

Bedford Hockey Club AGM
Thursday 22nd May 2008
At 7.30pm
At the Bedford Sports and Hockey Centre.

Present: Brian Woodrow (Chair), Rob Moulam, Michelle Logan, Hannah Scott, Dominique Swain, Michelle Drewry, Nicola Genders, Verity Mason, Martin Mcleod, Tony Sawyer, Mark Lawson, Matthew Riley, Phillip Joyce, James Bilham, Nigel Brookes, Brendan McNulty, Julian Pagliaro, Catherine Lymer, Trish Sawyer, Jo Gilmour, Carolyn Stead, Jon Lord, Phil Norford, Duncan Talbot, Pauline Woodthorpe, Adrian Talbot.

1. Apologies for Absence: Rebecca Docherty, Helen Sinclair, Caroline McGuckian, Fran Stedman, Hensley Moulam, Becci Stroud, Rob Oakley, Steve Bilham, Heidi Weight

2. Review of the previous minutes.

Approved.

3. Chairman's Report:

This season started for us at the club on brand new pitches thanks to the dedication, and hard work from several members of the club in delivering this project. These individuals donated a lot of time and in some cases money too to ensure the club was successful in replacing our pitches. We'll talk about these individuals later in the meeting when the pitches are on the agenda.

Once the project and the majority of the funding was in place we also had a large number of volunteers come along to the club to help raise our old pitches ourselves, again giving up personal time to save costs related to the relaying of the pitches and I think building club spirit at the same time.

As usual I will leave the reports on the efforts of the teams to the Club Captains.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank a number of people for their contribution to the club over the last year. A big thank you should go to the Captains, Team Managers, and junior organisers who put a huge amount of effort each week to ensure that we get teams on the pitch – a task that certainly wasn't easy particularly in the mens side of the club. As well as team selection they are critical to the club getting information out to people and, of course, getting the match fees and subs in.

Umpires – week in week out, they put up with the travelling and occasional abuse from teams to volunteer their services.

Coaches – Thanks to all for giving up their free time to help out on Tuesday evenings or Sunday mornings or maybe even both.

Unfortunately we still have the same problem in the club where we have enough people who would rather complain from a distance than volunteering to help out.

Volunteer for a role we need fresh ideas and you could be the one that makes a difference to where we are this time next year.

4. Team Reports:

Ladies Club Report – May 22nd 2008

Trish Sawyer (Ladies Club Captain)

Ladies 1st XI

The Ladies 1st XI were always going to have a challenging season playing in the national league. Despite some excellent strong performances and some close run games, they were relegated at the end of the season. However, with a team of strong players they will be looking to dominate the league this season and win promotion straight back up.

Ladies 2nd XI

Hannah Scott (2nd XI Captain)

The 2nd team have had a somewhat difficult mixed season, after starting the season of in style with a few 4-0 wins our luck changed. We could not find the team cohesion that was lacking and not for the want of trying we could not match results to our work rate. We were unfortunately relegated due to a variety of reasons. However I feel that we have many talented players with some eager youngsters coming through the ranks. With the right leadership, coaching and mentality on and off the pitch we will definitely be a quality team to compete against next season and should see us bouncing straight back into the Premier League. Mentions must go to Jill Rush and Nicola Genders for their consistently good solid performances and Genders for being top goal scorer for the 2nds (Dockers wasn't far behind with 10 own goals!!!). Special thanks must also go to Duncan for his coaching this year, it has been much appreciated and to Trish in what has been a difficult year for the club. Roll on next season!!!

Ladies 3rd XI

The Ladies 3rd XI had a strong and competitive season, finishing in the top half of their league. Most noteworthy is the excellent team spirit that the 3s held all season and the way in which more experienced players have welcomed some talented junior players and have encouraged them – to the point that they are likely to be playing higher up the club in 2008/09.

Ladies 4th XI

With the influx of university players and talented juniors to the ladies club as well as the return of 4th team players who so nearly gained promotion the season before, the Ladies 4th XI were lucky enough to have an incredibly strong team this season. They won their league, and therefore promotion, with a game to spare. The only problem that they really had was having opposition teams cancel at very short notice – however they are looking forward to next season and a league where games should be

more competitive on a weekly basis. They aim to start the new season as strongly as they finished the old and secure their place in the new division.

Ladies 5th XI – 2008/09

Due to the success of the 4s and the number of players attending training but not playing league hockey (we were in the unusual position of turning away players on some weeks!), we will be introducing a Ladies 5th XI for 2008/09. Pauline Woodthorpe has volunteered to be captain and the team is likely to consist of junior members with a few core senior players to anchor the team.

Ladies Club Training

Duncan Talbot (Coach)

Overall, ladies club training went pretty well and was very strongly attended throughout the season. Next season we hope to make a few changes/improvements and I understand it is planned that the 1s and 2s will train together with a Club session, with hopefully at least 2 coaches, for the 3s, 4s and 5s. As well as starting a 5th team we are entering an Under 18 team in the national Under 18 girls cup Competition which will give some of our strong young players the opportunity to play together in competitive games.

Women's teams are very encouraging and have generally done well. But the Men's teams need attention. Availability and commitment have been a major problem particularly for away matches. If we go down to 3 or 4 team's availability should then improve. We have lost approx. 30 men over the last 2 years and our men tend to be either under 18 or over 25. We need to target players in the middle age group. We should be trying to attract players from the university and local upper schools. Freshers week would be a great opportunity to target these men.

Men's Club Captain Report Thur Borren

It has been a tough, tough, tough.....tough year. With no one willing to be Men's Club Captain I really had no option but to volunteer and ended up doing quite a poor job given my other playing, coaching and captaining commitments. For that I apologise.

I now appreciate Jon Lord's sterling efforts in the past and how I wished he hadn't left the post!!

Initially I would like to thank the men's captains who did an outstanding job through ridiculously trying times this season. Secondly I would like to thank those players who turned up every week, sometimes playing more than one match and even in odd occasions, 3 matches in a row both home and away.

Men's Section Results:

1's	8 th place	Remain in Prem A next season
2's	11 th place	Relegated to Southwest 3
3's	5 th place	Remain in Southwest 4

4's	12 th place	Relegated to Southwest 7
5's	10 th place	Remain in Southwest 8

The results really do speak for themselves with 2 teams relegated and only one finishing (just) in the top half of their division, but in reality they tell only part of the story. With the men's section losing in the order of 30 players over the past two seasons, and with a considerable number of those remaining having injury problems or serious availability issues, it was amazing that it was only 5 games from the end that we defaulted our first match. But then the floodgates opened and we defaulted at least 1 match each week after this time. It is a credit to the captains and a number of extremely dedicated junior players they we managed even this.

The men's section is suffering from a lack of drive, passion, commitment and responsibility from its players. Participation in weekly training is extremely poor and availability for Saturday matches, especially away games, was almost equally so. With no real team spirit or identity on the pitch it is not hard to guess that off it the club also suffered. The hockey centre was often occupied only by the opposition 30 minutes after a match.

Things have to change and will change next season, hopefully for the better but perhaps not.

Once again there is no Men's Club Captain. The Men's section will reduce to 4 competitive teams although this may decrease to 3 teams depending on how availability looks at the start of next season. Player retention and encouraging new players to join is a key objective over summer. And a more enjoyable social side of the teams and the club centre needs to be encouraged and addressed.

But to end on a good note and some positives. Manjit and Nigel have agreed to continue with the 1's and with an excellent new captain in James Bilham, they look in good shape for improving next year. With less teams; selection, availability, team identity and results will improve for all the lower teams. And the biggest success of the Men's section this year must be noted. Brendan McNulty and Duncan Talbot for the efforts and achievements with the men's 5's and U18 teams.

A special thank you to Brendan who now leaves the 5's to take up his rightful place among the Vets team next season.

Thank you all for the 3 years I have been here, I will now go back to my sheep in New Zealand and retire a happy although broken man.

Men's 1's Captain: Thur Borren

It was challenging season for the 1st team as they had their 3rd coach in as many years and a number of key senior team members either had left the club or were injured before Xmas. Adding the unavailability of players meant the team was standing in a relegation place (11th) during the Xmas break. A consistent available team and stronger commitment bought significantly improved results after Xmas, although the escape from relegation was narrow being successfully achieved in the last game of the

season, with the team eventually finishing in 8th place. Thanks must go Manjit Meeda and Nigel Brookes for their outstanding commitment and support through out the season.

Men's 2's Captain: Duncan Talbot / Rob McAuliffe / Jon Eldridge

The men's 2nd team had a tough season. With no captain in place and no pre-season friendly matches (or during the Xmas break) ten strangers took to the field at Sudbury in the first match and were duly well-beaten. Jon Eldridge and Rob McAuliffe, a new club member, took on the unenviable task of captaincy before Christmas but struggled with poor availability and the lack of a core of second team players.

After Christmas I took up the captaincy and promoted a number of the stronger Under 18 players to the second team. Team spirit was good and availability improved. Julian Pagliaro's experience was badly missed after he fell off his bike but the younger players performed well and with a good blend of the better young and some more experienced players the team should do well in Division 3 next season.

We owe great thanks to Thur for taking the second team training sessions each week - the players greatly benefited from his coaching, commitment and enthusiasm. The Club will reap the benefit of this in the future, particularly as the youngsters continue to develop.

Men's 3's Captain: Mark Lawson

The season started off with high hopes. The men's thirds on paper looked good enough to challenge for promotion. However, a couple of poor results early on put us on the back foot. Then the clubs availability issues started to bite. A number of the thirds were drafted to the 2nd eleven so the team was rebuilt using 4th team players. This team started to string a few results together and by the half way point of the season promotion was still a possibility. However, further availability issues saw us show up to matches with players who had already played a match or weren't strong enough to sustain the drive at that level. Some poor results and a couple of cancelled matches saw us drop out of contention to finish just in the top half of the table.

Men's 4's Captain: Alex Robison (Dingo)

The season was not a good one for the men's fours. Last years success was built on the fact that we had a consistent core of players. This year we had to play four games, including two at home with ten players. We did not play one game this year with a team where every player only played for the fourths. It was very frustrating to arrange a team on Tuesday and then have it whittled away as the week went on. Having said all this there were some positives. The young players who came up to the team played well and showed that they can play at the level. however they do need the support of some experienced players to add the steel to balance their eagerness.

Men's 5's

Captain: Brendan McNulty / Rich Adams

A good start to the season with many of the players benefiting from being a year older. Not so McNulty and Parratt. The bright start turned into a bit of a struggle as poor availability further up the Club saw youngsters promoted and a changing team sheet weekly. Ollie Thomas in goal and Seb Ullah particularly grew stronger as the season progressed, and Joe Walsh and Alex Morphew tirelessly played at least two games each week. Captaincy retirement beckons - Vets next year.

Under 18s

Manager: Duncan Talbot

We entered a team in the National Under 18s Cup for the first time. This was particularly successful giving the young players an opportunity to play together in competitive matches. Before each round I organised either a training session or a friendly game. Having received a bye in the first round we beat a decent Wisbech team 5-1 before losing to a strong Southgate team who had won the National indoor competition the previous week. With only 2 players being too old for this years competition I am hoping that we will progress further next season. Next season we intend to enter boys and girls teams in their respective Under 18 competitions.

Juniors

It has been a very successful season for Bedford Juniors with a membership of over 80 ,ages ranging from 4-14 and subs collection totalling £3000.

There have been many local tournaments with the under 9's and under 11's achieving placing in all of the tournaments.

Lynda Sadler ran our tournaments in November with a total of 27 teams entering and generating income into the club.

At Christmas and Easter there were parent v children's games with a guest appearance from Rob Moulam as a goal keeper!

The collaboration between the Bedford schools and hockey club has been growing with two middle schools festivals being run in February with eight schools competing in each tournament and promoting hockey amongst pupils and teachers within the area.

The under 9's also completed the season by entering the Beijing mini Olympic festival in Nottingham on 16/05/2008 representing South Africa.

The ongoing support of the parents and the five regular coaches is invaluable and the juniors would not function without this despite having a lack of basic facilities on some Sunday mornings such a toilet for the children to use!

Richard Pyall (parent) deserves a special mention as our unofficial press officer for the juniors and therefore promoting junior hockey within the local press.

Unfortunately Thor will be unable to help next year and the junior club will grow in numbers, it is therefore a plea that coaches come forward from the senior side of the club to help with the development of the clubs future senior players.

5. Treasurer's Report:

The main focus this year was obviously trying to breakeven after donating all of our reserves to the pitch replacement project and maybe even starting to build these reserves back up working towards replacing the pitches again in 10-15years.

The collection of subscriptions has improved massively this year which is very good for the club and is a sign of the hard work (and hassling skills) of the committee. Unfortunately we've seen the amount of match fees collected decline this year, this is largely down to the fact that around 75% of our mens 4th and 5th teams were playing at least 2 games a week this season, with us obviously only collecting 1 match fee. Our ladies 1st team were also back in the National League this year meaning a lot more match fees would've been paid out as travel expenses. The majority of captains have been great this season using the facility on the website to record the amount of match fees received, this saves so much time and hopefully is something we can build on for next year.

We do make a small profit on kit purchased each year, however this is more than offset by the extremely frustrating situation when we constantly have to replace practice and match balls that are lost each week. Yes I would expect a certain amount of balls to go missing or maybe even crack, but nowhere near the levels that we are at.

The 100/500 club is a successful way of bringing in money to the club and I'm more than aware that we are well overdue a draw on this. This has been unfortunately one of the areas that has suffered from not having an active treasurer this year. It's not a case of not having time to do a draw, it was simply down to the fact that we had no information on who is still paying into this. This will be sorted over the summer and I'm hopeful that once we get a volunteer in to take on the treasurer's role this effective way of fundraising can be extended.

Our expenditure this year on socials hasn't been as high this year as our end of season do was a lot cheaper to host. Apart from the end of season do, attendance at social events has been disappointing this season and is definitely an area for improvement for next year.

Hopefully next season we can generate additional funds through more and better attended socials and I think these figures show we can operate with our current rates so I propose that we have no changes to match fees and subscriptions rates again for next year.

Subs: We have 80 paid up junior members and this is still growing. The number of paid up adults is growing too and stands at approx 180/185, including some younger players who pay just to train with no matches. There is a problem with the men not

paying subs but being needed to play due to the lack of players. A proposal of adding a £2 levy onto match fees for unpaid subs was put forward, but this again may deter them from playing. To be discussed further at an EGM at a later date.

6. Election of Officers:

Position	Nominated	Proposed	Seconded
President	Brian Woodrow	R Moulam	M. Mcleod
Chairman	Rob Moulam	M. Lawson	C. Lymer
Subs Secretary	Jo Gilmour	R. Moulam	J. Lord
Treasurer	D. Tyler	R. Moulam	B. McNulty
Secretary	M. Logan	M. Mcleod	V. Mason
Ladies Club Captain	Trish Sawyer	J. Gilmour	C. Lymer
Mens Club Captain			
Ladies Fix. Secretary	Jo Gilmore	T Sawyer	C. Lymer
Men's Fix. Secretary	M. Mcleod	R. Moulam	M. Riley
Auditor			
Umpire Liaison			
Junior Organiser	M. Riley	R. Moulam	C. Lymer
CRB Officer	Maxine Clewlow	M. Riley	D. Talbot
Club Volunteer Manager			
Web/Communications	Trish & Tony Sawyer	R Moulam	C. Lymer
Captains			
Ladies 1st	Natalia Norford	V. Mason	P. Norford
2nd	Hannah Scott		
3rd	Caroline Stead	J Gilmore	C. Lymer
4th	C. Lymer	T. Sawyer	C. Stead
5ths	P. Woodthorpe	D. Talbot	C. Lymer
Men's 1st	J. Bilham	R. Moulam	M. Meeda
2nds	Mark Lawson	Tony Sawyer	M. Mcleod
3rds			
4ths			
Vets			

7. Pitches:

Brian would like to send his congratulations to everyone who helped with the new pitches, including all those who helped remove the old ones, but special thanks goes to Brendan who did a fantastic job. It took a lot of hard work, immense cost and lots of hassle. Also to have completed it with no debt, well done! Brian proposes to write and invite a few people to become vice chairs in recognition of their help and work:

Brendan McNulty

Peter Lickiss

Rob Oakley

Jon Lord

Mandy Brookes

Julian Pagliano
Matt Riley
DaveTyler

He will write to the existing vice chairs to ask if they are still interested in retaining the position, as we have not heard from some of them for some time. He will also write to key members of our local community to search out interest, as this may be advantageous to the club.

We need to have a high profile opening of the new pitches, with Brian inviting key people and the local press. Sport England is likely to take over the press involvement and therefore we may get more than local coverage. Date already arranged for a club day in September. More details to follow.

8. Any Other Business:

With the rise in fuel prices maybe we should consider rising the fuel payments for away matches. We will wait until the end of the summer and see how high prices go before deciding on this. Probably only 50% of drivers claim these monies but it does need to be reviewed. The problem is how we would fund this rise:

We are unkeen to raise match fees

We need to increase our fundraising

River Festival: We have a tent in the sports area on the 12th and 13th July. We need volunteers to help run it and we need around 12 people. We will have flyers to give out.

Volunteers:

Mark Lawson

Martin Mcleod

Mouse

Dom

Hannah

Dockers

Helen

Catherine Lymer

Duncan Talbot

Adrian

Pauline

Club Bar: The bar is often not open during or after matches or meetings. This is not conducive to the club atmosphere. Visiting teams do not see us as a social club and often do not stay after matches. The match teas are not providing variety and need to be reviewed. Also basic facilities are often not open on Sunday mornings for the juniors. A meeting to be arranged to discuss these issues as the club and centre need to work together.

The club needs sponsorship. Someone needs to seek it out and actively promote the club. Brian proposes a marketing group should be formed to do this, and he is prepared to lead it. Flyers to be produced for the river festival and to be given out at fetes, schools etc promoting both juniors and seniors. Trial dates need to be publicised in the local papers. Thur volunteered to help Brian over the summer.

100/500 club: We are breaking the law by not having regular draws, we could easily be sued. The law says we have to give away 50% of the income in prizes each year. There needs to be provision in the accounts for this and the draws need to be retrospective.

We need to have official accounts drawn up and they need to be approved. R. Moulam to look into this.

Brian thanked everyone for coming and the meeting closed.