



NORTHUMBERLAND BADMINTON ASSOCIATION

AFFILIATED TO BADMINTON ENGLAND

ANNUAL REPORT

SEASON 2013-14

CONTENTS

Chairman's Report	Dennis Gray
Secretary's Report	Norma Waterfield
BADMINTON England Partnership Manager's Report	Lynsey Edwards
Business Sub-committee Report	Richard Taylor
Clubs Sub-committee Report	Steve Porter
Senior Competitive Play Report	Steve Abbott
League Secretary's Report	Alison Thompson
Junior Competitive Play Report	Richard Taylor
Coaching Co-ordinators' Report	Steve Sharp Rob Wetherell

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Introduction

In my sixth year as chairman we have seen the consolidation of our move of operations to the Tyneside Badminton Centre. We moved out of Benfield at the end of May 2013 and from the start of the 2013/14 season, all of our events have taken place at the new Centre. It is proving to be a very popular venue, not only with local players but with visiting competitors at tournaments and matches. As we continue to settle in we hope that the Centre will allow us to further develop badminton throughout the County area.

General Matters

We are still continuing to encourage greater participation by clubs within the association through the Clubs and Premises committee. It is to be hoped that clubs setting up pathways for the juniors now playing in schools will succeed in helping them to make the transition into senior club play. We are particularly pleased with the initiative in North Tyneside, where working with schools, over 2000 children have had badminton taster sessions since last September and a local Junior County Talent Squad has been set up in Whitley Bay. We would like to encourage more clubs to establish their own junior club sections and although this can sometimes prove to be a slow process, there are signs of success. We hope to aid this process by working with coaches and schools throughout the county, as we have done in North Tyneside, to provide a steady supply of players who will need Junior Clubs to progress their development. If any club would like to set up a junior club/section please get in touch with Steve Porter.

As previously noted, holding our AGM closer to the end of the competitive season allows us to deal with any issues that have arisen during the season, whilst they are still fresh in everyone's minds. It also gives us the opportunity to put in place any changes in good time for the next season. Again as a consequence it has not been possible to complete our annual accounts for the year just ended, in time for this AGM and it is proposed, like last year, that the accounts be presented to an EGM to be held immediately before the League AGM scheduled for early in September.

Again this year, without wishing to duplicate the information set out by others in this Annual Report, I would like to use my report to mention and thank our great band of "county volunteers" and also note a few areas of concern.

Starting with the group who organise our County Competitions and Leagues, (Juniors, Seniors and Veterans), thanks go to Richard Taylor, Steve Abbott, Muriel Burgess, Alison Thompson, Steve Porter and Andrew McGill. By the way Steve and Andrew, who organise the Graded Events, would welcome help from a few more clubs prepared to run tournaments.

A Big thanks to all the members of the Management Committee, with special mention to Norma (supported by Mike) and Julie for their dedicated work in keeping the administration and the finances of the Association under control.

A huge thank you must also be given to all of the volunteers who keep our clubs going, without you the County wouldn't survive!

Thanks also to the Badminton England Staff, especially Lynsey, for all their hard work in helping to promote badminton in our area.

Well done to the Management, staff and volunteers at the Tyneside Badminton Centre, especially Mike Woodward, for helping us hold our events at the Centre.

Now for my usual rallying call, looking at the massive amount of work that the association is carrying out, it is even more apparent that if we wish to progress the development of badminton in our region and particularly with our opportunities at the Tyneside Badminton Centre, we need more volunteer support.

Thank you to those that have stepped forward to help this year and to all of you that have continued to “put in the hours”. As in previous years, can I again appeal for more volunteer help? Please contact Norma, myself or any member of the management committee if you feel that you may be able to commit some time, however small, to help our efforts.

Please read all of the contents of the Annual Report, it contains a wealth of detail regarding the work and achievements of the Association in 2013/14 and please also make it readily available to all of your members. If you have any questions on the content please feel free to raise them with the appropriate chairperson, or any member of the Management Committee.

I hope you have an enjoyable summer and come back refreshed and looking forward to a rewarding and successful 2014/15 season.

Dennis Gray

SECRETARY'S REPORT

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2013-2014

The Management Committee consisted of the President, Chairman, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer, and 8 other members, all elected at the last Annual General Meeting. Members have been responsible for the following duties as well as all serving on various Sub-Committees and other Groups.

<u>R. Pearson</u>	President.
<u>D. Gray</u>	Chairman, Manager of Benfield Badminton Centre until end of May 2014, represents NBA at Community Badminton Network (CBN) Management Committee meetings.
<u>Mrs N. Waterfield</u>	Hon. Secretary, Assistant for U19 Junior Tournament, represents NBA at CBN Management Committee meetings.
<u>Miss J. Brown</u>	Hon. Treasurer.
<u>S. Abbott</u>	Vice Chairman, Competition Co-ordinator, County Match Secretary, Chairman of County Selectors, Secretary and Referee of Northumberland Restricted Championships and Upper Divisions Tournament, Referee of North East Gold and Silver Tournaments, Northumberland Open Masters (Veterans) Tournament and U19 Tournament, County Representative at BADMINTON England General Meetings.
<u>S. Porter</u>	Clubs Co-ordinator, Secretary of North East Gold and Silver Tournaments, Secretary and Referee of NBA Graded Tournaments, County Selector.
<u>S. Sharp & R. Wetherell</u>	Joint Coaching Co-ordinators. (admin assistance provided by D Gray & M Waterfield)
<u>R. Taylor</u>	Junior County Co-ordinator, Junior Fixtures Co-ordinator, Chair of Business Sub-Committee, Secretary of BADMINTON England Junior Age Group Tournaments and of U19 Tournament.
<u>Mrs A. Thompson</u>	Senior Leagues Secretary and Referee, County Selector.
<u>M. Waterfield</u>	Hon. Assistant Secretary, Registration Secretary, Assistant for U19 Tournament, represents NBA at CBN Management Committee meetings.
<u>M. Woodward</u>	Child Welfare Officer, Secretary and Referee of Junior Super Series.

ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

Last season there were 25 Senior Clubs affiliated to this Association and also to BADMINTON England (in the case of Berwick Springhill Club, to the Scottish Badminton Union), and 7 Junior Clubs including the Newcastle Performance Centre.

Playing in our Leagues last season were 4 Durham Clubs affiliated to Durham County Badminton Association.

As well as the above affiliated clubs, a number of clubs/groups not affiliated to BADMINTON England, have registered with NBA and have paid a County registration fee. Their details appear on the NBA website. These clubs are:

Senior – Alnwick BC, Millenium Sporting Club, Ponteland Adults, Whitley Bay Social BC
Junior – Ponteland Juniors, Walbottle Juniors, Willowburn Junior Club, Alnwick

Various clubs have their own successful Junior sections, including Newcastle Medicals, Morpeth Riverside, The Parks and Hexham BC. There are still a number of other organised clubs/groups throughout the County, both Senior and Junior, which NBA will endeavour to contact and support.

Whitley Bay Social BC, which developed from the former Whitley Bay BC, has proved to be a highly successful and popular casual Pay and Play group, regularly attracting a good number of casual players on Friday evenings. A number of other clubs have clearly been struggling to survive during the season due to falling numbers and increased costs.

WEBSITE

Please note that the results of many events and matches can be found on the NBA website, as well as a huge amount of other information:

www.northumberlandbadminton.org

Northumberland Badminton Association is most grateful to Andy McGill for managing our County's excellent website. Thanks also must go to all other contributors who regularly update information. Anyone who has news items/information for the website should in the first instance contact the Hon Secretary.

Norma Waterfield

BADMINTON ENGLAND REGIONAL REPORT

Since April 14 BADMINTON England has been working through a new Regional Team structure which saw the removal of Regional Officers and new regions formed. Northumberland now sits in the North West North East region, which is covered by four members of staff:

- **Regional Delivery Manager** – Tom Smith
 - Strategic lead for the region, including managing the relationship with County Badminton Associations
- **Partnerships Manager** – Lynsey Edwards
 - Managing investment and delivery of Community Badminton Networks, Performance Centres and Center Parcs National Schools Competition
- **Participation Manager** – Kevin Hill
 - Managing relationships with Leisure Providers
- **Workforce Officer** – Leah Singleton
 - Developing the workforce for the region

The aim of the new structure is to provide us with clear work strategies to enable us to work more efficiently and effectively across the region to meet our Sport England targets.

Community Badminton Networks

Previously there were five areas working as CBNs covering the whole of Northumberland County; from April we have continued to work in four of these areas the largest number of CBNs per county across the Region. The CBNs we continue to support are Newcastle, North Tyneside, South East Northumberland and Tynedale. Whilst North Northumberland still occasionally meets as a CBN, BADMINTON England do not provide any financial support for them.

Each CBN has been asked to provide a development plan outlining how and what they are delivering and how they are working in partnership across the area. The key criteria for them are to provide an effective player pathway, increase retention of players (engage players in activity once a week), increased participation and be the single, recognised voice for badminton in that area. We provided them with financial investment to deliver their development plan, ranging from £1500 to £2500.

North Tyneside Badminton Partnership were one of the first CBNs invested in nationally, receiving £2500. This funding was mainly focussed on delivering a 14-19 session by North Tyneside Badminton Academy (NTBA) to retain players of this key age group in the sport and a parabadminton session led by Sport North Tyneside. Furthermore the CBN has delivered a very successful Over 50s session with Tyne Met College and support Wallsend Bewicke BC to smoothly move into North Tyneside linking them with John Spence High School, Whitley Bay Social session and NTBA. Moving forward the Partnership will be helping deliver North Tyneside Council's Community Sport Activation Fund programmes. The Partnership has also run a further 2 highly successful Adult Social tournaments, attracting record entries with a huge age range (16 to 75) amongst competitors.

Newcastle Badminton Partnership has been awarded £1500 of funding to support a variety of activities including Teacher Education Workshops, Essentials Courses, Women's Only sessions and Social Tournaments. Through the Tyneside Centre the Partnership is looking to work with JET (Jobs Education and Training) to deliver a women's only session for some of their participants who have moved to the UK on spouse visas and are trying to integrate into society. The Partnership is also looking at providing a club bursary for partner clubs.

South East Northumberland CBN has been provided £2500 of funding being led by Blyth Valley Arts and Leisure. The priority for this CBN is to maintain their current activity particularly in the Cramlington area including two Over 50s sessions and a Family Badminton session. They will also be working with Northumberland Sport to link in with their Workplace Activity to support their Play Badminton franchise.

Tynedale CBN was awarded a Sport England Small Grant in April 2014 and has been delivering this activity throughout the past year. With the funding received, they have established a new club in Prudhoe, a ladies only session in Hexham to support both clubs as well as a young person's session at Haltwhistle to link with the adult club. Also they have set up a satellite talent squad linked with the PC. The main benefit of the grant has been the increase in coaches now available in the area, with four level 2 coaches and six level 1 coaches.

SmashUp!

SmashUp! is our new out of school hours badminton programme aimed at 13-16 year olds. It has been developed to break the existing perception of badminton that young people have, revitalising the sport by providing a fun and dynamic environment to play badminton in. We're creating a new consistent approach to after school badminton

- Sociable and engaging
- Centred on fun rather than skills
- Relaxed rather than structured
- A strong and relevant brand

Across Northumberland we have 18 schools signed up, with the majority of these being through Sportivate funding; Ashington High, Benfield, Bothal Middle, Cramlington Learning Village, Excelsior, Haydon Bridge High, Heaton Manor, James Calvert Spence, John Spence, Monkseaton Middle, Northumberland C of E, St Benedicts Middle, St Cuthbert's High, St Mary's Catholic, Duchess High, Valley Gardens Middle, Walbottle and Whytrig Middle. We still require Activators for the majority of these schools; if you are interested in getting involved in the delivery please contact Lynsey Edwards or Leah Singleton.

Center Parcs National Schools Competition

The Center Parcs National Schools Competition (CPNSC) was this year ran by two local delivery partners on our behalf. Northumberland Badminton Association organised the Tyne and Wear and Northumberland County Rounds, whilst Tyneside Badminton Centre delivered the North East Regional Round. All events went very well with the standard once again improving. Both the Tyne and Wear and Regional Rounds were held at the Tyneside Badminton Centre, giving the players a great playing experience. Thanks to the School Games Organisers who ensured an even high entry this year, as well as the volunteers and young officials who made the county rounds run smoothly.

The results of the County and Regional Rounds can be seen in the table below:

Round	KS3 Boys	KS3 Girls	KS4 Boys	KS4 Girls
Northumberland	Longridge Towers	Berwick Academy	Cramlington Learning Village	Berwick Academy
Tyne & Wear	Benfield School	Church High School	Gosforth Academy	Monkseaton High School
North East	Benfield School	Church High School	Gosforth Academy	Monkseaton High School

Special mention goes to Longridge Towers, Gosforth Academy and Monkseaton High School who made the Regional Finals for the first time, with Gosforth and Monkseaton also both making the National Finals.

PlayBadminton

PlayBadminton is our participation framework for leisure providers to deliver to increase their revenue and participation. The framework was developed off the success of No Strings Badminton and currently includes four elements:

- Essentials by No Strings Badminton – an 8 week adult beginners coaching course
- No Strings Badminton – semi-structured, pay and play initiative for the adult recreational market www.nostringsbadminton.co.uk
- Battle Badminton – online league/ladder system which offers flexible competition <http://battle.badmintonengland.co.uk/>
- SmashUp! – Innovative twist on out of school badminton; youth initiative that combines music with non-traditional badminton activities <http://smashup.kitserver.co.uk/>

Within Northumberland the following leisure providers and centres are signed up to the framework:

- Tyneside Badminton Centre
- Sport North Tyneside - Hadrian Leisure Centre and The Parks Sports Centre
- BVAL - Concordia Sports Centre and Sporting Club Cramlington

Clubs

We launched an Inclusive Clubs fund in September 13 to support clubs and CBNs to deliver parabadminton. All four CBNs have been successful with applying for funding and are now delivering their programmes. Any other clubs who are interested in becoming Inclusive please contact Lynsey Edwards for more information on the funding which can provide up to £500 to set up an inclusive programme.

Our satellite club programme will be launching this summer and comprises two offers:

1. Hub club delivers a satellite session in a local education site – BE will provide a free SmashUp equipment bag and one free activator training place.
2. Hub club delivers a satellite session for hard to reach groups – BE will provide £400 to set up the satellite

The hub club must be a Premier Club or working towards, and the satellite session must run for a minimum of 30 weeks with the aim for the session to be sustainable and long-term.

Finally, we are doing a big summer campaign to keep people playing throughout the summer. Clubs should have received an email about delivering activity from June to August, with £100 available to clubs to support this. We are also working with CBNs to support them to continue delivering over the summer as well as approaching local community centres/village halls/youth centres etc to deliver SmashUp!.

If you would like any more information on any of the above programmes please contact Lynsey Edwards.

Whilst there have been a lot of changes over the past 12 months, the support and effort from all those involved in Northumberland has been much appreciated. And I would like to commend all those involved across the county for the work that continues to thrive.

Lynsey Edwards

BUSINESS SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

The principal objective of this Sub-Committee is to provide business support to the Association's Management Committee and with this as its aim the Terms of Reference for the Sub-Committee cover the following:

- managing the Association's finances;
- reviewing other Sub-Committees' business plans;
- considering how to cover any income shortfalls;
- generating additional sources of income;
- managing the website;
- marketing and publicity; and
- reviewing the Development Plan.

The Management Committee had been concerned that the Association's finances had been running at a deficit over a number of previous seasons and had given the Business Sub-Committee a brief to review the finances with a view to moving towards break-even. Early in the year, a review of the main areas of the Association's finances, the senior and junior team play, was carried out by the relevant co-ordinators: we are confident that this will help us move towards elimination of the overall deficit. However, it seems likely that we will need to generate some additional funds and a priority for the new year will be to regenerate the Fund-Raising Sub-Group: this will be very dependent on encouraging new input from parents and active senior players for the organisation of social events, draws, raffles and bag-packs.

It is accepted that marketing of our activities has the potential to be very important for the Association. But progress in this area has been very limited so far and we need players or members who have particular expertise to become more involved. We would also welcome contact with anyone who works for or has contact with any business that might be interested in discussing some form of sponsorship.

Richard Taylor

CLUBS SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT 2013-14

It was decided that the Clubs Sub-committee would only meet annually to review the past season and prepare for the forthcoming season. These meetings would be held at the end of seasons so any issues arising from the badminton year were fresh in people's minds.

Again this year, in general, feedback from the senior clubs reported a good season with very few 'hiccups'. Reviewing the past year, most felt that things ran smoothly with no major complaints about the past season. Clubs seemed to be carrying on business as normal.

Junior clubs are continuing to remain healthy with Morpeth, Hexham, North Tyneside, Berwick and Newcastle areas reporting good numbers and finding the 'Super Series' events very rewarding.

Facilities continue to be an on-going challenge for clubs, with costs rising and limited availability for choice of location. Jesmond Dene, Telecom and St Gabriel's have now relocated from the Gibson Street Centre to the new Tyneside Badminton Centre. Elmfield reported that they have now lost their hall for next season with Church High School merging with another local independent school (Central High) and redevelopment of the land. This could be a temporary problem, but the club is continuing to look for alternative venues for the forthcoming season. Blyth Tynedale reported that their school has now turned into an Academy, which could have a knock-on effect on cost. However, this will not be known fully until mid summer.

League rules - A few suggestions were put forward regarding the forthcoming season and league rules. The sub-committee looked closely at the suggestions and felt that most were just 'rule for rule sake' and chose not to change them. The suggestion relating to allowing a club to have two teams in one division arose again and was debated thoroughly. Clubs did have some reservations again about this concept, but it has been decided that from the season 2015-16 this rule will be introduced. The Management Committee will need a little time to draw up the restrictions relating to this process and will report back at the EGM/League Fixtures meeting in September 2014.

The rearranging of matches has been problematic for the League Secretary this year and for some clubs. It was felt that from next season, after 1st October, clubs WILL NOT be allowed to rearrange matches once they are on the calendar. Only in exceptional circumstances, and only with the permission of the League Secretary, will it be possible to move the date of a match. Matches rearranged without the prior permission of the League Secretary will be void. The suggestion of points deductions for clubs which forfeit matches was also discussed, but it was felt that we should review this after the 2014-15 season and see if it would be appropriate to implement for the season after.

Once again I would like to thank the clubs for a good turn out at the meeting and would still encourage ALL clubs to attend to ensure we keep providing a club league structure that is supported by our players.

Steve Porter

COMPETITIVE PLAY REPORT 2013-14

New Home!

With the completion of the new Tyneside Badminton Centre in August, the county's competitive programme was transferred from Benfield to take advantage of the international standard, state of the art facilities which are set to become their home for at least the next 25 years.

Senior County

Having been promoted from division 3 North last season the first team have had a tough season in an extremely competitive division, yet to register a win and securing a point on only 3 occasions they are still fighting for survival. They were unlucky to lose their opening match of the season 8-7 at home to Glasgow but balanced that by recovering from 8-2 down away to Lancashire 2, winning four of the last five to secure a point in a 9-6 defeat. They recently lost a close match away to Staffs 8-7 and have to reverse that result in their remaining fixture, re-arranged twice from earlier in the season, to retain their division 2 status.

Division 2 North:-

Teams	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Yorkshire 3	8	7	1	82	38	19
Lancashire 2	7	6	1	67	38	17
Glasgow 2	7	4	3	58	47	12
Staffs	7	1	6	30	75	3
Northumberland	7	0	7	33	72	3

Results

Date	Opposition	Venue	Result
03/11/13	Glasgow 2	Tyneside BC 1400	Lost 7-8
17/11/13	Yorkshire 3	Hull BC, HU5 4ED 1400	Lost 4-11
01/12/13	Lancashire 2	Ribby Hall, PR4 2PR 1200	Lost 6-9
19/01/14	Glasgow 2	Cockburn Centre 1330	Lost 5-10
02/02/14	Lancashire 2	Tyneside BC 1330	Lost 4-11
23/03/14	Yorkshire 3	Tyneside BC 1330	Lost 0-15
30/03/14	Staffs	Newcastle High School, ST5 1DB 1300	Lost 7-8
27/04/14	Staffs	Tyneside BC 1330	

In contrast, the second team had an excellent season being unbeaten throughout. They have demonstrated an excellent team spirit all season, notably in recovering from 6-4 down away to Lancs to win 8-7 and also in the two wins against their closest rivals the Isle of Man, coming from even further behind at 7-3 to again win 8-7 in the second having taken all three mixed from 6-all to win 9-6 in the first. This meant they clinched the division by a single point.

Their likely opponents in Division 4 North next year are Durham, Cumbria (relegated from division 3 North), Lothian 2 and Yorkshire 5.

Division 5 North:-

Teams	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Northumberland 2	8	8	0	85	35	21
Isle of Man	8	6	2	81	39	20
Lancashire 4	8	4	4	67	53	13
Nottinghamshire 3	8	2	6	36	84	4
Derbyshire 3	8	0	8	31	89	2

Results

Date	Opposition	Venue	Result
13/10/13	Notts 3	Tyneside BC 1330	Won 12-3
20/10/13	Lancashire 4	Ribby Hall, PR4 2PR 1200	Won 8-7
24/11/13	Derbyshire 3	Tyneside BC 1330	Won 14-1
26/01/14	Derbyshire 3	Rolls Royce Sports Hall, Derby DE24 9HY 1200	Won 11-4
16/02/14	Notts 3	Chilwell Olympia, Nottingham NG9 5HR 1230	Won 11-4
01/03/14	Isle of Man	Tyneside BC 1400	Won 9-6
02/03/14	Isle of Man	Tyneside BC 1000	Won 8-7
06/04/14	Lancashire 4	Tyneside BC 1330	Won 12-3

We entered a third team this season, for the first time since 2010-11, in order to re-establish the pathway between our U17 junior team and the senior teams, judging that we had sufficient girls coming through. This proved to be the case and 6 players benefited all of them recording victories at some point during the season. The team recorded two victories, 11-4 against the old enemy Durham and an excellent effort 8-7 in their final game at home to Cheshire.

With Durham withdrawing their third team and Cumbria seconds being promoted, they will be in for some travelling next year their likely opponents in Division 6 North being Derbyshire 3 (relegated from division 5 North), Cheshire 3, Lincs 2 and Leics 4.

Division 6 North:-

Teams	P	W	L	F	A	Pts
Cumbria 2	6	5	1	62	28	15
Cheshire 3	6	4	2	54	36	13
Northumberland 3	6	2	4	36	54	6
Durham 3	6	1	5	28	62	2

Results

Date	Opposition	Venue	Result
27/10/13	Durham 3	Sedgefield Community College TS21 3DD 1300	Lost 6-9
10/11/13	Cheshire 3	King's School, Chester, CH4 7QL 1300	Lost 4-11
15/12/13	Cumbria 2	Univ. of Cumbria, Carlisle, CA1 2HH 1200	Lost 4-11
02/02/14	Durham 3	Tyneside BC 1330	Won 11-4
23/03/14	Cumbria 2	Tyneside BC 1330	Lost 3-12
30/03/14	Cheshire 3	Tyneside BC 1330	Won 8-7

The County Match Secretaries meeting that will confirm our teams sections for next season is being held on May 10th this year.

County Championships Review

I am part of a BadmintonEngland review group of the "County Championships" which remain a major plank of BEs Competitive Play Strategy but financial support is unlikely unless a sponsor can be found and something needed to be done to make it more attractive to potential sponsors.

The proposal is for a 12 team Premiership division to be held over 4 weekends in the new National Badminton Centre, underpinned by divisions of 8, North & South in division 1 and four sections of 8 organised geographically in all divisions below that. Matches will be played in the premier league format but with additional men's singles and will take place in central venues on four sacrosanct Sundays within the season, two matches per day.

This should make the fixtures into more of an event for the players and also remove clashes with the tournament calendar which is ever popular. It won't come into play until the season after next, 2015-16 so there is time for consultation with the counties and to iron out the detail.

Senior Tournaments

The move to the Tyneside Badminton Centre enabled both the Restricted and Uppers to revert to their traditional format, namely singles on Friday evening, doubles all day Saturday and finals on Sunday.

The annual "Restricted" tournament, restricted in the sense that only those people qualified for Northumberland can enter, provided some excellent entertainment and saw Sarah Renton a triple champion for the third time, repeating the feat she achieved last year, and also previously in 2009. Some 45 players competed across the disciplines of singles, level doubles and mixed doubles.

County Restricted champions for the 2013-14 season were:-

Men's Singles:- Richard Eaton

Men's Singles Plate:- GarryLee McMullen

Ladies Singles:- Sarah Renton

Men's Doubles:- Malcolm Lightbown & Rob Wetherell

Ladies Doubles:- Sarah Renton & Katherine McGill

Mixed Doubles:- Malcolm Lightbown & Sarah Renton

The annual "Uppers" Tournament took place at the Tyneside Badminton Centre in February. Richard Eaton and Sarah Renton stole the headlines as double champions.

"Uppers" champions for the 2012-13 season were:-

Mens Singles: Richard Eaton

Ladies Singles: not held

Mens Doubles: Andrew Pollard & Richard Eaton

Ladies Doubles: Sarah Renton & Katherine McGill

Mixed Doubles: Malcolm Lightbown & Sarah Renton

On the national front, we again staged a Northumberland Senior Silver, this being one of some 20 such tournaments nationally. Sarah Renton again excelled taking all 3 titles, repeating the feat she achieved in 2010. She was more than ably assisted by her regular Northumberland partners Kate McGill in the ladies and Malcolm Lightbown in the mixed.

The men's singles boasted a record entry of 41 and the best local performance came from county champion Richard Eaton who, having won two rounds, narrowly missed out on a quarter-final berth, losing 25-23 in the third.

The Northumberland Championships, part of the Badminton England Senior Gold Circuit, again took place in early January with some 70 players entering across the 5 disciplines. The star amongst them was Niluka Karunaratne from Sri Lanka, world ranked number 73 at the time but the entry also featured three England internationals in Helen Davies, Alex Langley and Ben Stawski, not to mention up and coming star Chloe Birch from Yorkshire. Local success came from Sarah Renton who partnered Helen Davies to success in the ladies doubles for the third time, having previously won in 2009 and 2011.

Under-19 International Tournament

The International Team Tournament was not held this season with neither the regular Swedish visitors nor Scotland able to field teams. This severely impacted the size of the entry, particularly in the ladies but there was still much quality on offer. The eventual men's singles winner Ygor Cuelho, hailed from Brazil and there were a handful of junior internationals from England and Scotland on show. The tournament has

secured a move of date in the international calendar for next season and it is hoped that this will enable the team tournament to be staged as a precursor to the tournament as has traditionally been the case.

Graded Tournaments

In addition to the Restricted and Uppers Tournaments mentioned above, which double as A&B grade tournaments, a further 8 graded tournaments were staged during the season including 2 singles only events. This is the same number that we ran last season and we are indebted to Andy McGill and Steve Porter for all their hard work in supporting these. Jesmond Dene and Medicals did again run tournaments but we do urgently need support in this area, and I would ask all clubs to consider staging a graded tournament. There will be plenty of support available from us to help and you can make money for your club as a result.

The overall entries in graded tournaments are slightly down on recent seasons so a review is being held during the off-season to determine if changes are needed.

Masters (Veterans) Tournament

The 14th anniversary of the Northumberland Veteran's Challenge featured over 100 entrants and featured Over-35 events for the first time. This enabled Malcolm Lightbown to become a double champion, with Rob Wetherell in the men's doubles and Sarah Renton in the mixed. Sarah combined with Durham's Claire Lapworth to take the ladies doubles.

The move to the Tyneside Badminton Centre enabled the singles to be staged on the Friday evening for the first time although the entry was large enough to mean there was a late finish! Cumbria's evergreen Harry Shadwick won the Over 65 men's singles for the umpteenth time and Durham's Stan Johnson just failed to defend his O55 men's singles title, going down to Trevor Hampson of Worcestershire in the final.

PROPOSED SENIOR TOURNAMENT DATES

The following dates for season 2014-15 are set with sanction having been gained from BadmintonEngland for the regular circuit tournaments:-

26th, 27th, & 28th September – County Restricted

11th & 12th October – Senior Silver

24th, 25th & 26th October – U19 featuring the international team tournament on Friday.

31st October & 1st & 2nd November - Masters

10th & 11th January – Senior Gold

30th & 31st January & 1st February - Uppers

Steve Abbott

LEAGUE SECRETARY'S REPORT

Thanks to Andy McGill's 'behind the scenes' work, another highly competitive season has been visible online to all. A total of 25 clubs were represented throughout the period, 1 up on last year, with the same number of teams (91) competing in the leagues.

39 teams competed in 7 Mixed Doubles Leagues
37 teams competed in 7 Men's Doubles Leagues up 1
15 teams competed in 3 Ladies Doubles Leagues down 1

17 were conceded this season. 4 Mixed, 10 Men's and 3 Ladies, down 3 from last year, of the 348 scheduled.

1 ladies match remains unplayed.

Note that it is up to the HOME team to contact the away team. Do not rely on email or text, either ask for receipt of mail or return text as assuming these 'non verbal' methods are getting through has caused problems. Ideally SPEAK to the opposition!

Although it is the home team's responsibility to provide me with copies of their match cards, this season has been particularly bad for 'disappearing' cards, resulting in me chasing the opposition for their copy. As it is not the away team's responsibility to keep a record of the match scorecard, in order to keep leagues up to date, I have even had to enter a match without players' names.

Please remember that I require legible, fully completed cards and keep me updated on any changes in fixture dates. I have had to chase a few clubs about unplayed matches which, ultimately, I have found have been rearranged. There have been at least 50 matches rearranged this season, many of which I have only discovered when chasing match cards. This creates a huge amount of work!

Again, I have had several complaints about clubs rearranging matches. Please refer to the league rules 3.4 and 3.5

Finally, congratulations to all of the trophy winners, in particular the much reduced number of teams who completed the season undefeated:

Medicals 'A'	Men's D
St Gabs	Mixed Premier
Elmfield 'B'	Mixed B
Elmfield 'C'	Mixed F

Alison Thompson

NORTHUMBERLAND LEAGUES 2013/ 2014 FINAL PLACINGS

LADIES	MIXED	MENS
DIVISION PREMIER	DIVISION B	DIVISION PREMIER
ST GABRIELS	ELMFIELD 'B'	TELECOM
ELMFIELD	LNER	ST GABRIELS
LNER	MEDICALS	ELMFIELD
TELECOM	JESMOND DENE A	NCBC
NEWCASTLE UNI	BLYTH TYNEDALE	MEDICALS
DIVISION A	DIVISION C	DIVISION A
JESMOND DENE	ST GABRIELS 'B'	ST GABRIELS 'A'
ST GABRIEL'S 'A'	NCBC	NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY
RIVERSIDE LC BC	OCEAN ROAD 'A'	ELMFIELD 'A'
ELMFIELD 'A'	MEDICALS 'A'	HEXHAM
BLYTH TYNEDALE		JESMOND DENE
DIVISION B	DIVISION D	DIVISION B
BEWICKE	RIVERSIDE LC BC	LNER
MEDICALS	NORTHUMBERLAND CLUB	CHESTER LE STREET
NCBC	WHITLEY CHAPEL	JESMOND DENE 'A'
WHITLEY CHAPEL	CHESTER LE STREET	NORTHUMBERLAND CLUB
JARROW	LNER 'A'	BEWICKE
	DIVISION E	DIVISION C
	BENFIELD BEARS	RIVERSIDE LC BC
	BEWICKE	BLYTH TYNEDALE
	JESMOND DENE 'B'	WHITLEY CHAPEL
	JARROW 'A'	LNER 'A'
	BLYTH TYNEDALE 'A'	NESLC (DSS)
MIXED	DIVISION F	DIVISION D
DIVISION PREMIER	ELMFIELD 'C'	MEDICALS 'A'
ST GABRIELS	NORHAM 'A'	BENFIELD BEARS
ELMFIELD	JARROW 'B'	NORHAM
TELECOM	WHITLEY CHAPEL 'A'	PARKS
NEWCASTLE UNI	BEWICKE 'A'	
HEXHAM		DIVISION E
DIVISION A	DIVISION G	RIVERSIDE LC BC 'A'
ST GABRIELS 'A'	SIGNATURE	JARROW
ELMFIELD 'A'	PARKS	NESLC (DSS) A
TELECOM 'A'	RIVERSIDE LC BC 'A'	BENFIELD BEARS 'A'
OCEAN ROAD	JARROW 'B'	
JESMOND DENE	NESLC (DSS)	DIVISION F
		HEXHAM 'A'
		JARROW 'A'
		BENFIELD COMMUNITY BC
		NORTHUMBERLAND CLUB 'A'
		DIVISION G
		SIGNATURE
		HOTSPUR
		BLYTH TYNEDALE 'A'
		WALBOTTLE NOMADS
		WHITLEY CHAPEL 'A'

JUNIOR COMPETITIVE PLAY

Annual reports in recent years have made the point that we need to do better at identifying latent talent at an earlier age to develop a more regular flow of young players with the basic aptitude to progress through the junior ranks each year, playing in age group tournaments and team events and then going on to press for places in the senior teams. This is proving to be a rather slow process but there are now signs that work being done by a small handful of coaches in networks of schools is beginning to show some results.

Principal Team Events:-

Unfortunately, the Under 13 and Under 15 National County Challenges suffered from rationalisation measures at Badminton England and were not held this season. This was a real pity as we had qualified for the finals in three recent years. There are signs that these tournaments may be regenerated in some form for next season.

The Under 17 County Challenge, formerly called the "ICT", is the equivalent event for the older age group and for those lucky enough to be picked it is one of the highlights of their junior careers. This has just taken place again at Nottingham University. In recent seasons, we have tended to finish in the low 30s, as the general standard of all competing counties has increased. This year, there was considerable competition for places in our team and some difficult selection decisions had to be made: clearly this is good for the county but not so easy for the selectors. The young team battled their hearts out and eventually came 30th, so a marginal improvement on last year. But given that all of the boys and two girls will be available again next year, we will certainly be shooting for the 20s.

This season again, it was felt that we only had sufficient depth of squad players to compete at Under 17 level in the Shires League, so we decided not to enter Under 13 and Under 15 teams. In retrospect, we could probably have put out an Under 15 team with reasonable prospects, although we would have had a very small pool of available girls: we will have to review this carefully for the new season. The Under 17s drew a very tight match with Cumbria, had a concession win over Derbyshire 2nds and lost the other 4 matches. The boys in this year's team were, however, quite young and all will be available next year. The results were as follows:

Lincolnshire:	lost 8-12	Yorkshire 2 nd :	lost 1-19
Lancashire 2 nd :	lost 5-15	Yorkshire 1 st :	lost 1-19
Derbyshire:	won 20-0 (w/o)	Cumbria:	drew 10-10

We have maintained our membership of the North Midway League: this is played at Sheffield and does not feature any "Grade 1" players and limits the number of "Grade 2s". We did not have sufficient players to participate at the Primary and Under 12 events and were only able to go to one event at Under 14 when we came 7th of the 9 teams. The Under 16s, however, having finished last of 9 teams before Christmas, turned this round magnificently in February to finish an excellent 2nd.

In the Anglo-Scottish League events (run on our behalf by Foong Tham – many thanks to him for that), our team for the Under 12 event was augmented by some Durham players and performed very creditably to come 4th of 6. The Under 19 event only had 4 competing counties and we were 3rd. The Under 16s did well and came 4th of 8 competing teams. These Anglo-Scottish team tournaments are very popular with the players but do seem to be facing more problems with the congested calendars both north and south of the border. We hope to be able to reinstate the Under 14 age group event next season.

Other Team Events:-

We played in both of Durham's age group team events. The Under 15s came 4th of the 6 teams with good wins over Durham and Cumbria. The Under 17s did brilliantly, winning all their matches to record an excellent win overall.

An Under 13 team went to the Lothian team tournament on Easter Sunday and came 3rd of the 6 competing teams. A combined Northumberland & Durham team will be travelling up to Largs on the Ayrshire coast in mid-May for the Under 12 Anglo-Scottish team tournament. This is always a lovely event and is often the first overnight that the team members will have spent on a badminton team tournament.

We will do our best to continue to run a range of team tournaments, as well as putting on individual tournaments at the full range of BE age groups. We feel that we need to continue to do this, as our geographical location means that our juniors and their parents have to commit to considerable travelling just to get regular competitive experience: this is one of the biggest constraints facing us. The availability of the new Tyneside Badminton Centre has been a great boon here and provides greater flexibility in the arrangement of events: many thanks to Mike Woodward and his three colleagues for bringing this magnificent centre into operation so well.

In conclusion here, I wish to record my thanks to the following coaches and team managers who have been such a great support over the season: Rob Wetherell, Martin Fagan, Tom Appleyard, Elizabeth Alam, Chris Howard and Joanne Wilson. A great many thanks also to Geoff Bedford and Jim Smith, for their invaluable assistance in managing the BE junior tournaments: thanks also to Zayeed Alam for co-ordinating the various raffles that have been held to boost junior finances. And finally to the many parents who ferry the kids around and provide great support from the sidelines.

Individual Tournament Successes:-

A number of our Northumberland juniors have enjoyed successes on the BE tournament circuit. But pride of place here must go to Under 12, Asmita Chaudhari. Having had success at last year's Under 11 Nationals, Asmita recently played in the Under 13 Nationals and ended up winning two titles, the Girls' Doubles and Mixed Doubles, as well as reaching the semi-finals of the Girls' Singles!! Asmita has been part of the national squad this season, and has played in several international events. In addition she was one of Sport Newcastle's Rising Stars at the recent awards ceremony. Many congratulations to Asmita on her superb achievements.

Others who have been keenly flying the county's flag on the tournament circuit include Lexie Howard, Emily Harrison, Anna Railton, Hannah Lee, Sarah Wilson, Ellie Roberts, Jonathan Elsdon, Gyan Chadda, David Murray, Philip Pahatouridis, Annie Karn, Alisha Israni, Robyn Luckley, Megan Porter and Beth Railton. There have probably been more medals won at BE events this year than in recent seasons. Our Northumberland Bronzes were a particular success with medals won in most events, particularly at Under 15.

However, as stated last year, it is really important that we get a bigger base of younger players starting to play competitively in the local area. More of these will then hopefully go on to develop their abilities in the truly competitive environment of the national tournament circuits and/or to join the Performance Centre.

The Junior Restricted County Championships were held in September, although the Under 13s was deferred due to lack of numbers and will take place in early May: the Under 19 events involving the girls were not held. All the winners are shown below:

	Under 19	Under 17
Girls singles	Not played	Sarah Wilson
Boys singles	Jishnu Bhattacharya	Philip Pahatouridis
Girls doubles	Not played	Annie Karn & Sarah Wilson
Boys doubles	Dan Rogerson & Zarius Ferozepurwalla	Amit Chaudhari & Philip Pahatouridis
Mixed doubles	Not played	Annie Karn & Amit Chaudhari

	Under 15	Under 13
Girls singles	Asmita Chaudhari	Yet to be decided
Boys singles	Ashraf Alam	Yet to be decided
Girls doubles	Sarah Wilson & Ellie Roberts	Yet to be decided
Boys doubles	Ashraf Alam & Jonathan Elsdon	Yet to be decided
Mixed doubles	Asmita Chaudhari & Gyan Chadda	Yet to be decided

The “Super Series”:-

The NBA Junior “Super Series” continues to bring together players from a number of the junior clubs throughout Northumberland on four occasions through the season. The basic concept is to introduce the children to competitive play with the emphasis being on singles and giving the players lots of matches during each of the four days. Entry numbers grew steadily during the season 2013/14 with many entrants from Ponteland, Morpeth, Hexham, Whitley Chapel, Gosforth Academy, Berwick, Duns, Dunston and the Tyneside Sharks. Attracting sufficient girl entrants continues to be a problem, although the last 2 events showed promising signs with a fledgling girls’ event. There were 62 entrants at the last event, which was excellent.

In addition to producing individual singles and doubles winners, the singles results are calculated to produce an overall Junior Club winner. Previous winners have been:

2010/11: Tyneside Sharks
2011/12: North Tyneside Badminton Academy
2012/13: Tyneside Sharks

Based on singles results this year Tyneside Sharks were runners-up but the deserved winners were Morpeth Riverside. Many congratulations to them on a consistently good performance throughout the season.

Center Parcs National Schools Championships:-

This season BADMINTON England invited Counties, clubs, CBNs etc to take over the running of the County and Regional Rounds of this highly successful competition. Norma and Mike Waterfield organised the Tyne and Wear and Northumberland County Rounds (at the Tyneside Badminton Centre and Blyth Sports Centre respectively) on behalf of NBA, while Mike Woodward organised the Regional Finals at the Tyneside Badminton Centre. The winning 4 schools going forward to the National Finals in May all come from North of the Tyne. Monkseaton High School Key Stage 4 girls’ team (featuring Under 17 County juniors Megan Porter and Robyn Luckley) made history by becoming the first school from North Tyneside to make it through to the National Finals and the Regional Finals too, as did Gosforth Academy Key Stage 4 boys’ team, led by Philip Pahatouridis, who has had an excellent season. Also through to the National Finals are Church High School Key Stage 3 girls and Benfield Key Stage 3 boys. Both of these schools have already appeared in the National Finals on more than one occasion. We wish all 4 teams the very best of luck.

Awards for the 2013/14 Season:-

The Chairman of North Tyneside Council’s awards for the most promising Under 12s will be presented shortly. This season’s winners are Rachel Bogan and Andrew Liang. We continue to be grateful to the Council for their kind support.

Decisions on the award of the Bob Forster salvers for the “most promising” juniors, and on the award of junior county colours, will be announced at the Junior Presentation Evening which has yet to be arranged.

Richard Taylor

COACHING CO-ORDINATORS' REPORT

The past year has seen a good deal of work happening throughout the county.

Badminton has continued to be one of the most successful sports involved with Premier League 4 Sport (PL4S). Satellite clubs in 8 high schools across North Tyneside and Newcastle have flourished with very good numbers attending. At Marden Bridge Middle School in Whitley Bay there were so many children playing that a second session for the more talented players was established after February half term resulting in the first area Talent Squad in North Tyneside. Also in February a Regional PL4S event was held at the Tyneside Badminton Centre. The Newcastle United team, made up of players from Satellite clubs in Newcastle and North Tyneside, was victorious, defeating Hull City and Middlesbrough.

A new project designed for Primary schools and supported by the County has been successfully piloted in North Tyneside. The sessions have been highly successful and really enjoyed by the children. Primary teachers have also benefited from their own CPD sessions, and many new after-school clubs have been set up as a result of the project. Some of the primary children have accessed the PL4S Satellite clubs and a number have even progressed to the new area Talent Squad in Whitley Bay. It is hoped to replicate this successful project across the County, with other coaches showing interest. Over 2000 children have taken part in the Primary school sessions and the Satellite Clubs.

Other work with schools/clubs has been happening in Cramlington, Gosforth, Hexham and Ponteland thanks to the help of teachers and local coaches.

The purpose of this development work was to trial ways of engaging with schools and clubs to provide a good badminton experience for youngsters and to signpost pathways to allow those children who wish, to continue to playing badminton outside of school time.

The idea going forward next season is to work with coaches/clubs County wide to develop ways to engage with children to give them a chance to play badminton in their local area including ensuring access to club play outside of their school.

Meetings with coaches are planned to discuss how they can develop working with schools to promote badminton in their areas and ensure local pathways into club play.

However in order to progress we do need more active coaches who are available during the day especially and after school. We also need more Coaching Award courses as these now seem to be few and far between.

Steve Sharp and Rob Wetherell

Admin assistance provided by Dennis Gray and Mike Waterfield