

BOWLS HAMPSHIRE SECRETARY'S REPORT 2018

This is my sixth report as County Secretary and I am pleased to say we had a less challenging year than 2017. The weather was good throughout the season so we had little disruption to the playing schedule. The fact that we had to organise third place play offs in 9 events (6 in 2017) did however give us a few headaches particularly when an individual was involved in more than one event. We have for 2019 again built 'Fall Back' dates into the calendar. My thanks go to all competitors for their co-operation, to the Clubs which provided us with rinks, sometimes at short notice and to Tony Prince, our Umpires Co-ordinator who, despite the national reduction in the number of Umpires always succeeded in finding us Umpires.

The weather may have been better but it was another disappointing season in team events. The Middleton Cup began with a convincing win over the Isle of Wight but away against Buckinghamshire we flattered to deceive, being in the game until the 16th end at which point the wheels fell off. A convincing win in the dead rubber was no consolation. In the White Rose the Men's juniors bowed out to Surrey in the first round. In the John's the Ladies too had a convincing first round win, again against the Isle of Wight but then suffered heavy defeats against Sussex, Surrey (the eventual winners) and Middlesex. Defeat also came in the Walker Cup though not by as large a score as in 2018.

It was, however, a much better season in individual events. Alton Social – Lesley Johnson, Brenda Plumpton; Hazel Marke and Margaret Holden won the Women's Senior Fours whilst Lesley and Margaret were runners up in the Women's Senior Pairs and Hazel and Margaret were runners up in the Pairs. Also finishing a runner up was Peter Ward of the Sports Centre in the Men's 2 Wood Singles. He was so close to victory losing on an extra end. Nicole Rogers of Oakley reached the semi final of the Junior Singles and Cove were also semi finalists in the Tony Allcock Trophy. Mark Brocklebank; Craig Paterson and David Kerr reached the quarter finals of the Men's Triples, losing on an extra end to the eventual winners whilst Danny Smith of Southsea Waverley reached the quarter final of the Men's Junior Singles and with clubmate Louis McCubbin the quarter final of the Junior Pairs.

This year Louis McCubbin of Southsea Waverley and Nicole Rogers of Oakley played for England in the Junior Internationals but, for personal reasons, Matthew Marchant of Southsea Waverley had to drop out of the Senior team. He has nonetheless been selected for the 2019 team.

As is customary, our Presidents, Julie Greenwood and Ken Eichen were present throughout Leamington to support our players and they travelled many miles presiding at matches and attending lunches and functions. As a County we are exceptionally fortunate in having so many people prepared to give up their time to ensure the County runs smoothly. Most are continuing in Office for 2019 when, in Hazel Marke and Paul Robson, we shall be providing the National President and Senior Vice President. We cannot, however, be complacent. Many of the Officers have worked for the County since well before Unification and it cannot be expected that they will go on forever. It is important that we have some succession planning if we are to avoid the problems other Counties are facing.