

GLOUCESTERSHIRE HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

Junior Festivals Organiser report for GHA Committee Meeting on Thursday 25th January 2024.

In the first half of the season (October to December) there were Clubs Festivals for U8 mixed, U10 girls and boys, U12 girls and boys and U12 A Teams girls and boys. These were generally well supported as can be seen from the table below. The numbers would have been higher, but the weather on 3rd December led to the cancellation of the U12 girls and boys Festivals that day. The total entries were as follows:

U8 Mixed	U10 Girls	U10 Boys	U12 Girls	U12 Boys	U12 A Girls	U12 A Boys
32	41	26	33	19	26	15

Overall a total of 192 teams entered and average numbers were a slight decrease from 2022 – 23; in that season there were a total of 196 team entries, but with more dates cancelled due to bad weather. Looking at the detail though; U8s and U10s increased, U12s decreased. Invoices for a total of £4,800.00 have been sent out although payment has still to be received from some of the Clubs.

Support for the Festivals in January has started well with high numbers of entries, indeed the U8s will need a different venue next season as there are now too many teams for Bournside. All the expected In2Hockey U10 and U12 girls and boys entries have been received as well as payments. 25th February is U12s date at Dean Close, 10th March is U10s date and is at CLC as Dean Close was not available. I have volunteers to assist me on 25th February and Lansdown and Cheltenham have offered to run 10th March when I am not available.

I have attended a couple of the West Junior Competitions Committee meetings and a few key points are included below:

25th October meeting

- Anne Baker (Isca and Devon) has taken over as Chair.
- League fixtures have once again this season been impacted by postponements and there was a discussion around what might be done to improve fixture fulfilment. There was no clear conclusion.
- West Schools Girls U18 Tier 3 winner was Pate's Grammar School. There was also an issue at this event with a number of teams arriving late due to road traffic hold-ups. Rhys Meredith of KLB queried why the sanctions outlined in the regulations were not applied and it was agreed to find out what other Areas did in similar circumstances.
- Both Clubs and Schools Indoor became direct entry to West organised rounds.

17th January meeting:

- I was only able to attend the first 30 minutes so comments are taken from the Minutes
- The Area 8 meeting felt that sanctions on teams late for an event (see above) due to circumstances beyond their control should not be applied, but where it is due to poor organisation then they should apply.
- No teams from Gloucestershire Clubs qualified for the Clubs Supraleague U14s.
- In the West girls schools competitions, Balcarras came second in the U16 Tier 3.

- Indoor Clubs – Wotton-Under-Edge came first in both West boys U18 and U16 and finished first and fifth in the respective EH competitions.
- Indoor Schools – Dean Close won West girls U18s (then EH third), KLB won West boys U16 (then EH seventh) and Dean Close West U18 (then EH seventh).
- West board have requested a Junior strategy to be defined, draft received and commented on. Very aspirational, but perhaps too much to ask!
- New social media accounts set up!

Jackie Stanley has also put us in contact with a Schools Games Organiser who is now covering Cheltenham and Tewkesbury. She has set up some Quicksticks events for 11th and 18th March for primary schools, to take place at Pate's Grammar School. The person is Tara Godby with whom I have talked to understand her role and what is happening.

It would seem she works for Move-More a charity based in Cheltenham and her activities are funded by the Youth Sports Trust who have contracted Move-More to deliver Schools Games in Gloucestershire. She would like support for the events and it would be a means for us to advertise our role within hockey and also we could promote clubs that could welcome any youngsters inspired to play the sport.

I also asked her whether Move-More could take on the task of promoting our coaching offering within state schools and organising state school competitive events. Unfortunately she is very new to the role and Move-More so was not really the right person with which to discuss this. However, it was clear that Move-More has links to both Active Gloucestershire and all the schools which would be a clear benefit albeit their hockey expertise is likely limited. The question to the Committee therefore is whether I should pursue this further?

An email was sent over Christmas to all GHA Junior contacts regarding replacements for both myself as Clubs organiser and Lisa Lundie as schools organiser. The request was for Clubs to canvas their members to see if there might be a volunteer or several who could take on the roles. To date there has not even been an acknowledgement of the need!

Ian Harvey
23rd January 2024