

Newsletter - July 2011



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NEWSLETTER

Regretfully in some ways, but happily in others, this is the last time I shall be editing the newsletter. Unfortunately, nobody has shown the least interest in taking over the job and so the newsletter will 'die the death'. Or is there someone unknown out there who is keen to try their hand at a bit of journalism?

There have been odd times over the last 20 years when I have been 'tearing my hair' to get squad managers, players and parents to write articles, but they always appeared in the end. I am very grateful to all 281 (yes, I did keep count!) people who have written over the years, several of them more than once. I couldn't have produced so many newsletters without their help. So here goes on the last one - I hope you enjoy it as much as all the rest.

U13 County Trials

U13 Players born in 1999 and 2000

Wednesday, September 7 at the Herts Sports Village, Hatfield 5.45 - 8.00 pm

Please be there at 5.30 pm to sign in

For further details please contact Graham Hall (07939 105478) or Mike Newlove (01707 263403) e-mail: hsba-trials@gmx.com

U11 Players born in 2001 and later

Wednesday, September 7 at the Herts Sports Village, Hatfield 5.45 - 8.00 pm

Please be there at 5.30 pm to sign in

For further details please contact Sangeeta Dhall (01462 684804)

It has been decided to end school, club and individual affiliation to HSBA next season. Information regarding tournaments, squad trials, etc will be found on the website: www.hertsschoolsbadminton.co.uk

HSBA Tournament Dates for 2011/12 (make a note now - further details will be on HSBA website: www.hertschoolsbadminton.co.uk)

U18 (Year 13 and under)	Boys Singles / Girls Singles	16th October
	Boys Doubles / Girls Doubles	16th October
	Mixed Doubles	16th October
U15 (Year 10 and under)	Boys Doubles / Girls Doubles	6th November
	Mixed Doubles	6th November
	Boys Singles / Girls Singles	20th November
	Boys 'B' Singles / Girls 'B' Singles	11th March
U13 (Year 8 and under)	Boys Singles / Girls Singles	16th October
	Boys 'B' Singles / Girls 'B' Singles	6th November
	Boys Doubles / Girls Doubles	11th March
	Mixed Doubles	11th March
U11 (Year 6 and under)	Boys Singles / Girls Singles	6th November
	Boys Doubles / Girls Doubles	20th November
U10 (Year 5 and under)	Boys Singles / Girls Singles	11th March
	Boys Doubles / Girls Doubles	11th March

U15/U17 County Trials

The U15/U15 county trials were held on Sunday, June 5th at the Herts Sports Village. The following players have been selected for the squads

U15

Emily Clarke - Victoria Clayton - Heidi de Souza - Renu Dhall-Chopra -
Francesca Farlie - Tanishia Gearing - Isabel Hatt - Aimee Hodgkinson -
Krishni Thayaparan - Sophie Vernon - Chloe Winyard
Andrew Baird - Greg Benson - Jonathan de Costa - Ellis Drayton - Austin
Ephgrave - Daniel Fox - Harry Knill-Jones - Sai Raj Kondan - Lathan
Mahalingam - Sam Newlove - Nicholas Page - Senthuran Thayaparan -
Edgar Titterton - Duncan Williams

U17

Cayleigh Bambrick - Alex English - Philippa English - Libby Jennings -
Hannah McLaren - Laura Monk - Georgia Pittson - Miti Shah - Pui Yi Tam -
Ying Cen Tee
Conor Bambrick - Wesley Chan - Lyall Daniels - David Maughan - Mark
Sadler - Liam Scofield - Nathan Scofield - Lewis Stringer - Hugo Weaver -
Oliver White - Matthew Widdicombe

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

There was a very poor attendance at the Annual General Meeting - the committee plus 2 others. Chairman Ken Winchester reported that the county had had a very busy and successful season. He thanked all the squad managers, coaches, other committee members and other helpers, without whom HSBA could not function. Each squad manager gave a short report on the season and treasurer and tournament secretary also said a few words. David Bartlett, the HBA rep, commented on the HBA Annual General Meeting and on the development of badminton in the county. During the course of the meeting, the names of 3 new vice-presidents were announced. They are Marion Conway, Malcolm Lumb and Megan Lumb, who join Duncan Conway, Tony Clarke and Joan Walters on the vice-president list. The committee was voted back to serve for another year.

HSBA Committee

Chairman	Ken Winchester
Vice Chairman	Angela Blowers
Secretary / Website Manager	Kevin Maughan
Minutes Secretary	Mary Wikner
Treasurer	Ash Kejriwal
U17 Squad Manager	Pat Walker
U15 Squad Manager	Hitesh Shah
U13 Squad Manager	Graham Hall
U13 Assistant Squad Manager	Mike Newlove
U11 Squad Manager	Sangeeta Dhall
Closed Tournament Organiser	Barbara Lewczynska
Welfare Officer	Barbara Lewczynska
Open Tournament Organiser	Mike Newlove
Fixtures Secretary	Phil Westwood
HBA Representative	David Bartlett
Badminton Development Officer	Jenni Crisp

Senior School Tournament Points

The last U13 tournament of the season did not create any changes at the top of the table and the boys trophies went to St Albans and Hitchin Boys Schools with the girls trophies going to Ralph Sadleir and St Albans High School. Final tables:

Boys			Girls		
1	St Albans	116	1	Ralph Sadleir	94
2	Hitchin Boys	97	2	St Albans Girls High	45
3	Haberdashers' Aske's	65	3	Dame Alice Owen	37
4	John Warner	47	4	Royal Masonic	32
5	Lochinver House	40	5	St George's	19
6	Stanborough	33	6	Knights Templar	8
7	Dame Alice Owen	30			
8	Ralph Sadleir	7			
9	Richard Hale	4			
10	Onslow St Audrey's	2			

As there is no affiliation next season, points will be awarded to players from all schools

U15 National Team Challenge Finals

John Stobo

The Herts U15 team - Cayleigh Bambrick, Anna Collis, Philippa English, Isabel Hatt, Lyall Daniels, David Maughan, Hugo Weaver, Matthew Widdicombe - qualified for the National finals very comfortably in the Eastern regional round - indeed, only Essex took more than one game off us - but when we looked at the list of the other qualifying teams, we knew that sterner tests lay ahead and everyone in the squad put in some hard training in the weeks before the finals events.

The first match against Avon we won 6-1 and we established a confident rhythm for the whole day. Everyone in the team played with 100% effort and exemplary concentration and, while most of the games were won by quite wide margins, Izzy/Cayleigh's victory by 21-20 in the girls doubles was the first of several very close games in the day. The next match, against Warwickshire, yielded another victory, this time by 5-2, with both defeats being by very narrow margins

Matches 3 and 4, against Derbyshire and Lancashire respectively, were won by 6-1 margins, emphatic indeed but each featuring several very close games. Matthew's victory against his singles opponent from Derbyshire and Izzy/Lyall's at 2nd mixed against Lancashire were both by 21-20.

We rounded off the first phase with a 5-2 victory over Hampshire. They had been the other undefeated team in our group of 6, so in despatching them by such a margin the Herts team had definitely proved themselves the strongest in the group. Furthermore, with Hampshire qualifying with us for the top group in the second phase, and our 5-2 victory over them being carried forward to that phase, we were off to flying start for the afternoon and had a real prospect of a top place for the event as a whole.

In the second phase, we met Ulster who had qualified in second place from the other group. We achieved another 6-2 victory and it was at this stage that Hitesh Shah and I began to believe that the team might be capable of winning the event. Not only had the whole team played to an excellent standard, but two more 21-20 victories, achieved by Anna and Matthew in their two singles matches over very highly rated opponents, showed that the players had the winning temperament and, perhaps, also the little bit of luck that is needed for success.

With Yorkshire having won the other group and their second-phase match against Hampshire, our tie against them was now to be the gold medal match. The opening three mixed doubles ties were exceptionally close and almost unbearably tense for the Team Managers and the substantial body of Herts supporters alike. Anna/Matthew at 1st pair and Philippa/Hugo at 3rd won by very narrow margins (Anna and Matthew by yet another 21-20 score, achieved with the benefit of a net cord at 20 all!!) Despite Izzy/Lyall's close defeat at 2nd mixed, we were very happy to take a 2-1 lead from the mixed events, the more so as Anna then made short work of her singles opponent to give us a 3-1 lead in the match. Sadly, the gold medal was not for Herts that day, as neither Hugo in the boys singles, nor Matthew/Lyall and Philippa/Izzy in the two level doubles could quite find a way past their very strong opponents, leaving the team with a 3-4 defeat.

Though the defeat, by the narrowest of margins, left the Herts players feeling a little deflated at the conclusion of the tournament, walking out to receive our silver medals was still a great moment at the day's end. Reflection on the day as a whole, I would say that the team's achievement showed the value of the efforts the squad had put into training over the whole season. The training work paid dividends especially in the results of the mixed doubles games, which are critical for success in the format of the U15 Team Challenge, for the Herts team won 19 out of 21 mixed games played over the course of the event. In the final reckoning we showed ourselves to be one of the very best county teams in the country. Hitesh and I both felt that the players had given their utmost over the day. We congratulate them on their achievement and we wish them further success in competition at U17 level over the coming two years.

Centerparcs National Schools Championship

Caroline Jennings

St Clement Danes School from Chorleywood entered the Centerparcs National Schools Championship this year for the first time ever with boys and girls teams in both the U16 (years 10 - 11) and U14 (years 7 - 9) groups.

The U16 boys and U14 girls teams got to the county finals with the U14 girls emerging as winners much to the surprise of their teachers. They then went on to win the Regionals (à la Glee) and so the team of Libby Jennings, Ellen Jennings, April Miller and Urooj Rizvi found themselves as one of nine schools in the National final at Centerparcs Nottingham.

As we drove into the Centerparcs car park it was clear that the big guns were out with some schools turning out U14 teams with players ranked in the country's top 100 plus they had strength in depth! There was a great atmosphere all day with lots of shouting and screaming. St Clement Danes came a creditable 7th. Every team had 15 minutes to talk to international Elizabeth Cann and Libby and Ellen won kitbags for rallying the most shots in one minute.

Prior to the event neither Urooj nor April belonged to a badminton club. Now April is about to have a trial for High Wycombe performance centre showing that this competition can provide an inroad into the game.

U15 Shires League Finals

John Stobo

The U15 team - Cayleigh Bambrick, Anna Collis, Philippa English, Isabel Hatt, Libby Jennings, Lyall Daniels, David Maughan, Hugo Weaver, Matthew Widdicombe - had gained their place in the finals through a series of very convincing wins in the league and, with six wins out of six and only 14 rubbers dropped in the entire season out of 120 played, we had achieved second place behind Yorkshire, who had dropped 4 fewer rubbers in the course of their 6 victories. It was very apparent from the apprehensive expressions of the other team managers when the draw was being made for the first round that Yorks and Herts were the two teams that everyone else wanted to avoid.

In the event, we were drawn against Oxfordshire for the first round, a team of which we knew almost nothing except that they had unexpectedly beaten Buckinghamshire in the play-off for a place in the finals. The victory we gained by 18-2 was quite comfortable and I was especially pleased to see us winning all 12 doubles matches, as in training we had spent a lot of time on tactics for both mixed and level doubles and we had settled partnerships for all our pairings

In the second round we were drawn against Essex, a very familiar opponent. Though we won by 11-9 and most of the games we won were by convincing margins, I felt we made rather heavy weather of an opponent we had defeated comfortably in the league match earlier in the season. We were indebted to another very strong showing in the doubles events, with 9 out of 12 games won, to secure our passage through to the match to decide first and second places, where our opponents were Yorkshire as expected.

The match began very well for us, with three victories out of four in the mixed doubles. We knew the Yorkshire boys substantially outranked ours on paper, so were not unduly concerned to lose all four boys singles, though the 20-21 score in one of them left us with a frustrating sense that an opportunity had been missed. The girls singles were halved - two games each - and our girls did us proud in the level doubles, winning all four games. The boys doubles saw four exceptionally hard-fought games, but we were able to win only one of them, leaving the match score at 10-10. Sadly, the points count revealed that Yorkshire were winners by 359 - 347, a margin of less than one point per game.

Of course, we felt a keen sense of disappointment, but I think that overall the team performed very well on the day and the silver medal position was a fine achievement. Our great strength was our doubles play, with 29 out of 36 games won on the day and, in my view, this shows the value of the squad training evenings during the season, which were very well-attended by all our team players. Most of our top players have individual or cell training elsewhere, and squad training is about developing the squad's performance rather than about promoting individual ability. The players commitment to it this season has been exemplary and I have no doubt the results of it showed in their performance in the finals.

Thanks to Geoff Daniels and Conor Bambrick who managed the team with me on the day.

End of Season Reports

U13 Squad

Graham Hall (Squad Manager)

Once again we were delighted to have Herts' Olympic bronze medallist, Jo Goode, as coach for the Wednesday evening sessions at HSV this year - her experience and enthusiasm made a great impact on all the players

It's fair to say that after 3 very successful seasons (numerous grade 1 players plus strength in depth in the squad), this year was much tougher. However, in matches the team was always committed and the players were tough opponents with great team spirit.

Team Challenge - We qualified in 2nd place from the Eastern region heat (winning 4-2 against Norfolk and 5-1 against Suffolk, but losing 0-6 to Essex). On finals day we were eventually 10th out of 12, beating Wiltshire 5-1 and Dorset 4-2, but losing heavily to Bucks, Surrey - both 0-6, Yorkshire 1-5 and Warwickshire 2-4.

Shires League - We were beaten comprehensively by Bucks 20-0 and Essex 19-1, whose teams clearly demonstrate the benefits of the Performance Centre methods, and also by Hampshire 11-9. Wins against the weaker counties - Kent and Beds both 13-7 - were insufficient to qualify for the play-off stage and we were finally 18th overall, with 3 wins and 3 defeats (after Northants conceded their match).

Eastern Region Single Sex Tournament - We entered 3 boys and 3 girls teams and all played well, learned from the day and enjoyed some excellent games. Herts Boys A won the boys event and Herts Girls A were runners-up in the girls tournament. Boys B were 5th, Boys C were 8th, Girls B were 6th and Girls C 8th.

By the end of the season, the squad contained 1 silver player (Andrew Baird) and 2 bronze (Sophie Vernon and Sam Newlove), all of whom now move up to U15.

U12 Eastern Team Event - Played at Wodson Park, we beat Norfolk and Suffolk, but Essex were again far too strong for us, so we were 2nd overall. There were some promising performances from the younger players that day and I believe next season's team should be a little stronger relative to other counties.

I am pleased that 3 U11 age players (Keya Patani, Chris Adey and Matthew Harden) and an U12 (Ellen Jennings) have been 1st choice U13 team members right from the start of the season. These players have also gained great experience for next season and beyond, which will undoubtedly be beneficial to them and to the Herts squad as a whole.

Congratulations to all the team members for these creditable performances in often difficult circumstances, and to all the parents and other helpers whose support is vital. Thanks in particular to Mike Newlove, Caroline Jennings and John Stobo who assisted with team events during the season.

Next season, unfortunately, we lose **Marion Conway**, our assistant squad manager, who has been constantly involved with junior badminton since before I was a junior player!! Marion has inspired literally thousands of players (and many squad managers) in her time and contributed a huge amount to putting Herts in the enviable position we find ourselves in today, as well as consistently feeding the county a stream of players from Swifts. So, Marion - Many Thanks, all the best for your retirement, and we look forward to seeing you still, whenever you can pop down on a Wednesday.

U15 Squad

Hitesh Shah (Team Manager)

At the trials in June 2010 we selected 28 players for the squad. A few of our top players trained with the U17s and two U13s trained with the U15s.

Team Challenge - At the regional round of the team challenge played in November we beat all the opposition for a well deserved first position. The finals were played in March and, having beaten

Avon, Warwickshire, Derbyshire, Lancashire and Hampshire to reach the top four, we were eventually defeated by Yorkshire to become runners-up in the Team Challenge.

Shires League - a big league group with 32 teams. Having beaten Cambridge, Essex, Middlesex, Warwickshire, Suffolk and Norfolk we were 2nd overall in the league and into the finals, which were played in May. We were drawn against first Oxfordshire, then Essex, winning both these matches and so into the final against Yorkshire. The final score was 10-10, but the total count of points gave the victory to Yorkshire, so yet another runner-up place for Herts.

Avon U15 Invitation Doubles - We entered two boys pairs and two girls pairs and won gold in both events

Friendly Matches - I would like to thank Phil Westwood for arranging these matches - a quadrangular Redbridge (Essex), Kent and Sussex where Herts came 3rd; a quadrangular against Berkshire, Kent and Surrey, where the Herts B team players had a well deserved opportunity to play against other counties.

Eastern Region Single Sex Tournament - For grade 3 and non graded players, we entered two boys teams and one girls team. The boys A team came 3rd and the B teams 7th out of 10 teams. The girls were 4th out of 5.

Most Improved Player of the Year - Hugo Weaver was awarded the shield this year. He has worked very hard and performed well in tournaments.

Sponsorship - Thanks to Ashaway for their continuing support.

John Stobo has been instrumental for the squad as he has motivated the players to perform at their best and taught them well, and I would like to thank him for his valuable time and effort. Together we managed all the matches and the squad night. I would also like to thank our chairman, Ken Winchester, for his support at the squad training.

Parent Rep - I would like to thank Mandy English for her role in helping to manage the squad, providing a good spread laid out in our Shires league matches and her generous input for Hertfordshire badminton.

I would also like to thank all the parents who supported their children by chauffeuring them to squad practices, matches and tournaments.

All squad members have worked very hard to learn and achieve good results. I would like to thank Caroline Jennings and Razinah Scofield for supporting the U15s through the season and hope they will keep helping in the future. Thanks also to Geoff Daniels and Conor Bambrick who helped out at matches.

The season went very quickly and we achieved very good results. I thoroughly enjoyed teaching and mentoring the squad nights.

Finally I would like to thank fellow members of the HSBA Committee for doing a wonderful job. Keep it up.

U17 Squad

Pat Walker (Team Manager)

Squad nights - We started the season with a squad total of 19 players at U16/17, 13 boys and 6 girls. We also invited 5 U15s to join us on a rota basis. The average attendance over the whole season was 16 mainly due to the heavy school commitment experienced by this age group. Chris Dakin coached at most of the squad nights with David Westwood covering for him on a couple of occasions. All the players in the squad represented the county at U17 at least once during the season with 6 squad members also playing for the senior county.

Shires League - We won all our matches in the Shires League: Cambs 19-1, Beds 14-6, Surrey 13-7, Suffolk 17-3, Essex 17-3 and Northants 18-2. We finished in the No 1 position in the U17 table which put us into the finals without going through the play-offs. In the finals at HSV on May 1, Herts came 4th beating Staffordshire 17-3, drawing 10-10 against Lancashire but losing by 35 points, and losing 7-13 to Cheshire.

Eastern Region - At the Eastern Region U16 team event in November, Herts came 2nd losing 2-12 to Essex, but beating both Cambs and Suffolk. At the U17 Single Sex tournament at Luton in April, the Herts boys came 3rd out of 7 teams and the girls 4th out of 6. This event is for grade 3 and ungraded players.

Wimbledon - We entered a team of 3 boys and 3 girls in the Wimbledon U16 Invitation Tournament in May but the organisers cancelled with just a couple of weeks notice as they felt that 7 teams was not enough to run the event.

RIO - In January we took a team of 6 boys and 6 girls to the RIO tournament weekend in York. We finished 4th out of the 8 strong counties taking part, despite beating Bucks who came 2nd. It was a very tight battle for position between the top 4 counties.

ICT - For the 4 days at Nottingham University our team of 5 girls and 5 boys was seeded 7th out of the 40 counties taking part. And 7th was our final position. Out of the 10 matches played, Herts beat Wiltshire, Northumberland, Sussex, Dorset, Surrey, Leinster and Devon and lost to Cheshire, Ulster and Yorkshire.

Liz Hatt did a great job as the U17 Parent Rep and I would like to thank her for all her help and support to me, the parents and the players throughout the season.

HSBA Junior Leagues

Teams were entered into the U12 Boys, U15 Boys - A and B groups, U15 Medley, U18 Boys and U18 Medley leagues. This year there was also an U11 Friendly league. Not all matches were played due to weather, player availability and difficulty of getting dates fixed and the U15 Boys final play off did not take place. The final outcome from the games played is:

U12 Boys	Winner:	Swifts	R/U:	Stanstead Abbotts
U15 Boys 'A'	Winner:	Swifts	R/U:	Maccabi
U15 Boys 'B'	Winner:	Comets	R/U:	Swifts 'B'
U15 Medley	Winner	Swifts	R/U:	Much Hadham
U18 Boys	Winner:	Swifts	R/U:	Comets
U18 Medley	Winner:	Comets	R/U:	Swifts

Kent U15 Open Tournament

Mike Newlove

This tournament was played on a hot, sunny Saturday in a very warm hall at Sevenoaks School.

The Kent U15 Open had a high number of attendees from Herts - Matthew Widdicombe, Lyall Daniels, Nathan Scofield, Duncan Williams, Daniel Fox and Sam Newlove. Matthew and Lyall went into the main knockout competition, narrowly losing in the semis; Duncan lost in the final of the plate to Tom Owen from Kent.

In doubles, Daniel and Sam managed to win the plate final after a hard fought match with a score of 23-21.

Herts Youth Games Badminton Tournament

Barbara Lewczynska

Another excellent badminton tournament, as part of a smaller Herts Youth Games this year, but equally as exciting as years gone past. Played in a round robin format, in total a massive 225 games were played in all, with all of the ten districts playing each other.

Stevenage, I think, won the accolade as the most noisy/supportive and certainly the most brightly coloured team, but it was North Herts, ably managed by Robert Ticker, who won back the trophy after Three Rivers had claimed it last year.

Many thanks must go to our scorer, Gill Bartlett, on the desk, who patiently took in the scores and answered competitors concerns, mostly 'what position are we in now' about a thousand times; Dave Bartlett for the technical input and setting up, and to our volunteers Max Crouch, Anna Collis, Philippa English and Helena Lewczynska, who all did a great job scoring.

The top four teams - East Herts, North Herts, Three Rivers and Watford - jockeyed for top position throughout the day and, because of the nature of the tournament, which took points difference as the final calculations, we were all on edge until the last minute. So, well done to North Herts, who managed to give a game to all of their ten person squad.

Thank you also to the parents who came along to support, they couldn't have done it without you!!!

The final team positions (and their managers) were:

1	North Herts	-	Robert Tucker
2	Three Rivers	-	Frances Morrison
3	Watford	-	Jay Marshall
4	East Herts	-	Doug Clarke
5	Dacorum	-	Carol Gahan
6	Stevenage	-	Ben Vranjkovic
7	Hertsmere	-	Alan Overy
8	St Albans	-	Keith Burns
9	Broxbourne	-	Tara Haddock
10	Welwyn Hatfield	-	Andrew Butterworth

I hope to see you again next year (many of the children excitedly told me they would still be young enough to play next year!)

From the Editor: Thanks to everyone who contributed this time - you won't have to worry next time as there won't be one! It might be a good idea if players (parents, teacher, club leaders) gave any interesting bits of news re tournaments - and results - to their squad managers, or e-mailed them directly to Kevin Maughan: kevin@maughans.co.uk and ask for them to be put on the HSBA website: www.hertsschoolsbadminton.co.uk

I am still going to be involved indirectly with tournaments (sorting out points etc) and, if anyone is ever interested, I have lists of squad members and tournament winners and runners-up, dating back to what feels like 'pre-historic' times - well the 1970s anyway! as part of the history of Herts Schools Badminton. (The tournament winners are all on the HSBA website.)

It would be nice if someone would take over the editing of the newsletter - or even start again and change the whole format. Isn't there anyone out there who has a tiny inclination to get themselves in print?

Once again thanks to all the 'journalists' over the years, particularly my daughter, Ceri, who filled in on numerous occasions when others 'forgot'!

With all good wishes to everyone for their future and to Herts junior badminton in particular, I will sign off for the last time.

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HSBA BIDS A SAD FAREWELL TO MARION CONWAY

There are a number of people within our Association whose considerable contribution cannot be adequately fitted into a few words.

We are now compelled to say a very fond goodbye to a highly benevolent individual whose significant contribution to junior badminton extends over a period of around 40 years.

During these 4 decades, Marion Conway has fulfilled the majority of requisite tasks essential in introducing young players to the game and providing the appropriate pathway to match their aspirations.

Following a period of running a junior section at Christchurch, Little Heath, she and Duncan Conway opened Swifts Junior Badminton Club back in 1984.

Enormous success quickly followed and since that time a countless number of children have begun their playing career under Marion and Duncan's expert guidance.

As many of you also know, this considerable involvement extended across our younger county squads where again, the Conway's were highly successful. It would be impossible to guess how many innumerable hours they spent both managing and training their squad players.

Marion's sense of what is needed to maintain the smooth running of this Association is depicted by her willingness to slot into many occurring vacant roles. As with every task she tackles, her skill and dependability remains exemplary.

I can do no better than repeat what I recently said at this year's AGM: "Marion Conway is one of the most understated and selfless individuals you could ever wish to meet."

On a bright note, I am pleased that Marion has accepted the position of vice-President on our Committee.

A FOND FAREWELL TO OUR EDITOR AND THE END OF A GREAT CHAPTER FOR HSBA

It is a melancholy fact of life that we do not fully appreciate what we have until it has gone. For example, how casually do we greet the arrival of our invaluable Newsletter as it is conveniently thrust into our hand or otherwise forwarded to us every few months. In our haste to read through the pages, do we ever really ponder how much skill, commitment and sheer dedication has been expended?

Sadly, we can no longer take these matters for granted since the time has come to express our deep gratitude for the countless hours of reading pleasure given to each of us by the invaluable work of Megan Lumb.

Those of us who have been closely associated with HSBA for many years know that Megan can always be relied upon to fill essential roles whenever the circumstances demanded. For not only has she been our long term editor, she has also been instrumental in running many of our closed tournaments and providing essential administrative support.

On a personal note, I have always greatly valued her friendship and support and have particularly appreciated her helpful advice on many occasions over the years.

For the past couple of decades we have been most fortunate to have benefitted from Megan's tireless efforts and it is now with great sadness and gratitude that we must bid her a heartfelt au revoir as our Newsletter Editor.

However, I am most pleased to say that Megan will still be around to help out in many of her other roles for which we offer her our sincere thanks.

In recognition of Megan's long service to this Association, I am delighted that she has accepted the role of vice-President.

Ken Winchester