

Hockey AGM 2015

1. Welcome and Apologies

Welcome to the AGM of the Ipswich Sports Club Hockey Section, it is good to see you here supporting the sport and our club.

This AGM is open to all members of Ipswich Sports Club and I'd be grateful if you could add your name to the attendee list circulating.

Apologies have been received before the meeting from:

Howard and Linda Walker; Emma and Mariette Rix; Helen Davies; Graham Frettwell

2. Minutes of last AGM

- Apologies not available – will be put online

3. Chairman's Report

This has been my third, and final, season as Chair. As I look back at the 'hockey' year just gone, there has been more hard work on and off the pitch than I have seen yet. New volunteers are starting to step forward, new leaders are starting to emerge from within the section, and we have made great strides towards securing the future of the club in the long term, but more of that later.

This time last year at the AGM I hoped for even bigger and better things to come and I can say I have not been disappointed! The building of friendships and working relationships, especially between men's and women's sides of the section, is especially pleasing. I know I leave a club that's not divided along gender lines, as some would still believe, although a few more men on Committee would never go amiss!

The introduction of a formal Selection Policy and reference to EHB Codes of Conduct have been a good step forward and help helped those involved in selection with their efforts. Now we need to put in a big effort to get our ClubsFirst renewed. Membership chasing has been less work but still continues to be very important.

There were things I didn't achieve that I pass the baton to the new Committee to achieve – a Summer Tour here at Tuddenham Road to raise funds for the section, increasing the number of club umpires is desperately important, as is continuing to run activities such as Back to Hockey and build links to local state schools.

A personal thank you to Ness, my long suffering Vice Chair, who has organised, supported, counselled, and kept my smiling throughout – I am so happy to say she is staying on as Vice Chair, she is such an asset to the section and Committee, thank you Ness for being my hockey wife!

I won't be disappearing, once my wedding is out of the way in May I have lots of training to give over the summer I think, and I am looking to take up an ordinary member post on ISC Council if one is available at the upcoming AGM, finally, working as part of the Hockey Working Group but more of that later.

Finally, I'd like to say thanks to Roy Dunnett and Seven for continued support this year.

Seniors

- Special thanks to the Captains, Kat Wrinch & Mark Wrinch (Club Captain) for their weekly efforts with selection in an especially challenging year for availability, and Vanessa Allen (ULO) as ever pulling it out of the bag to find umpires for all the games
- Teas have once again been provided at Tuddenham for all home teams regardless of playing venue – this creates a real old-fashioned hockey club house atmosphere that is rarely found at other clubs, and it also supports our section budget which is essential – our teas girl Macauley has been a big part of that success, as well as the volunteers who go to Makro to keep us stocked with potatoes and cake!
- It has been great to have socials up at Tuddenham again this year, with loud and raucous fun on Saturday night not followed by complaints from Junior organisers the following morning – long may they continue, especially looking forward to another race night (please Alice? 😊) – thanks to Alice
- This season was unfortunately hit by a spate of freezing weather in the new year that impacted fixtures

Women

This has been the toughest season for availability I can remember, as a result we have seen all teams impacted, and the results stand for themselves. A commitment to training and playing league games is fundamental to being a successful club and I hope recent rumours of some local schools planning mid-week inter-school matches becomes reality – this is the way to keep club hockey alive!

- W1 - National League Outdoor Conference East - 8th (second year in a row, 27th season in NL)
- W2 - East Prem – 12th, relegated
- W3 - East Div 2C – 11th, relegated
- W4 - Suffolk Prem – 11th, relegated
- W5 - Suffolk Div 1 – withdrew from the league
- Women's Indoor – Suffolk League Runners Up (second year in a row); East entrants next year?
- Women's Over35s – Lost on flicks in the 3rd round, will be back next year!

Donna – 25 years as manager; Sandie – stepping down this year, planning underway

Men

It was a better story in the Men's section, where availability was an issue several times, but greater numbers of 'grown ups' and boys being more available in their non-hockey school term boosted performances. Special mention must be made

- M1 - East Prem B – 2nd, PROMOTED
- M2 - East Div 2N – 4th
- M3 - East Div 5NE – ½, PROMOTED
- M4 - East Div 6NE – 6th
- Men's Indoor – Suffolk Indoor Prem League Runners up, Div 1 4th; East entrants for first time in years
- Men's O40s – couldn't raise a team for second round, hope this improves next season
- Men's Over 50 – lost in second round to Magpies, will be back next year!

Hack – moving away next season, planning underway

Juniors

- Chris Clough took over as Junior Chair this season, and was immediately faced with an exodus of players – he dealt with it calmly and with a quiet determination. Not only did he steady the ship, he persuaded new parent volunteers to take on jobs, and oversaw another hugely enjoyable season for our youngsters and successful one for those loyal juniors who did remain part of our club. It should also be noted that Chris has built strong inter-club links and organised friendly matches to give the juniors fun games to try out their skills and match play, which has been a great addition to the sometimes full on experience of competitions!
- Special mention to Ollie Davies who coached numerous teams this season, he'll be missed next year when he goes off to uni , and Helen Davies, who supported Chris' efforts with Juniors and again managed on the GU16 and GU18 teams
- Thanks to the coaches and volunteer, especially Sarah L, Pete G, as well as Jock and Kat and to the managers and parents who have helped and supported this season.

- Girls' U18 - National Indoor Finalists; National Outdoor Quarters-finalists
- Girls' U16 - National Indoor Finalists; Regional Outdoor Finalists
- Girls' U12 – In2Hockey County Champions, Regional Outdoor Finals on 19th April
- U10s - ?
- Brentwood indoor results?

- England players?

Going back to the exodus I mentioned, it was disappointing to see so many of our juniors that we had coached and developed over the last few years, and who had enjoyed Regional and National success even, turn their backs on the club last summer in favour of other local clubs, one in particular with lower fees and a blue pitch to play on! Whilst the way that happened was seemingly driven by one or two individuals with a personal agenda, we could not sit back and ignore the clear local market economics at play, and the feedback of the loyal parents and juniors who remain part of our club.

Therefore, Chris has worked with a small team on developing a proposal to offer a hockey-only option. Here's the official statement and update on that which will be going out to parents shortly:

The hockey section have listened to the views of parents this season and understand that some children are interested solely in playing hockey at Ipswich Sports Club and not the other activities on offer through the current all-sports junior membership. A membership that gives a hockey-only option would be attractive to those members.

We have developed a proposal for the coming season which has been raised with the Club Council and will be discussed in full at the end of April. We look forward to giving a full update for next season after that.

So, all I can add at this stage is that I will work with Chris and Richard W on putting that detail to Council and negotiating for the desired outcome to retain and start to attract new juniors to the club – this is vital not only to have a strong junior section, but to the future of the adult teams too!

Future of the Section

At the end of last season I announced to you all that the plan for securing the future of the hockey section was to continue to build on the great season we'd had on and off the pitch with the atmosphere coming back to Tuddenham with the majority of games being played there. Meanwhile, we would continue to explore opportunities to develop the TR site in the next few years, as well as links to the Ipswich School new pitches at Rushmere. As it transpired, with the generous financial support of Seven, the Women's 1s were able to play a number of night games at Rushmere, and the Men's 1s were able to play all their home games there too. We wait to see if this can be repeated next season.

The condition of our pitches, which has been an area of concern for several seasons, was significantly improved by focussed and sustained maintenance, including a specialist 'deep clean' before the start of the league season. Thanks to Roger G, Richard Wrinch, Andy Cutting and Graham Fretwell for their work last summer, drainage being a particular problem tackled, and all who took part in the Helping Hands day to cut back the hedging, clear brambles, and pick weeds from the sides of the pitch. Special mention also to Ant Harper for devising and installing the splash barrier in the corner, it has worked a treat!

So to the exciting announcement you've all been waiting for! This year, Claire Webb, Judy Wright, Roger Girling continued and increased their efforts to detail the plan for securing the future of hockey at Tuddenham Road. I can't convey fully the time they have put to this project already, but without their combined experience and professional skills we would not be in the position we are in now. That is, following a presentation to ISC Council on Thursday evening, we have approval to proceed with grant funding applications and outline planning to relay the pitch here at Tuddenham Road and refurbish and enlarge the club house. Whilst there are still many hurdles to overcome we have a real chance to see this project become reality ahead of the 2016/17 season.

So now it's over to you all to show your support by attending the club AGM on Thursday 25th June 2015, 7pm, Henley Road. By attending in numbers we're voting with our feet and showing the rest of the sections that hockey is engaged in club life, interested in plans for ISC, and actively involved in our project for Tuddenham Road. I look forward to see you all there!

We have achieved so much as a club this season, and working together, lending a hand and getting involved we are starting to build the kind of club we all wish it could be. As ever during the summer there is Summer League to look forward to, and much to put in place before the start of the league season. Thank you for your attendance, good luck for the coming season, and thank you for having me as your Chair!

4. Election of club officers

[See list]

5. AoB

- Club Dinner : Saturday 2nd May at Henley Road
- ISC AGM : Thursday 25th June 2015, 7pm, Henley Road
- New rules coming in!
- East season dates
- Summer League starts week of first May Bank holiday (captains?)