



What a difference a year makes!!

The coronavirus has devastated sport, the economy, people's social lives and livelihood, but all of these are nothing compared to the massive loss of life being suffered across our United Kingdom and in the rest of the world.

On behalf of Leicestershire Badminton Association, I would like to offer our sincere condolences to all those who have lost a loved one and I would like to pay tribute to all those working in the NHS and other key workers for their tireless dedication in these troubling times.

I would like to thank all our members who listened to the Government advice and took the necessary action to close down their respective clubs.

As you know our season has effectively ended, resulting in several matches remaining outstanding. A decision will be taken when we know this pandemic is over, as to what should happen with those matches and undecided league positions. This will be a decision taken by all the clubs, who will be offered a number of options.

At present our AGM and presentation evenings have been cancelled, but we will need to have some type of AGM at some point in the future and details of that will be emailed to all clubs when we are in a position to do so.

This season the LBA set up a Development Committee, because we realise that in order to keep our great sport vibrant and growing, we needed a plan going into the future. The development committee, working with Badminton England, have formulated a strategy, which we believe will grow our game and ensure all our clubs benefit from that growth. However, the success of this strategy is dependent on all the clubs embracing it, which we are sure you will do.

We were hoping by now, to have sent all clubs an email outlining that strategy, but other more important matters have overtaken us. However, at some point, later this year, we will tell you more about it.

To end on a positive note, as you know Ray & Carol Harding retired last year, but we felt that their contribution to badminton had been so great, we should nominate them for a National award.

To that end, I'm pleased to announce that Ray & Carol have been awarded with an English Badminton Award by the Badminton England Honours Committee.

Congratulations Ray & Carol Harding.

**Ian Bosworth (President)**



# Report from 'The Badminton Man'



## **Badminton England/Team Leicestershire – free badminton coaching for Primary Schools**

Badminton England kindly granted funds to both Carole Spencer and myself to attract 12 primary schools to their 'Racket Pack' offer. This was followed by our Performance Centre matching the funding for the City schools, thereby offering those schools free badminton coaching for six weeks.

The response in the North West primaries was immediate and 6 schools signed up: St Charles, Hugglescote, St Johns, Warren Hills, Thringstone & Willesley.

With a few exceptions, the response from City primaries was poor. Therefore, the offer for free badminton coaching was extended to those County schools on the periphery of the City. There was an immediate positive response from schools in Anstey, Groby, Glenfield and Braunstone, signing up for the remaining 6 places.

**The Primary Schools County Challenge** ramped up this year following this investment and was aimed at increasing the number of children attending Team Leicestershire's 12-2pm and 4-6pm sessions on a Saturday at Babington Academy.

County Final Qualifiers: The Hall, Thurnby Lodge and Millfield Academy.

Sadly, City Round 4, The S Leics Round and the North West Round, along with the County Finals are all postponed until further notice. My thanks to Maurice Roberts, Cathy Buckler, Ann Cooper, Joe Johal and Lesley Howes for giving up their time to help with our tournaments.

## **Leicestershire Performance Centre Junior Training**

At the time of writing this year's primary schools project has been highly successful. Both 12-2pm and 4-6pm sessions are now full, despite the early halt to proceedings as a result of the corona virus. Thanks in particular to the teaching staff at Sandfield Close, The Hall and Lady Jane Grey, whose help in our promotions, had a huge impact on the number of children attending.

## **Juniors - General**

There is no let-up in the number of phone calls I receive from parents asking where their sons and daughters can undertake badminton. This proves what we always knew – kids love badminton!

**Greg Howes, Coach and Development Officer**



In August 2019, we ran a Level 1 course, which ran completely full, and upskilled a number of new Level 1 coaches for the County. This is great news for the continued development of clubs and badminton across the County.

#### Club development and projects:

The primary project and the success that has been brought definitely needs to be a focus for the future.

Rainbow Racquets – a new senior club, newly affiliated and playing in the league, discovered via the social competitions run last season (see medal winners photo). The club even had the good fortune to win an experience playing at this years' YONEX All England Championships!



We have been working with several clubs throughout the season to expand their offers, including Leicester Lions with a new NSB to launch in the new season, and the fantastic success story of Ray delivering a new No Strings Badminton **and** Racket Pack session at the new Broughton Astley LC, with unbelievable uptake and engagement.

Free disability CPD was delivered with great success nationally across the year, with huge uptake from coaches. The course run most locally in Birmingham had great attendance from Leicestershire coaches, and some even travelled up North to attend! We hope to support more clubs and coaches to provide inclusive and disability provision in the new season.

#### **Helena**

#### **THE COLIN KENT AWARD**

This award is given to a person for their contributed to badminton over many years. The 2018/19 winner was Greg Howes who was presented with the award at the 2019 LSBA presentation evening. Anyone that knows Greg knows that he devotes many hours to develop junior badminton as a coach in the schools and in the clubs. He is the treasurer of the Coaches Association and a great administrator keeping us all in check with the Leagues. A true badminton man and a well-deserved winner of this special award.



## PRIMARY SCHOOLS COUNTY FINALS JULY 2019

As always our primary schools promotions and competitions culminated in the County Finals held at Babington Academy (The Home of Leicestershire Badminton). Hugglescote were firm favourites to retain their title having a number of their players from the previous year's campaign, still eligible to play again this year. Throughout the event, the favourites maintained a healthy lead over their rivals. When it came to an all-Hugglescote doubles final, it was clear that there was only going to be one winner; last year's champions reclaiming their title in style. Thurnby Lodge were delighted to take the silver medal spot, as were Sandfield Close taking bronze.



Finishing positions:

1. Hugglescote;
- 2 Thurnby Lodge;
3. Sandfield Close;
4. Foxton;
5. Millfield;
6. St Barts

## A FEW OF THIS YEAR'S PRIMARY SCHOOL WINNERS





## NON COUNTY TOURNAMENTS

Once again non county competitions, including the annual Derek Meakin Memorial Tournament, gave our juniors the chance to shine.



## PRIMARY NORTH MIDWAY COMPETITION

17th November 2019 & 5th January 2020

### Managers Report

The first leg of this season's primary midway team tournament was played on 17th November at Babington. Leicestershire had an incredible 28 young players of primary school age compete on the day, split across 3 teams. All Leicestershire players showed great team spirit, sportsmanship and determination. Whilst a lot of fun was had on and off court, the event really did bring out the best in our players. It also shined a light on those players that were just on the periphery of squad selections. The first team showcased mature and focussed badminton only dropping two games all day (wow!). They went flying into the next leg in first position!

The second leg was played on Sunday 5th January. Fuelled by selection boxes, 25 young players dusted off their rackets to compete for the final positioning.

Players across all three teams were excited to be back and their behaviour and attitude throughout the day was exemplary. The third team put in a great effort, with an improved overall performance and some good games won, the 3rd team came in at 8th position- it was a very close contest with York 2 for 7th place! The second team played with determination and really showed their skill, going through into the top half of the draw following wins against York 1 and York 2. The 2nd team final position was an admirable 5th place. The first team went into the final day confidently with their sights set on bringing home the gold! And they certainly did not disappoint! The 1st team showcased their talent, putting in a solid performance to finish in a well-deserved 1st position!

I think it is fair to say that the event was a fantastic success and the kids had lots of fun whilst playing hearts out!

Well done to all the players- they all smashed it!

### **Anna Edwards (Manager)**





## LEICESTERSHIRE SCHOOLS LEAGUES 2019/2020

A big thanks to all the schools that continue to support the Leicestershire Schools Badminton Leagues .

Well done to the schools that got through to the County rounds which were hosted at Babington Academy in March .

Congratulations to the winning teams who should have gone through to the East Midlands regional round of the competition to represent Leicestershire but with the current circumstances this had to be cancelled as did the County finals of the Under 18yrs League.

The winning teams were : KS3 Boys - Loughborough Grammar, KS3 Girls - Woodbrook Vale, KS4 Boys- Market Bosworth , KS4 Girls - Babington Academy.



The under 18 finalists were:

Girls : Loughborough High, Beauchamp, Uppingham & WQE

Boys: Ashby, Wigston College, Leicester Grammar & Loughborough Grammar

I would like to thank our partners Leicestershire and Rutland Sport who helped to make it another successful year.

**Carole**

# NATIONAL MEDALS 2019/2020





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## NATIONAL HONOURS 2019/2020

### Carly Stevenson



Congratulations to Carly Stevenson for being selected for England in the U15 European Championships which took place in Liévin, France 14th-16th February 2020. Carly and her partner had a good start by winning their first mixed game against a pair from Finland, but unfortunately they lost the next game to a Russian pair who went onto to eventually win the event. Another good start in the girls doubles saw Carly and her partner win the first game against a pair from Slovakia and then narrowly losing in the next round to a pair from Germany.

Carly has also just been picked to play for England again for the U15 Quadrangular which should have been taking place in April in Scotland but has now been postponed and they are hoping to reschedule it for later in the year.

### Katie Hoult

Last season I reported that Katie won a bronze medal at the under 11yrs Nationals. This was a brilliant achievement which she was really pleased with. Winning a bronze medal at this age group in the Nationals is a part of Badminton England's criteria to be invited onto their player pathway discovery programme. Katie was invited to 2 training sessions hosted in Milton Keynes. This was a whole new ball game for her, as she never expected to be taking part in this type of training. She did her very best to achieve what was required of her and definitely gained a greater knowledge of all aspects of the game. The final training session was held at the Yonex All England Championships on their training courts. This was a great opportunity for the young players who enjoyed the chance to work with some of the competition players. What a fantastic end to the season. Katie has continued to improve this season, and has won many medals in National tournaments playing a year above her age group. She has also been a regular member of the U12 & U14 county teams; both teams getting through to the Finals of the Leagues. Unfortunately these have not been played yet due to the current circumstances. Well done Katie keep up the hard work.





## SUMMER TRAINING CAMP



Atu Rosalina former Indonesian Badminton player is now living and working in Leicestershire.

Atu was a part of the Indonesian junior team that won the girls “team singles” at the 1999 Asian Junior Championships; she also won the bronze medal in the girl’s singles event. In 2001 she was ranked number 20 in the world for singles and won the women’s singles title in the Indonesian National Championships. Atu retired from the national team in 2003 and moved to Brunel to work as a sparring partner for the royal family. After the move she still competed in tournaments and was the winner of the 2005 Hungarian open. She then moved to Denmark and whilst there, won the polish open. A move to France followed where she continued to play until getting married and moving to England. Still very keen to compete, she entered the 2016 English national Championships and reached the semi-final. A year later, she achieved the runner up place. Atu now has 2 lovely children and has settled in Leicestershire where she coaches. Many Leicestershire players are benefiting from working with Atu as she shares her vast knowledge and experience of the game. Last summer she ran a summer camp at Loughborough University, where many of our young players enjoyed a week of learning all aspects of the game both tactical and technical, together with the importance of flexibility and fitness. If anyone would like to benefit from Atu’s coaching, give her a call on. 07980722019.

## ANNUAL SUMMER BADMINTON TRIP

Our annual trip to Milton Keynes was another great success. The 8hrs of coaching over the weekend was well received by the players; they all worked hard and enjoyed the excellent coaching delivered by Greg Maires and Liz Cann. The social evening this year was a fantastic evening out and we went along to the open-air Aqua Park. The players and some parents had a brilliant time on the inflatables. However, I enjoyed the sunshine and a glass of wine. Then back to base for a pizza delivery and more socialising!!! It was great to see everyone enjoying themselves and making lifelong friends on and off of the courts. A big thanks to all the parents that went along to help; we definitely could not do the trip without you. This year's trip is fully booked already. **Carole, Amie & Neil**



## BRIT & CHELSEY WHITE back on the courts together

Twin sisters Brit and Chelsey White started playing badminton at 8 years old at the Hermitage LC. They soon progressed to playing at Whitwick Juniors BC then to training with the Junior County and into the County teams where they continued to play until 17



years old. Mum and Dad were really supportive and travelled all over the country allowing the girls to compete in national tournaments which gave the girls the experience they needed to progress. They won numerous medals along the way, and as adults played for Loughborough Leys BC for many years representing the senior county. Work and families then had to be their priority but the girls have never forgot the great time they had when being involved



in the sport. When an opportunity arises, they still enjoy a game. Brit picked a racket up again at University where she is training to be a nurse and did play a match for the county this season. Chelsey is an experienced plumber who doesn't live in the county but has started playing again. They paired up again in a tournament recently and won. Welcome back Ladies!!!

## UNDER 12 COUNTY TEAM REPORT

This was my first year as a manager and what a year it has been. My super littlies gave it their everything and am so proud of them all.

Our first match was a tough one against Warwickshire (who tend to win most leagues at most ages) but we came away with an awesome 14-6 win. Considering for most of the team this was their first appearance for Leicestershire it was an amazing win. Next up was a long trip to Cheshire and a few players not available. I was a little apprehensive but I shouldn't have been. Another amazing win Leics 18 - Cheshire 2.

Our third game in 3 weeks came as a home match v Herts 2. This was a little easier beating them 20-0.

After our little Christmas break we were straight back into our matches with 3 matches in 4 weekends. First was Yorks 2 at home winning that 19-1, but the following weekend was Yorks 1 away (another tough opponent) again the team gave it their all and we came away with a fantastic 15-5 win. Last up was Norfolk at home and probably our easiest match winning another 20-0.

Within the league we finished 3rd overall and off to the shires finals (whenever they will be)

I have thoroughly enjoyed my year with the team and can't wait to manage them again. They are a fantastic bunch of kids and supporters (couldn't do it without them) and wish them well for the rest of this season.

### Natalie





## UNDER 14 COUNTY TEAM REPORT

This seasons under 14yrs County team was a young team comprising of U12's playing up an age group as well as a core of U13's and a couple of true U14's. We started the shires league qualification games with a 19-1 win at home against Yorkshire 2. We continued the winning run by beating Lincolnshire side who we beat 20-0. The last home match saw the U14's go against an inexperienced Northumberland side that we ended up beating 19-1 utilising the whole squad. The first away fixture saw us come against a very strong Warwickshire side that easily beat us 17-3. The very next week saw the team travel all the way over to Norfolk getting a convincing win of 17-3. The 4<sup>th</sup> match in 4 weeks saw the last qualification match against local rivals Nottinghamshire, another convincingly win to us 20-0. Winning 5 out of 6 games has been phenomenal with such a young squad and we have secured a home playoff if the finals are to go ahead. We have been lucky enough to play most the squad again this year and I cannot thank the players and parents enough for their support as we had a very crowded shires fixture commitment. A special thanks goes to the players and parents that travelled over to Norfolk as that was a very long day due to the roadworks. Alex and I are extremely proud of the children's effort and attitude again this year, it was a pleasure managing them and look forward to the rest of the season.

Finally on an individual front we have had four of the girl's competing in the



U13 Gold Competitions and bringing home medals, so well done to Sylvie Walker, Matilda Sherwin, Katie Houlton and Lexie Edwards. The majority of the squad have been competing nationally on the BE tournament circuit and recording some great results and medals. Well done on this season's results so far. Everyone stay safe and we'll see what happens with the rest of the season.

**Chris and Alex Sherwin**

## UNDER 16 COUNTY TEAM REPORT

It's been a long hard fought season for the U16s in the Shires League with many new faces representing the team. Fortunately we managed to play all 6 games in our pool winning four and losing just two.

First up was a convincing win versus Lincolnshire, a good, dominant opener and chance to try out a few partnerships. Next up, the always strong Warwickshire. With a number of players unable to play, we drew upon our reserves, whom for some were making their first Shires League, and County, appearance. Together, they players put up an amazing demonstration of passion and resilience, losing only 13-7, of which many games were decided in three ends and scores very close. This was followed up with confident wins against Staffordshire and Derby and then one of the closest matches many of the players will ever experience against Buckinghamshire. Thanks to some, 'out of their skin' performances, this match went all the way to the last game to which we took an incredibly well earned 11-9 victory, a true team performance. In order to challenge for the playoffs, we still had to face Nottinghamshire, a team that we know very well, away. This meant a journey to Mansfield, and another player making their debut in a tough match. Our aim was simply to take as many rubbers as we could, where we could. The players stepped up, showing the great team spirit they have all season, which saw the games go very close with lots of extended rallies and many deciders being settled in the third end. Although losing out, the result had set us on the fringe of the playoff positions but some of the teams have a game in hand so only time can decide our finishing place.

I'd like to thank all the players and parents that continue to support this squad, the new players who took their opportunities to represent, and for the spirit demonstrated across the squad.

Players that represented (rubbers played) this year are Carly (8), Sylvie (24), Lexie (20), Matilda (16), Violet (8), Emma (12), Ria (4), Naomi (4), Leo (24), Will (23), Tom (23), Mitchell (8), Eddie (14), and Dani (4).

**Adam**



## UNDER 18 COUNTY TEAM REPORT

Going into this season we knew we had a very strong U18's squad; the goal starting the year was to gain qualification for the season-ending finals. As we looked down the fixture list for the season we knew that we had one very stern test against Warwickshire. This proved to be the case as we quickly dispatched Notts, Northants and Yorkshire 2 by 20 – 0, and Lincs 19 - 1. The expected test against Warwickshire, turned out to be a very close affair with many of the games going to 3 ends. However, unfortunately the final score did not go in our favour as we were beaten 14 - 6. We were due to face Norfolk but that was cancelled due to storm Ciara (doesn't that seem a long time ago). With the season coming to the sudden stop it leaves us wondering where this team would've finished, if the play-offs had taken place and the team went on to qualify for the finals. I'm sure we would've been the team that everybody wanted to avoid.

### The RIO Tournament

Again this year we were able to take 12 very strong players up to the Railway Institute, with the target of equalling if not bettering last year's 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish. Starting the first day with a comfortable victory, 14 – 1, over Lothian, we moved on into a second match, that on paper, looked to be a tricky encounter against Surrey. However we simply proved too strong, quickly despatching Surrey by a score line of 10 - 5. The last match of the day was against the old powerhouse, Yorkshire. With both teams undefeated this would prove to be a tight affair, but with many players stepping up we held our nerve and won with the final game on court to win the match 8 - 7. Going into the second day our first opponent was Hertfordshire and with good performances all-round we proved too strong beating them 9 - 6. Our last match, and essentially the final, was against Warwickshire, the team that beat us to the title last year at both ICT and RIO. All the games proved very competitive, but sadly we let the match slip and went on to lose by a score line of 11 - 4.

The players involved during the year were Jess Allen, Tamsin Betts, Tilly Dale, Grace Sherwin, Carly Stevenson, Sophie Watson, Danny Beynon, Rowan Clark, Luke Hoult, Owen King, Ayush Panchal and Tom Paterson-Watts.

Thank you to everybody who helped me out throughout the year, especially Pete (Dad).

**Chris Hall (manager)**





## UNDER 20 COUNTY TEAM REPORT

### U20 SHIRE'S TEAM – TOP OF THE LEAGUE!

This was the second year of Leicestershire having an u20's team following a mid-table position in last year's league. This year's four matches were scheduled against Lincolnshire, Avon, Gloucestershire and Nottinghamshire.

Player selection was given by prioritising those in the correct age group wherever possible. I was pleased that in all matches at least half of the team were true u19 and u20 players, appreciating the commitments that these players have outside of badminton.

A total of 14 players made up the squad, with Harry Clare, Eve Dale and Jess Rodgers playing in all four matches. A further mention goes to Sameer Chenia who was unbeaten in all of his 12 games played, and Jessica Allen who won all of her 8 games without dropping a single rubber. Other players who played in at least 2 of the four matches were Tamsin Betts, Luke Houlton, Owen King, Tom Patterson-Watts, and Izzy Pike. With Danny Beynon, Rowan Clark, Tom Cowperthwaite, and Hritika Modi playing in one of the matches. So, a big thanks to all those who competed! (Especially those who made the lengthy journey down to Portishead to play against Avon!)

Going into the final match against Nottinghamshire because of our three impressive wins to date we knew we were in for a shot of finishing unbeaten and sitting top of the league above Warwickshire if we achieved at least a 15-5 victory. To get us into this strong position we had already beaten Lincolnshire 16-4, Avon 17-3, and Gloucestershire 19-1. Nottinghamshire always have a strong team and we wanted to seek revenge on last year's very narrow loss.

Team selection was crucial to achieve the dream. Matches started well with all four mixed pairs winning, followed by only two losses in the eight singles matches. Going into the doubles we quietly, but confidently knew that it could actually be possible. Winning all four girls matches and three out of the four boys matches meant a third loss only.

So, a great result winning 17-3 against Notts to finish unbeaten and top of the league!!!!





## HARBOROUGH LC Junior Badminton Club



The weekly Wednesday night sessions are on the four courts at Harborough Leisure Centre. We now have registered a total of 86 Junior Badminton

England members for the 2019/20 season of which 27 regularly attend the 4-5pm session; 24 the 5-6pm session and 28 the 6-7pm session. For season 2019/20 all members have been given both free club hoodie & club shirt and the opportunity to attend the Free Meal Christmas Party on 18/12/19. The club has for the younger members the Badminton England "The Racket Pack" scheme for Tink, Flo & Wise awards.

In July 2019 Caitlin Sullivan was presented with the "Outstanding Club Member" trophy for 2019.

Members have continued to take a pro-active approach in entering the Non-County Tournaments. A special mention to Lewis Booth & Jakub Cox who have won trophies. Also, to Theo Parsons, Billy Rowe & Austin Wigley who now attend their respective "Team Leicestershire" training sessions. Harborough Feathers encourage the older club members to attend their Friday night sessions.

The club has encouraged and paid for a total of 7 Junior Club members aged 16+ to attend these UK Coaching "Safeguarding & Protecting Children" courses. In addition, 4 coaches and 3 adult volunteers have attended this course. **The club for 2020 will continue to encourage and pay for Junior Club members aged 16+ to attend these UK Coaching "Safeguarding & Protecting Children" courses.**

The fifth internal club tournament events were being held during Spring Term 4 so as not to disrupt older player's exams. However due to the coronavirus, the Girls & Boys Singles and Level Doubles events for U10's; U12's; U14's; U16's, U18's have been halted. All remaining matches will need to be played when we can resume with a revised Presentation night and meal. The club have helped members in respect of their D of E awards in respect of volunteering and / or physical elements for all levels. Also, any video recordings required for their Badminton PE GSCE.

A very basic automatic shuttlecock launcher was purchased by the club. This is battery operated and can hold 12 shuttlecocks to be able to deliver to just one set position. The younger club members enjoy that under supervision they are allowed to control this machine.

The club's own web site <http://www.harboroughlcjuniors.org.uk/> provides details of all club sessions, documents for all to be able to really appreciate what the club is about and what is available to young players.

With a Constitution, Code of Conducts updated Welcome Leaflets, additional younger volunteers the club continue to receive renewal accreditation as a Badminton England Premier Club and Sport England Clubmark.

**Ray Phipkin – Head Coach**

## **B BROUGHTON ASTLEY LC** **Junior Badminton**

Back in December 2017 / January 2018 the issue of the "Broughton Matters" indicated a new leisure centre was finally to be built in Broughton Astley and requested residents make any comments for the Broughton Astley Parish Council to consider. With this news Ray Phipkin a badminton England Level 2 coach didn't lose any time contacting them with a plan!

With regard to facilities at the new Broughton Astley Leisure Centre it was really essential that consideration was given to the type and positioning of the overhead lighting making sure it was suitable for badminton. Ray was hopeful that his comments would be taken into consideration.

In July 2019 Ray had a face to face meeting with Mike Price, Regional Transition Manager, North and Midlands Parkwood Leisure when they agreed to have Junior Badminton sessions on Tuesdays from 5-6pm for 7-13 years age group which seemed suitable for local schools in Broughton Astley. They would be offered the opportunity to take part in the Badminton England "The Racket Pack" award scheme. He also suggested to start up an adult No Strings Badminton sessions on Mondays from 7-9pm.

With the help of Badminton England's grants scheme the Racket Pack and No Strings sessions were set up. To help promote the Junior Badminton Sessions at the Leisure Centre Ray contacted the three Primary Schools in Broughton Astley to offer to provide FREE badminton fun lessons in their school for pupils in years 5 & 6. After a lot of correspondence, finally two schools took up the offer. Two free badminton fun lessons for year 5 (27 pupils) and year 6 (36 pupils) took place at Hallbrook Primary and Orchard C of E Primary Schools. To help to advertise the new sessions at the LC, a voucher was given to attend one FREE session of the Tuesday 5-6pm Junior Badminton at the centre. The LC then provided, during a school lesson time, four weeks each of 90 minutes free badminton coaching to 32 pupils in year 9 pupils from Thomas Estley Community College.

The first session of "The Racket Pack" junior badminton was held in January 2020 and a total of 4 attended. Over the following 10 weeks the numbers have varied from 6 to 7. A total of 6 girls and 18 boys have attended at some stage over the 11 weeks. This has included 4 from Hallbrook Primary School, 3 from Orchard C of E School and 8 from Thomas Estley Community College which indicates the free in school badminton coaching had really helped to provide the numbers attending. The Adult No Strings session started in January 2020; a total of 9 attended (5 ladies and 4 men). Over the following 10 weeks the numbers have varied from 13 to 23 and all four courts are available for the two hours. A total of 21 ladies and 27 men have attended at some stage over the 11 weeks.

Ray has created a clear pathway, from the players attending "The Racket Pack" junior badminton sessions on a Tuesday to join one of the two "South Leicestershire Badminton Junior Club" sessions on a Friday. Already 3 players have taken this route.

A pathway is also available for players from the Monday night "No-Strings" badminton club to attend an adult club night of South Leicestershire Badminton Club with the opportunity to join subject to their playing ability. It is however the intention to run an "Essential" badminton course aimed at the "No-Strings" group to give them the confidence and skills should they want to join an adult badminton club.

This is a great example that working in partnership with the LC, Schools and clubs is a way to make the development of badminton a success. **Ray Phipkin – Head Coach**



# WHITWICK JUNIOR BADMINTON CLUB

Our aim at the club is to offer quality badminton coaching and the opportunity for the children to progress. Over the years we have done really well at this, with quite a few of our junior members having been selected for the county teams and invited into the PC training sessions. Many are now regular members of senior clubs and play in the Leicestershire adult leagues. Over the last year, Amie and I have been trying hard to build the club membership up. Because of our success in moving our players onto the coaching sessions at Babington, our membership was down. But it has improved over the year and now up to 30. Some of these are now ready to move on, which means they might stop attending the club,. However, we see this as a job well done and we start once again identifying new players for next season.



At the end of last season we had our club presentation where medals were given to the most improved players. Congratulations to the winners who were Liam Ritchie, Oli Sewell, Bridget Murray, Eddie Patchett and Katie Hoult who won the club cup.



Carole & Amie



Loughborough Leys junior club has welcomed former Indonesian international player Atu as head coach this academic year. The opportunity for myself and our young players to learn alongside such an experience former professional player and is really helping our members to flourish. Having a top female coach has also helped to increase our membership, especially on the girl's side. We now have over 50 junior members attending weekly, with our under 12 year old girls now outnumbering the boys 2 to 1, some of these young players already attend county training and we continue to encourage players into the county setup.

I would like to thank those junior county players that have come to help with the training and development of our young players on a Saturday morning at Loughborough Leisure Centre. One of whom the club will be helping to fund through a coaching course when they become available again.

At the moment we are using a waiting list for interested new members and also providing them with the information of all junior clubs in the Leicestershire area.

**Dave**

**[loughboroughleysjuniors@hotmail.com](mailto:loughboroughleysjuniors@hotmail.com)**

**Loughborough Junior Badminton Club**

Great year with 20-30 juniors attending each week. Many thanks to Babu, Phil, Ryan, Zoe etc for helping out.

A number of the players in the junior club have either moved on to train at the performance centre or are now playing for Loughborough in the adult leagues. We all look forward to next year after the long break.

**Mark**

**LEICESTERSHIRE  
BADMINTON ASSOCIATION** 

The LBA junior club for the second year running has had to turn players away because membership is full. The standard has been very good resulting in players doing well in non county tournaments .

U13 boys singles won by Shaan Rana beating Dexter Bale, both from the LBA.

U15 girls singles won by Anupan Cundon, also LBA.

Julie and I would like to thank Robert Pope, Ken Dando and Greg Howes for all their help during the season and a special thank you to Fran Price and Sophia Sarna who have helped with the younger group.

**Grahame Forryan**



Although very sad to see the season finish early, this has been another busy and successful year for Melton OGs Badminton Club. Our coaches, Linda Hallam and Trevor Sanders, have continued to deliver badminton in local schools and our Monday night junior and intermediate coaching sessions have been extremely well supported. We have 22 juniors registered and 14 intermediates and all have attended regularly. During the 2018/19 season, several of our intermediates completed the Badminton Sports Leaders course and have, this season, been able to support our coaches deliver badminton festivals for local schools. In addition to holding our own singles competitions, 8 of our juniors and intermediates entered organised Leicestershire junior tournaments and very much enjoyed taking part. As part of our commitment to their continual development, several of our intermediates have stayed on after coaching to attend our club nights and we are confident that some of them will begin their competitive league play as part of our teams next season. On the coaching front, we have added another coach to our team, Chris Martin, who has brought new and more current coaching ideas. He has mainly supported the intermediate sessions and we've seen significant improvement in our players as a consequence. We continue to receive huge support from Badminton England and Leicestershire and Rutland Sport and our local Schools Sports Development Manager, Clare Marlow, all of which is very much appreciated.



I took over as Head Coach for both junior sessions from the beginning of this season; I had a challenge to ensure we carried on the superb work undertaken in previous years. I would personally like to thank Greg and Lesley Howes for their dedication and coaching on Mondays, so many juniors have benefitted from it throughout the years. To help support the junior coaching sessions, this year I recruited an existing member from our club who wanted to help upskill their coaching. I am therefore pleased to report each Monday and Friday I deliver coaching session with the help of Shemangari Sivaganeshwaran who is already a qualified assistant coach. She works closely with me, learning from my method of teaching and so that she can soon be a fully qualified coach. This year as with previous years, both our junior clubs have thrived. We have 52 registered members and a waiting list of more than a dozen that want to join! This is largely thanks to word of mouth recommendations, those juniors members that are part of the club thoroughly enjoy it and hence recruit their family and friends. In addition, a large number come via social media enquiries. I hope this trend continues for the future. Finally, we have also seen great success in promoting able junior players with our adult club, thus building a sustainability for the club membership long term. **Ajay**





South   
Leicestershire



## Badminton Junior Club

After many years at Brockington College the club moved from January 2020 to a new venue at Broughton Astley Leisure Centre. This new venue will enable the club to have sessions for all the weeks of School's Autumn, Spring & Summer Terms. The weekly Friday club nights sessions now run from 5:00 – 6:00pm and 6:00 – 7:30pm. We now have 42 Junior players registered with Badminton England who regularly attend.

Members continue to take a pro-active approach in entering the Non-County Tournaments such as the LSBA Junior American, LBA Junior Club and the Whitwick Badminton events at which Jasmine Johnson & Lexi Wright won trophies. A special mention to Zack Johnson who has now been successful at Badminton England events. We also have members who are part of "Team Leicestershire" and dependent on their technical & tactical badminton skills, have the opportunity to represent the LSBA in matches.

For season 2019/20, all members / volunteers when joining are presented with a free Club T-shirt and younger members take part in "The Racket Pack" award schemes.

Due to the coronavirus, the clubs second year internal club tournament with Girls & Boys Singles U10's; U12's; U14's; U16's, U18's has been halted. All remaining matches will need to be played when we can resume.

The club paid for three older members to attend the UK Coaching Safeguarding & Protecting Children course. Jing Wang & Callum Chapman obtained their Badminton England UKCC Level 1 and help at both sessions. The club now has five Badminton England coaches available to be able to adapt the structured programme for each week of the term session to suit the player's technical skills on the respective courts.

To develop the Junior Members of a suitable playing standard, some are invited to stay on and join in part of the senior club sessions from 7:30-10:00pm.

Parents, Volunteers, Coaches and especially players dedication, commitment, help and support enables the club to continue to grow at the new venue. The Junior club has its own section within club web site <http://www.southleicesterbadminton.co.uk/login> which provides details of all Junior club sessions, documents for all to be able to really appreciate what the club is about and what is available to young players.

The club continues to receive renewal accreditation as a Badminton England Premier Club and Sport England Clubmark.

**Ray Phipkin – Head Coach**

## LEICESTERSHIRE SENIOR COUNTY 2019/20

Well we were on track for a good and potentially excellent year for senior county before the final weekend of matches was cancelled... 1<sup>st</sup> team 7<sup>th</sup> out of 10 teams battling hard and looking forward to a tough fight to remain in the top tier. 2<sup>nd</sup> team have done amazingly well (promoted last year and missing two key players this year) were 10 points clear at the top of their division with champagne on ice, and our 3<sup>rd</sup> team were in 3<sup>rd</sup> place with a chance of a promotion place. As with last year, the strength of our teams is due to the wealth of talent coming through, and that is really pleasing to see and well done to everyone involved. I firmly believe the future is very bright for Leicestershire badminton and I'm sure there will be even more competition for places in our county teams next year and beyond as our PC continues to produce excellent young players.

Links to show how the three teams have done this year:

<https://be.tournamentsoftware.com/sport/draw.aspx?id=D0B6DCFE-3205-46F7-96A2-A1F14B788D3D&draw=3>

<https://be.tournamentsoftware.com/sport/league/draw?id=2115D4AB-D6DE-48F8-BD60-5DDE98AB61D6&draw=25>

<https://be.tournamentsoftware.com/sport/league/draw?id=2115D4AB-D6DE-48F8-BD60-5DDE98AB61D6&draw=10>



## LEICESTERSHIRE RESTRICTED TOURNAMENT

Mens singles: Jai Chandarana beat James White 23-21, 21-16

Ladies singles: Jess Allen beat Sophie Watson 21-19, 21-17

Mens doubles: Tom Armstrong & Chris Hall beat James White & Simon White 21-19, 21-17

Ladies doubles: Zoe King & Emma Ault beat Sarita Patel & Laura Mercer 21-18, 23-21

Mixed doubles: Tom Armstrong & Zoe King beat Chris Hall & Laura Mercer 21-16, 21-17.

Special mention to both Jai and Jess for their 1<sup>st</sup> senior county singles titles.

Also for Zoe and Emma for winning ladies doubles 18 or so years after predicting it!

**Mark King**

**Leicestershire Badminton County Captain**

## LBA BADMINTON LEAGUES

Despite having 4 new clubs join the LBA this year (DMU, Mowbray, Highfields and Rainbow Racquets), player numbers continue to tumble. Season 18/19 finished with 609 registered players. 2019 ended at 572. To date this has risen to 614. The LBA, along with the LSBA, has appointed a development group to address this problem.

Play was brought to an abrupt halt by the global crisis with just over 100 matches to be concluded. A number of proposals are to be presented to the clubs in order to decide the outcome of this season. At the time play was called to a halt, Loughborough Students had already won four divisions; Croakers were on course to win two divisions; and newcomers, Mowbray, were poised to win promotion in their first season of the Mixed league.

## THE DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY

After an absence of over 25 years, the Leicestershire Badminton Association (LBA) were delighted to welcome the University back into the County badminton leagues. As part of a pre-season welcome, Development Officers, Carole Spencer and Greg Howes, with help from the DMU sports committee, organised a doubles tournament for the University's students. 18 pairs took part on a busy Friday evening in May.

As a result of the tournament's success, and whilst the parties were once again working closely together, it was agreed that the LBA would run this competition on an annual basis.

### Winners and Runners Up together with the organisers.





## RAINBOW RACQUETS

Some months before the start of this season, several of our badminton group entered a social tournament at Babington. This was our first foray into playing competitively and we absolutely loved it! We met lots of new people and enjoyed the whole experience. We walked away with several gold and silver medals, gaining our first taste of success. We wanted more!

During that event we met both Greg and Helena who were incredibly encouraging and introduced us to the possibility of joining the league for the 19-20 season. Our interest was piqued and the race was on to get organised and put together a team!

Flash forward several months and there we were, about to do battle in our first ever league fixture. The other team didn't field a full side and we scraped a win. Elation! Our next match was a different story entirely - comprehensively beaten! This turned into something of a regular theme... not sure we were at all prepared for our baptism of fire which I understand the majority of first seasons are! In terms of the stats we've lost way more than we've won but the progress is visible. With the help of a coach we've started to add more structure and technique to our gameplay and the defeats have become much more hard fought. We've managed to win some rubbers and have gained more confidence in ourselves.



Reflecting on the duration of this season there have been many highlights: taking part in (and winning!) a social tournament, building our team and our team spirit, visiting new places and meeting lots of lovely people in the badminton community, being interviewed by BBC Radio Leicester about our club and its aims of promoting a more active lifestyle in our community and getting more women into sport. In addition, two of us have become accredited Line Judges and started the path into giving something back to this fabulous sport of ours.



What might be our most cherished experience was winning a Badminton England competition and playing on the match court before the quarter finals session at the All England. I can now legitimately say I won a match at the 2020 Yonex All England Open. We had a wonderful time on the court. Lots of life long memories made. We were very much grateful for the opportunity and the warm and generous welcome we received from our Badminton England hosts.

With an incredible first year of learning in the bag we're already looking forward to taking this, and our enthusiasm, into season two. **Karen**

## MOWBRAY BADMINTON CLUB

We have all enjoyed the challenges to date and have had some very hard fought matches. It has been refreshing to play some new faces, as well as the ones I remember from previous years.

We are looking forward to playing again when the current situation settles down.

Thank you for all the work you put to your role and hope to see you again soon.

Kind Regards

Barry

## PANTHERS BADMINTON CLUB

### **Panthers join with the British Armed Forces**

Panthers Badminton Club has been working closely with the British Armed Forces to allow badminton to be available and accessible for beginners through to veterans. Prina has now qualified as a Level 2 coach, where her coaching experience has led her to the British Armed Forces. She has been coaching the Army Ladies Doubles and Mixed Doubles teams to play competitively in the UKAF championships 2020. The inter-corps championships between the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force was played earlier this year, where the Army were most victorious throughout the leagues and winning the Mixed Doubles for the first time.

### **Prina Karia - Yonex All England VoTY Award**

Prina Karia has been working closely with Badminton England to develop weekly session of para-badminton in SEND schools. Panthers Badminton Club and Badminton England jointly recognised her outstanding voluntary work and nominated her for the Yonex All England Volunteer of the Year Award. This award was acknowledged at the Yonex All England Volunteer Conference, where, Prina received the Yonex All England Runner Up award from Adrian Christy - Chief Executive at Badminton England, who agreed that the work she is doing within her local community is extraordinary. He made special reference to the phenomenal work she is doing to help reduce the stigma against women in sport as well as getting actively involved in para-badminton. Panthers Badminton Club would like to thank all its volunteers for their continued efforts and support.



**Prina Karia – Co-Founder of Panthers Badminton Club**

**Maurice Roberts – Co-Founder of Panthers Badminton Club**

## THE WITHERS TOURNAMENT 2019

Another great turn out. 60 players enjoyed competing in what is now an annual event hosted at Babington Academy. The event is open to anyone that has not played in any senior county teams during the season, and if enough non league players enter we also run a plate event. As you might expect we had far more men interested in playing than ladies, which is such a shame. Overall there was 24 men's pairs and 6 ladies pairs. The results were: Men's Winners – Harry Clare & Rowan Clark, R/up James Hurst and Jordon Kelly, Ladies winners were: Grace Sherwin and Tilly Dale, R/up Amie Houlst & Sarah Bradbury. Hopefully this event will run again in Sept 2020.



## UNDER 12 LEICESTERSHIRE INVITATION TOURNAMENT WINNERS 2019/20

Leicestershire girls Katie and Lexi stormed through the group stages of the under 12 invitation tournament by winning all 6 games. They then won the quarters 21-8 and semis 21-13. Their opponents in the final were Matilda and Sylvie also from Leicestershire. It was a hard fought final with Katie and Lexi coming away as winners 21-12. Leicestershire lads Alex Vermaak & Theo Parsons got through to the finals just losing out 21-18 and took the silver medals.

Well done to all the players that took part, you did Leicestershire proud.





## LEICESTERSHIRE MASTERS REPORT 2019/20

This was my first year as Masters Co-ordinator and with Carol Harding's wisdom and knowledge passed on to me I was looking forward to the challenge.

Leicestershire entered O40, O50, O55, O60 and O65 teams in the County Championships and O55 and O60 teams in the County Challenge weekend.

Before a match was even played we had to withdraw the O50 team as 2 ladies pulled out of the squad leaving it mathematically impossible for them to field a full team. The upside of this should have been that the O40 and O55 teams gained some players.

Not so for the O40 team as they had to concede 3 of their 6 games due to non – availability of players and a very small squad to choose from. Next season it is unlikely we will be entering an O40 team.

**However it wasn't all doom and gloom as the O55, O60 and O65 teams all had aspirations of winning their respective divisions.**

The O65 team had another very successful season dominating the East Midlands division winning all their matches and only dropping 7 rubbers out of a total of 45, They progressed to the playoffs where they were due to meet unbeaten Staffordshire until all badminton was cancelled . Well done to the squad of 4 men and 4 women captained by Dave Watts and to Ann Cooper for winning her County Colours.

The O60 team was strengthened as Jane Roberts and Tahir Mahmood moved up an age group and it became clear half way through the season that the title decider was going to be between ourselves and Worcestershire 1. They came to Babington with a very strong team, including several national title holders. We did extremely well going into the mixed holding our own with the score level at 4 – 4 with some epic performances from all. The 4 mixed matches went 3-1 in favour of Worcestershire with only Tahir and Sue Mahmood winning the first mixed. Well done to the squad of 7 men and 6 women captained by Greg Howes. (As 6 of the squad are over 65 it's a massive well done).

The O55 team had commitment at the start of the season from some of O60 players allowing the team to be entered. Unfortunately the first match against Shropshire was lost 10-2 and we only managed to field 2 ladies. After that the team clocked up win after win and when Shropshire came to Babington we beat them 7-5. This left us second in the table with the same number of wins as Shropshire but a worse average. Well done to the squad of 7 men and 6 women captained by Ian Bosworth.

Leicestershire was so close to having 3 teams going to the Finals! Wow!

In the Masters County Challenge held in January both O55 and O65 teams played at Worcester which meant we could cheer each other on. The 65 `s came 3<sup>rd</sup> winning 4 and losing 2, whilst the 55`s came 5<sup>th</sup> winning 1 losing 2 and drawing 2.

**If you take anything from this report then it should be that the key to fielding a Masters team is the DEPTH of it`s squad.**

The O65 team consists of 3 men and 3 women whereas the other age groups are 4 men and 4 women. Have a look at the ink below which will give you a feel for the setup, the divisions and the players involved.

<https://be.tournamentsoftware.com/sport/league?id=135717D7-2206-470A-9CF2-7E44FF19B226>

## LEICESTERSHIRE MASTERS REPORT 2019/20

In the LBA leagues you play against young and old, why not test yourself against your own age group? Matches are played on Sundays and teams share the travelling duties. You can commit to as many or as few matches as you want

Teams for next season have to be entered by mid May so if you want to express an interest please contact me or one of the captains

Sue Mahmood 078790 23281 [suemahmoo@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:suemahmoo@hotmail.co.uk)

Also please get in touch in you have any questions regarding Masters Teams or Masters Tournaments

Practice / get to know the squad sessions will be held on Friday evenings at the LBA Hall Babington in September, please come along if you are old enough. **Sue**

The over 65 County Masters team comprised of Carole Spencer, Audrey Preston, Cathy Buckler, Ann Cooper, Richard Dayman, Edward Hayes, Greg Howes and team capt Dave Watts. The team won all their 6 league matches losing only 7 rubbers along the way, this would have seen them progress into a midland regional playoff against Staffordshire who won their 4 league matches losing only 6 rubbers, which would have made for a very interesting playoff. **Dave**



### Edward Hayes

Edward is a current member of the successful over 65s Leicestershire County Masters team, and a member of Central Leicester BC playing regularly in the Leagues. Edward is very dedicated to his badminton, so much so that he is still keen to compete in National tournaments. This season saw him move up to the over 70yrs age group. He entered the mixed event with his regular partner Sylvia Gill from Lancashire, and formed a new partnership this season in the men's with Roy Bartlett from Surrey. In his first tournament of the season in the West of England he got through to the quarter finals of the mixed and just lost in the final of the Men's doubles. In the Nationals (December 2019) he reached the Men's semi-finals and the Mixed quarter finals. In Yorkshire (February 2020) he got the top position winning the Men's doubles and was the Mixed losing finalist. Well done Edward I would say a successful tournament season.



## Saturday No Strings Badminton – Babington Academy

The Saturday sessions now in their 8<sup>th</sup> year are going along very well, averaging over 25 each week with a good mixture of ages, gender and ability. It is truly great to see so many diverse players, some new to the sport and some staple regulars.

It is also a testament that I have not advertised the session at all for the past 6 years anywhere externally. It has only featured on the Leicestershire Badminton Association website and an active Facebook group. This shows when you are running a successful fun session, people will come and play.

The session is every Saturday 6.00-8.00pm at Babington Academy (LE4 0SZ).

## Adult Coaching – Babington Academy Saturdays 8.00-9.00pm

Following on from feedback from players of the Saturday session and other sessions I run, I decided to introduce adult coaching. The aim of this was to give confidence to those that wanted to take their badminton to the next level and perhaps join a competitive league club. It was also for complete beginners to learn the basic techniques and skills of the sport so that they can enjoy and play it to their potential.

These coaching sessions have been very popular and I am pleased to report I will continue them in the future. Anyone that would like to register their interest in future adult coaching sessions, please visit: [www.lbabadminton.org](http://www.lbabadminton.org)

**Ajay**

## Next Season's County Strip?



## USEFUL WEBSITES

[www.lbadminton.org](http://www.lbadminton.org)  
(Senior)

[www.leicestershireba.co.uk](http://www.leicestershireba.co.uk)  
(Schools)





## Leicestershire Schools' Badminton Association

I have been providing an end of season report as LSBA Chairman for the last 10 years. Prior to taking on the Chairman's role I have been involved as Secretary, Publicity Secretary and 5 years as Team Manager. An involvement for well over 20 years!

The start of the Season was a very busy one! Our Secretary Paul Murray tendering a surprise resignation within our pre-season period!! I would like to express my thanks to members of the committee for their efforts to get the season under way as normal. Special mention to Carole Spencer, Ray Phipkin and Dave Watts.

At the time of writing this report the whole Country and indeed most of the world is struggling with the effects of the Corvid 19 Pandemic!

On behalf of LSBA I would like to pay tribute to all those working in the NHS and other key workers for their tireless dedication in these troubling times.

The knock-on effect on our own Sport and Association has been devastating!!

Most of our Shires teams have reached the play-offs -however it is not sure whether they will be concluded, ICT has been postponed and is unlikely to take place soon.

Badminton England are currently operating a '5 week rolling cancellation window' for all Senior & Junior Tournaments for this remainder of the season.

Closer to home our own AGM, LSBA Championships and Presentation night is seriously in doubt.

Also, all PC training has been cancelled for the foreseeable future.

On a positive note the LSBA committee are working hard to ensure the disruption is kept to a minimum and will be looking to return to normal as soon as it is safe to do so.

Once again, many thanks to all our Team Managers and Coaches for the management and team selection during our competitive campaign so far this season. It would be remiss of me not to mention the support of all parents and volunteers. Well done to you all- we could not function without your tireless support.

This is our 7th year of the formal Team Leicestershire set up. I am sure all those involved will agree this has been another successful year for the Performance centre coaches and assistants.

We continue to be supported by Greg Howes- Leicestershire's Badminton Development Officer. His efforts and involvement are not only Junior but all aspects of Leicestershire Badminton. We are also indebted to Greg, assisted by Michael Shaw, for stepping in at the last minute and taking up the role of LSBA Match Secretary.

Congratulations on all our successes in competitive play both individually and at team level so far this season. Details of which will shortly be found on the LSBA website.

Without players there would be no LSBA. We have a dedicated network of coaches and officials that take every opportunity to 'talent spot' for young new players. This is done at area coaching sessions, schools leagues, trials and club coaches introducing their players. A special mention to Carole Spencer, Greg Howes, Terry Talbot, Graham Forryan for their efforts.

A final mention to all members of the LSBA Committee who work behind the scenes.

We could not function without the efforts of our hard-working committee.

**Dave Armstrong – Chairman April 2020.**



## Leicestershire Performance Centre

With the premature end to the 2019-20 badminton centre there is plenty of time to reflect and I'm sure we are all looking forward to getting back on court whenever that might be. Training at the performance centre has been excellent this year and we introduced a new 'club' session on a Wednesday for those who didn't quite make the PC standard. Like in previous years many of the PC players regularly bring home medals across all age groups, and we are competing well at junior nationals. This is great to see, and I hope we can build on that again next year.

As we continue with our journey as a performance centre we will of course try to do even better next year. Our one frustration this year (apart from recent events) is that our Wednesday match play session (after a great start) hasn't been as we wanted it and we will look to address that for next season.

In terms of integration of our junior, senior and masters level county players under the Team Leicestershire umbrella there is still more to be done but I'm encouraged by the number of younger players that have played senior county this year; Jess Allen, Sophie Watson, Tamsin Betts, Grace Sherwin, Rowan Clark, Luke Hoults, Tom Paterson-Watts and Owen King - well done to all of them and I hope to see others joining them next season.

I hope you all manage to keep training over this extended break, it is great to see Jess and Anthony motivating you through the online videos – make sure you have a go.

**Mark King**  
Chairperson, Leicestershire Performance Centre.



## Leicestershire Badminton Coaches Association

It has been a contrasting season this year. It started really well with our annual Seminar conducted by Antony Clark, with 14 county coaches in attendance. The topics this year were mental toughness, footwork practice and making the best of the smash. Needless to say, Antony, ably assisted by two of our top juniors, provided a very entertaining day, putting us all through our paces.

Leicestershire coaches continue to work hard delivering badminton in schools to attract more grassroots players into the sport. With support and funding from the Performance Centre and Badminton England, we were able to deliver existing sessions and start new sessions in schools previously not engaged with badminton. This proved to be a tremendous success, as children from these sessions were signposted to the Team Leicestershire coaching sessions at Babington Academy on Saturdays. Not only did we exceed our expectations but also we attracted over 25 children on certain days! This is a nice problem to have. However, this progress was cut short by the social distancing measures put in by the UK Government to tackle the coronavirus (COIV-19) outbreak. Schools were shut as a result, and all coaching had to be suspended. In just a few weeks, everyday life in the country has changed drastically.

As there is a lot of uncertainty when we will commence coaching, again I would like to take this time to reflect on the positives. Perhaps the hard working coaches that work tirelessly can take this time to take a break, spend time with their families and rest. The children of today that have pressure to do so much can slow down, enjoy little joys in their lives and learn to develop different skills whilst they have been asked to stay at home. Finally, I believe strongly that we will come out of this for the better. Everything happens for a reason and we must take time to reflect on the fantastic work all the key workers are doing to help us through this pandemic.

I would like to wish all coaches and players the very best in these difficult times, stay safe, keep positive and we soon shall be playing the sport again! I for one cannot wait.

**Ajay Pitrola (Chair)**

### **PLEASE CONTACT CAROLE OR GREG**

If you would like to take any coaching qualification, start up your own Junior Club or be a badminton volunteer Coaching opportunities for your members

**carolespencer5525@gmail.com**

Phone 01530 811984

**greghowes71@gmail.com**

Phone 0116 2621476



## AND FINALLY

Well what an abrupt end to the season, nobody saw that one coming!  
When starting this year's newsletter, I intended it to be much smaller, but NO there is just too much going on and we need to share it.

I will start with a big thanks again to all the club volunteers, committees, coaches, parents and of course the players who keep badminton alive in Leicestershire. Also, welcome to the 4 new clubs that joined us this season, DMU. Rainbow Rackets, Highfields & Mowbray. I Hope you enjoyed your first season with us.

My coaching work has stayed much the same this season I am continuing to work in the primary schools, which has been a great success again. I think it's absolutely the correct way to promote the game to the youngsters. The children are so enthusiastic and keen to learn; it's a pleasure to work with them. A big thank you to the schools that have supported badminton this season and hopefully will again in the next academic year, although we all understand that badminton might not be top of the schools' agenda when they return to normal school hours. However, we must continue to engage with the schools as this type of work definitely has an impact. This season we have more young players attending our sessions at the Hermitage LC and at Babington.



Leicestershire High schools, Academies and colleges continue to support the Leicestershire schools leagues, competing in area competitions in KS3 & 4 & Under 18yrs boys and girls events. The area winners then go through to the finals held at Babington each March. This year 10 schools competed over 4 consecutive nights; a total of 160 youngsters playing competitive badminton.

The county junior and senior teams have had another fantastic season. Leicestershire are producing some very skilful young players that are now beginning to filter into the senior county teams and the clubs. I reported last year that there was money available from Badminton England for clubs to apply to help develop clubs. Two people applied and were successful having accessed the funding; Marie Whitehead for the setting up of a Ladies only club and Ray Phipkin to set up sessions at the new Leisure Centre in Broughton Astley. Well done both.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this newsletter. Greg and I will be here next season to give help and advice to clubs as always, if needed. So, don't hesitate to contact one of us. It's a long break this year from the sport we all love, so try and keep fit!  
Enjoy the summer, stay positive, and look forward to getting back on the courts soon.

Cheers Carole

