

Merseyside Crown Green Bowling Association

BCGBA Management Committee Representative report

I would like to start by thanking the efforts of Pat Crowther, who in her first year in the role of secretary has shown that the faith we have in her is not misplaced. We are fortunate to have Pat as secretary as well as Ron Holt as treasurer. Ron takes the honour of BCGBA President for 2009, it's just about the only position he hasn't yet held and I hope Ron enjoys his year. Ron is very highly thought of throughout the bowling world in fact all our officials are held in high regard. We are blessed that by having Pat, John Crowther, Harold Taylor and Ron Holt we have people who not only care about our county but who also care about the future of our sport.

Quite a lot has gone on this year, a fair proportion you will have read before in last year's report or have heard mentioned at Merseyside Committee meetings and it's likely that you will reading some of this again next year.

We started the year by electing a new Management Committee Chairman. You may have heard the name of Gerald Merry before as a previous President of the BCGBA. Gerald replaced Robert Jackson from South Yorkshire who was very highly respected and whose presence has been missed from the committee.

Part of the discussion on the proposals for the BCGBA Rules Revision meeting will be about the structure for the finals day of the BCGBA Senior Merit. We host this event next season and this was also discussed at Management Committee level. I have to admit that I am in favour of keeping a finals day of 64 players. This was agreed at Management level but it is up to the Rules Revision meeting to make a final decision. The costs for running the BCGBA events were also discussed and will be closely looked at next year. A proposal for doing away with the need for a seating enclosure was not passed by the Management Committee so I'm afraid this expense will remain.

During this coming season the BCGBA will have to replace the Competition Secretary, Coaching Administrator and the Child Protection Officer. All the retiring officers have worked extremely hard in their roles and I know their efforts have been much appreciated by those involved in the administration of the game. The Child Protection Officers post has already been advertised but unfortunately although interest in the role was high, none of the interested parties put in an application.

The BCGBA have agreed a new coaching structure as per the requirements of Sport England. We will have Level 1, 2 and 3 coaching levels with only level 2 and 3 being allowed to coach children. Each of the regional coaching areas will have new equipment. The coaches in each region will have a Camcorder and display equipment. This should make the instruction of new players easier. This is mostly funded by a grant received from the Central Council for Physical Recreation.

The BCGBA was now a licensed National Governing body for Clubmark as we had our first club accredited.

The new BCGBA website was launched on Sunday 30th November. The site will be updated by Pat Crowther and the new webmaster – Paul Hickman. The site will eventually have a Google map image

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of every green, a list of every bowler and club notified to the BCGBA via the NR1 forms. This site is already a vast improvement on the old site and it has the potential to grow into something very special.

The National Registrar reported that new registrations totalled 5801 for 2008. This was slightly higher than the current 3 year average. A total of 2169 clubs had their Public Liability insurance through the BCGBA, with 12,722 bowlers taking out personal accident insurance.

The proposal for the BCGBA to have a national headquarters moved forward a great deal during the summer. We entered into an agreement to develop plans with Stockport Council and Stockport County FC for Alexandra Park. Unfortunately the recent downturn in the financial world has led to our partners re-examining their commitment to the development.

As part of the Bowls Alliance we were told that a full-time Bowls Development Officer to promote flat and crown green bowls will be appointed in a 4 year post. This is to help attract not only school children but the 50+ age group. Bowls fulfils all the Government targets for that age group.

If the BCGBA Rules Revision meeting declines to accept a proposal to reduce the size of the finals day of the BCGBA Senior Merit (All England, though this title annoys our friends (!) from Wales), then thanks to a significant increase in the numbers entering the Merseyside merit we will have 4 places in the Senior Merit, which as you know will be held in this county. I would suggest that this may be an opportunity to watch some high class bowling. Please put the last Saturday in July as the day you take part in the biggest bowling event to be held in this county in 15 years.

You may remember I mentioned last year that following the Burchard enquiry into the Soame murders, an Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) would be introduced to act as a regulatory body. This will enable parents to check on the CRB status of any employees or volunteers who work with children. Any introduction of a new authority seems to take longer than you would have thought and it is the same in this case as the ISA is delayed until at least October 2009. This has occasionally made the news headlines as Sir Michael Birchard has been frustrated by the slow implementation of his recommendations.

The Burchard enquiry proposed that all ID checks should be done face to face rather than by a postal system. This will increase the amount time and cost to complete the CRB checks.