

# BRADFORD HOCKEY CLUB

## BRADFORD HOCKEY CLUB AGM REPORTS 2006

### Fixture Secretary

The 2006/2007 season was successfully completed with only one game BHC 3<sup>rd</sup> X1 v Scunthorpe 1<sup>st</sup> X1 remaining unplayed. In mentioning this Scunthorpe game, the match was awarded to Scunthorpe after some debate and League instruction to play the game, which we rearranged only for the game to be awarded two days before the rearranged date. No explanation from the League Committee has been forthcoming despite at numerous approaches to them to explain their actions.

The very accommodating weather allowed nearly all games to be played as per the originally arranged Fixture List. The only Saturday League exemptions were the above 3<sup>rd</sup> X1 v Scunthorpe that was not the result of the weather, & the 2<sup>nd</sup> X1 v Tadcaster rearranged due to a flooded pitch at Tadcaster GS.

Two friendly games v Halifax and Harrogate either side of Christmas were also not played, but that was to be expected in view of the Festive season.

The withdrawal of the 4<sup>th</sup> X1 from the Yorkshire Hockey League near the end of the 04/05 season still has an impact on the Club, with the 3<sup>rd</sup> X1 occasionally struggling to complete teams particularly to travel.

An absence of a genuine proactive attitude by Club Members to increase player numbers, and player strength, leaves a great deal of pressure on the Coaches to bring on the young players who will take time to nurture and develop into good Club players. We are not alone in this problem, many Clubs are now looking at the lowest team in Clubs to become 'Badger' Teams. Teams of younger players, and adults, who play against similar teams in a League designed for these teams.

We need to remember that players Under13 on 1<sup>st</sup> January in any season are in future not able to play any League/Senior Hockey in that season. (LTAD implementation). Next season BHC will have a considerable number of U12s & U10s, some quite talented, that could contribute to such a team if senior players were available to help with organisation and regular transport.

For whatever reason some senior and junior players continue to not make themselves available on a frequent basis. Team selection remains difficult to establish early in the week so that by the weekend there is conflict between Team Organisers/Captains about who plays where and why teams are short of players.

I do feel that the Selection Committee should be reinstated at the start of next season, not just to make sure Teams are fully selected, but also that promotion and demotion of players who are performing well, those who attend training, or who should be taken to task for not being available, or poor attitude, are taken into consideration when selecting sides.

Taking on board the suggestions I made last year:

The Club in an effort to increase playing numbers needs to:

1. Continue to make moves to amalgamate with the University; A number of emails, and face-to-face conversations, have been had with Univ, HC Members. They did indicate an interest and would respond when ready. Still no action from BUHC. As a footnote ... York St Johns College has just completed its amalgamation with City of York HC. If they can do it why not BUHC though, in view of the current level that BUHC BUSA teams play, we may not gain from the amalgamation.
2. Current BHC Members need to recognise their responsibilities as Members of the Club and be regularly available. Too many including some young players are too unreliable to be good Club Members, the reward & opportunity of playing in a higher team should be earned & not given to unreliable players.
3. Early selection must be established and players confirmed as early in the week as possible, so that by Wednesday evening, at the latest, everyone knows who is playing where & when. Reference League decision to punish teams who cry off after Wednesday evening. The reinstating of the Selection Committee would go some way to achieving this. A Meeting every two weeks could solve a number of selection problems. Trying to complete Teams on a Friday evening, even Saturday morning, is not on.

On the pitch the 1<sup>st</sup> X1 with its talented youngster players showing maturity beyond their years lived life again on the edge of the fast lane with these younger players enthusiasm driving things forward, and made for a potent force on the pitch. For a third year, the team could have gained promotion back to the top of Yorkshire League Hockey rather than finish a few points short of that success. Some dubious and unfair Umpiring contributed to that situation. A great deal of the credit for this success must again go to Stuart Harrison for his desire and determination to encourage players to train together regularly and give the team sound motivation and advice in competition.



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The 2<sup>nd</sup> X1 did not play to the level we had hoped for, and whilst occasionally they played the opposition off the pitch usually found life hard in the Div4 and were relegated come the end of the season. There is much to applaud in their team attitude but so much to still to get right in terms of organisation and time keeping to redress this situation.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> X1 had some problems with availability and often had to draw on players from other home teams to complete selection. Mick & Nick Hayes worked hard to raise the team each week and when players throughout the Club were available the 3<sup>rd</sup> X1 played some superb hockey, but this was all too infrequent. Scarborough HC dropping out of the League mid season helped the 3<sup>rd</sup> X1 remain in Div7.

A repeat of last years request:

There is concern that emails, text messages, and messages left on answer machines need to be responded to by everyone involved in Club activities. We need to realise that **WE ARE ALL MEMBERS of Bradford Hockey Club** not just the 1<sup>st</sup> XI, 2<sup>nd</sup> XI or 3<sup>rd</sup> XIs, play where and when selected, and help run the Club for our mutual benefit, not for personal advantage only or others disadvantage.

There are some enthusiastic, capable youngsters being brought up through the Coaching System and we need to make sure they are given the right sort of encouragement and support; regular games, consistent team selection, good advice on the pitch, and senior players prepared to provide transport and experience, if we are to retain them as hockey players never mind reverse this declining situation the Club finds itself in. It is important that we put this in place now.

Next season, will again have two slip date weekends with no designated fixtures, one in late October, the other in mid February. Both dates will also match up with half term so that player availability should not be such a problem.

The Yorkshire Fixture Secretaries Meeting is planned for Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June, when the friendly Fixtures on the attached Fixture List will be completed.

It is likely that some League games versus University teams will be re-arranged where they are early or late term dates. All three teams may have this problem.

Thornton Sports Centre, and Simon Turner, Centre Manager, have once again been superb in their support of the Club with the establishing of home games, Cup matches and training midweek.

Pitch wise:

A number of holes have been made in the carpet by the dugouts blown across the pitch. Trevor, the Grounds man, has tried with our help to minimise that impact. The new drain to be put alongside the school side of the pitch intended to make sure contaminated surface water does not get onto the pitch and clog the surface up, as before, has been started, but I feel that when we do get heavy rain it will not prove successful. The adjusting of the gully drain on the road near the vehicle access to the pitches has been completed by Brad Met. The poor reliability of the floodlights continues to be a considerable annoyance and is something the Centre must give urgent priority to through the summer. It would appear that birds are affecting the electrical circuitry on the lights that then stop lighting up!! The use of the Soccer City facilities as home Clubhouse, changing and socialising, has been a positive move allowing a core Club spirit to return with players now able to return to the pitch after their game to encourage the following game.

We all need to recognise that we are all part of Bradford Hockey Club and we all need to contribute towards its future success.

Once again:

The Club owes Paul Bateson a great debt of gratitude for his enthusiasm and desire to ensure the good name of Bradford Hockey Club is maintained within both the Community and the wider Hockey fraternity.

Paul's calls to ensure that all BHC teams are complete; His involvement in making sure that items of Club clothing that have been ordered reach the right people, and suppliers are paid correctly; Chasing up and checking finances of some players who ought to know better; are just three examples of the many tasks he has taken on board above and beyond the usual tasks of Club Secretary and player.

Phil Thomas May 2007



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