

BOWLS HAMPSHIRE SECRETARY'S REPORT 2023

Well, another bowling season is nearing its end, as this is my third report, I actually feel I am starting to get to know what my role entails and I hope I have carried out my duties to the Counties satisfaction.

The season kicked off relatively smoothly, although some games did appear to be very early still with decent weather things seemed to run quite smoothly. The County were extremely lucky and were able to complete all the championship quarter and semi-finals in relatively dry weather before the storms took over. A huge thank you to Tony Prince, our Umpires Co-ordinator who, despite the national reduction in the number of Umpires always succeeded in finding us Umpires.

Huge thanks go to Banister Park who ensured we had rinks and were extremely helpful. Our caterers at Banister Park provided food for everyone for all our competitions even though Dee suffered a terrible fall at the beginning of the season. Paul with the help of a number of volunteers did a fantastic job.

Our congratulations to everyone who reached the National Championships with particular congratulations to Steve Stockley joined Mike McDonagh becoming the National champions in the DBE (Disability Bowls England) Pairs. Alan Geary from Boscombe Cliff and Peter Ward from Ringwood met in the quarter final, with Alan winning and moving through to reach the 2-wood final, sadly losing out to Mark Ireland of Warwickshire.

Other notable results were Margaret Holden who reached the semi-final of the singles losing out to Stef Bransfield from Somerset who went on to win the National singles championship. Margaret was involved again in the Senior Fours with Lesley Johnson, Alice Atwell and Hazel Marke from Alton Social, they reached the semi-final and had to play an extra end being all square after 18 ends. Unfortunately, it was not to be with the IOW winning and going on to win the Final.

Three more teams from Hampshire progressed through to the final stages, they were Chris Weekes, Ben Paulley and Perry Martin from Boscombe Cliff and Donna Taylor, Sue Dyson and Allyson Flint from Cove both reaching the quarter final in the triples. Peter Ward was involved again alongside the team from Ringwood of Mark Brocklebank, Steve Van Wyk, Derrick Fulker reaching the quarter final as part of the senior fours. Congratulations you all did Hampshire proud.

Our Ladies President Kim Harris and Men's President Allan Leppard were at the National Championships for the entire event and supported all our competitors at times having to move between the five greens in order to support all the Hampshire players. The weather was kind for most of the time but we did have rain and our Presidents put up their umbrella's and continued to support.

By the end of the season, Hampshire's men had a lot to celebrate winning the Home Counties Leonard Denny cup against Berkshire 154 – 103 an outstanding win, many congratulations to all the players.

Not to be out done our Under 25 men's team played the final of the Bill Hatto U25 league, a very exciting and extremely close match with Hampshire coming out on top to win 62 – 59 Our congratulations to all the players involved a fantastic end to a great season.

It is always sad to lose any of our hard-working Officers. This year due to ill health Ken Eichen has had to step down. We thank Ken for his many years of service to the County both as our President in 2018 and in his role as Men's Match Secretary, I know he will be a hard act to follow. We send our very best wishes to both Ken and Carol during this difficult time.

Our Membership and Yearbook Secretary, Michael Andrews informed us last year that he would be stepping down. Michael has worked tirelessly ensuring Bowls England are kept abreast of any changes to our membership but also produced the excellent annual year book. Since the County's decision to go softcopy, Michael has ensured a regular update has been available for all clubs as well as producing a softcopy photobook of all the County Champions. We cannot thank him enough for all his hard work and hope he will still assist the County with his expertise in the future. Mandy Wilde who has shadowed Michael for the last twelve months will take over following the AGM and we wish her every success.