories resigned en masse last year. This has lead to a member of the committee having to use their personal funds until this could be rectified which thankfully it now has.*

*I feel we are in a healthy position for the season ahead and I suggest that £2,000 is a sensible target as a buffer but we will get a true reflection next year as it will be our first full season.*

Martin asked about junior funds and Mikey explained that the juniors were self-funding and held a different bank account which Jane Liddle and Steve Eltham had recently taken control of. The money from the now defunct NEWBA was discussed and the committee explained that that money is still being held by John Steele and Mike Coppack.

Mikey received an enthusiastic round of applause from the room!

**d) Tournament Secretary – Jamie Noble**

*NEWBL's first tournament since the COVID outbreak is a handicap tournament next Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> May at 10am with an entry of 19 mixed pairings, 11 Ladies doubles pairings and 11 Men's doubles pairings. For a perfect entry number, we need an additional 3 men and 2 ladies if anybody else can support.*

*Next season we are planning to host at least two tournaments. The NEWBL Handicap tournament at the end of the league season which is aimed at club level players and one badminton Wales graded tournament hosted in North East Wales during the season which is aimed at high level club players and above. Dates TBC.*

*Thank you for everyone who is supporting the event on Saturday and all the future events and I hope everyone enjoys themselves.*

Martin Gould questioned the pathway for juniors through to seniors and whether there was any county play. Ant Welch mentioned that this was certainly an area that needed further development and the new "Junior Coordinator" position on the committee was a step in the right direction. Heather Astley mentioned that Badminton Wales was advertising for a Regional Community Manager in the North and hopefully this would come under their remit. Jamie Noble and Heather Astley also talked about the county team that competed in the Badminton England Senior County Championships for two seasons prior to Covid but we had difficulty getting players to commit to playing and felt that we could not justify the high entrance fee. Owain Astley also mentioned the inter-county matches organised by Joe Hill at Bryn Estyn, Deganwy. Alex Mutch mentioned the cost of travel and accommodation could be prohibitive as prices have risen so much latterly and Covid had had a huge impact on young players in particular who had missed out on a lot of development opportunities.

**e) Junior Coordinator – Jane Liddle**

Due to technical issues we did not receive her report prior to the meeting so this is being shared afterwards.

*Being aware of the lack of provision for junior competition in the area, and on talking with John Steele and Mike Coppack, I agreed to co-ordinate a re-start of junior provision. The first event was the Gareth Coppack Memorial Tournament which was held at Mold Leisure Centre on Sunday, 23<sup>rd</sup> April. Sixty-four juniors took part and it was pleasing to see Flint, Connah's Quay, Buckley and Christleton fielding teams. Sadly, Mold and Llanferres were no longer running junior clubs but Prestatyn and St Peter's in Rossett both took part. It was a great event which filled Mold Leisure Centre with players and their families and it is reported*

*that the children enjoyed the competitive aspect, many competing for the first time. Flint A won, Christleton A took silver and St Peters A and Prestatyn A took bronze.*

*The NE Wales Junior Badminton account is in the process of being passed from Cliff Pryce and Dave Russell to me and Steve Eltham of Buckley who has been instrumental in re-starting the junior section.*

*I am currently trying to find courts for the Junior League, which will start in late September/early October. Llanferres have advised that they plan to start a junior club in September and will join the league and it is hoped that Ruthin School will be fielding teams as they may have a new badminton initiative within the school. At the same time, I aim to initiate regular coaching for those who wish to be more involved in the sport and to this end will be looking for venues and coaches.*

Steve Eltham shared on the night that the Gareth Coppack tournament went really well, it was great to see juniors back on court and everybody enjoyed it. Looking at setting up junior league next year and things are going in the right direction for the juniors.

#### **f) Challenge Cup Secretary – Sheila Palmer**

*Thank you to everyone that took part this season.*

*Every league club entered this season which hasn't always been the case. So again many thanks to every team organiser.*

*Thank you to the CUP COMMITTEE who helped with the handicaps and independent drawing of the matches.*

*Thank you to the NEWBL COMMITTEE for funding the court hire for the semis and finals, shuttles for the finals, engraving trophies and buying medals all from existing funds which meant that no team had to pay to enter the competition.*

*Many excellent matches lead up to the hard-fought CUP semis which were EROS v LLANFERRES A and CONNAH'S QUAY v HAWARDEN and the PLATE semis which were BUCKLEY v PRESTATYN A and ROSSETT v LLANFERRES D.*

*The FINALS was an exceptionally exciting evening of badminton. EROS just beat CONNAH'S QUAY to win the CUP and BUCKLEY just beat ROSSETT to win the PLATE.*

#### **4. Matters arising**

##### **a) Team Structure**

Representatives of Rossett, Llanferres, Prestatyn, Buckley, Holywell, Connah's Quay and Eros voted on the two team structure proposals (Appendix 2). With a majority of 4-3 the vote was to keep the current structure of 4+4.

Heather Astley then proposed trialling the 3+3 structure in the Cup competition as a sort of happy medium as the vote had been so close. She also felt that it was preferable to have a different format for the Cup to make it “special” rather than just another league game. Everybody seemed positive about this proposal and it was seconded by Martin Gould.

#### **b) League Structure**

Having now decided on the format we now need to look at how many divisions we have next season – there was a lot of discussion in the room whether it should be 2 or 3 with everybody noting that smaller divisions would help the huge disparity there was in standard from the top and bottom teams. Smaller divisions (possibly 5 teams) would mean 8 games but these would be supplemented for divisions of 5 teams or less by playing home and away and an additional fixture to make up total match numbers. Additionally, there will be the opportunity to play in the new men’s and women’s leagues for those clubs/players interested.

Mikey Parr questioned whether the current league should move towards being all mixed doubles play as effectively it is a hybrid league playing mixed and level doubles. People felt that a lot was changing at once so maybe it was something we could look into again next season after reflection.

Proposed – Duncan Church

Seconded – Ant Welch

#### **c) Men’s / Women’s Leagues**

Jack Morris proposed that if we did trial men’s and women’s league then they should be formally arranged as otherwise friendlies wouldn’t get played and it would just peter out. Seconded by Jamie Noble.

#### **d) Changes to scoresheets**

Sheila Palmer proposed to get rid of the “events” column on scoresheets so it is just the number of games won to count and this was seconded by Dave Markey.

#### **e) Registrations & league fees – NEWBL & BW**

Mikey Parr, as treasurer, proposed that no change be made to the fees as we are in a stable financial position. Fiona Reid seconded this and added that this would help maintain numbers and encourage as many players as possible.

**f) Rule changes**

Heather Astley, as secretary, proposed a large number of rule changes, namely to remove financial fines and out of date information. No objections were made to any of these changes and a summary of the changes is included (Appendix 3).

**5. Election of Officials:**

Heather Astley noted that the Committee is largely made up of Eros and Llanferres players as unfortunately they were the only ones willing to take on the roles necessary to keep the League going this season. It would be beneficial to the League for the Committee to have members representing a wider range of clubs and we would like to invite anybody who is interested in taking an active part in volunteering for NEWBL to contact the League Secretary.

**a) Chairman – Currently Ant Welch**

Seconded Alan Matthias

**b) Vice-Chairman – currently Owain Astley**

Seconded Duncan Church

**c) Secretary – currently Heather Astley**

Seconded Peter Williams

**d) Match Secretary – currently vacant**

Proposed role share between Ann Hipkiss & Steve Hodgson

Seconded Heather Astley

**e) Treasurer – currently Mikey Parr**

Seconded Peter Williams

- f) **Tournament Secretary** – currently Jamie Noble  
Seconded Owain Astley
- g) **Media Coordinator** – currently vacant  
Proposed Brandon Smith  
Seconded Steve Hodgson
- h) **Welfare Officer** – currently Rob Pullen  
Proposed Owain Astley  
Seconded Heather Astley
- i) **Junior Coordinator** – currently Jane Liddle  
Seconded Mikey Parr
- j) **Challenge Cup Secretary** – currently Sheila Palmer  
Seconded Heather Astley
- k) **Committee Members** – currently Ann Hipkiss & Dave Markey  
Ann resigned as has now become joint match secretary  
Dave Markey seconded by Owain Astley

## 6. A.O.B.

### (1) Old NEWBA Shields – Sheila Palmer

Due to a lack of space and now the now defunct NEWBA engraving, new shields were purchased for Presentation Night. Sheila suggested that the last winners of each trophy should be entitled to keep them rather than them being stored in one of the committee's garage. Everybody agreed with this proposal.

Division 1: Flint Phoenix

Division 2: Eros

Division 3: Prestatyn

### (2) Team Registrations – Ann Hipkiss



Ann suggested that due to all the changes made tonight the date for team registrations should be extended from 31<sup>st</sup> May to 30<sup>th</sup> June. This was agreed by all present.

❖ Meeting closed 9.54pm

❖ Date of next AGM TBC