



Southern Counties Hockey Association

Please reply to:
Dr N S Wrench
Vice Chairman

To all Clubs

24 March 2011

Indoor Hockey

The purpose of this letter is to seek the opinion of clubs regarding Indoor Hockey.

The success of the Super Sixes at Wembley this year certainly raised the profile of the Indoor game. EH is looking forward to providing an even better tournament event next year.

For some years now the EH Performance Director has been promoting the development of the indoor hockey both as a game in itself and for skills development. Indoor also offers opportunities for umpire and technical officials development as well as being fast enjoyable and challenging for players. The national centralised calendar identifies key dates for indoor hockey including regional senior and junior competition leading to qualification for the EH Indoor Hockey Leagues or finals. We have recently seen the return of England to indoor tournaments.

The Management Committee is keen to know whether or not the encouragement being given to indoor at national level and the eager support of national indoor finals day reflects a need for more indoor competition within the Southern Counties.

It is a fact that local indoor leagues have come and gone over the years. There are perhaps four key factors - willing organisers, affordable facilities, eager competitors and finding suitable dates for any growth in competition.

The Management Committee does not see the development of indoor as an additional burden on our regional and county outdoor league organisers. ***New volunteers would be needed.*** At South we do have two indoor competitions which are run each December and the winners go through to the EH Indoor League. The larger competition is the women's which last year was run over four days (two weekends), or would have done had not the weather intervened with the final day, and the men's tournament, which was a one day event. Entry to the competitions is either by direct application to the organiser or through counties.

One of the issues facing any extension of indoor would be dovetailing the additional activity into our existing outdoor leagues' programmes. Nearly all our men's outdoor and about one third of our women's hockey requires 22 Saturdays. This means that the EH preferred pre Christmas indoor dates are used for outdoor and could not be used for indoor unless other arrangements were to be made to accommodate participating clubs. This is already done post Christmas when all leagues allow any club with players in the EHL Indoor to rearrange fixtures.

There are of course options including indoor on Sundays but before December this could conflict with early rounds of EH competitions, or midweek evenings. Other options would be some double header outdoor weekends and an earlier start to the season. Most dramatic would be to ask our outdoor leagues to reconfigure their league structures but this could be seen as depriving the majority of regular hockey for a much smaller number of indoor players.

What Management would like to understand is clubs' views on the development of indoor hockey.

It is very tempting to set a formal questionnaire seeking answers to specific questions. However we feel this is not the way to approach the problem easy though it would be to analyse such answers.

However we do feel it right to pose some questions to which simple answers could be given. It would be helpful if in your response you comment for both men and women.

Is your club interested in taking part in indoor hockey?

- Locally
- Countywide
- Regionally
- Nationally
- Not at all

About the current SCHA arrangements?

- About right
- Need more publicity directly at South level and via counties.

Do you know of a local facility for indoor hockey?

- How available would it be?
- What would be the cost? Per evening session; Per full day session

If your club is interested in expanding indoor hockey do you?

- have or know a volunteer to assist in organisation.
- have umpires?: who already umpire indoor: would be keen to try.

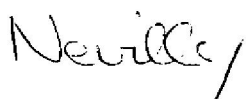
Would you accept any additional indoor impacting on outdoor leagues' arrangements?

If yes would you wish your league organisers?

- to plan double header league weekends pre Christmas; post Christmas.
- plan an earlier September start.
- to permit clubs playing indoor to rearrange pre Christmas matches.

Please feel free to answer all or any of these questions and make any other comments you consider relevant. We are seeking your views about indoor hockey and have no preconceived answers that we wish to obtain. Please send your views electronically to neville.wrench@ntlworld.com ***Please put INDOOR as the first word of the subject line of your reply.*** It would be helpful to have views by 16 June which would allow me to give a report to South Council.

Many thanks



Vice Chairman