

Southern Counties Hockey Association - Annual Reports

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Hon Secretary's Report 2007 - 08

I open my report this year recognising that in many respects it has been a watershed year for the Association. There are many initiatives coming to fruition which will have a lasting impact on the Association and its place in English Hockey.

The award of the Olympics to London in 2012 has naturally directed energy in that direction, not only at EH Headquarters but at Sport England, the DMCS and even higher. Much of this concentrated effort can only be said to be to the detriment of the interest and funding in grass roots sport in general and hockey in particular.

The Regions Consultative Committee of England Hockey which in our view should be the bed rock for grass roots hockey, and is the only regionally appointed body, has still not found a proper role. On the major issue of reform of EH it was not given proper time to consider the recently implemented changes to the Articles of Association of EH. The Association is fully supportive of the decision to seek a full time Chief Executive for England Hockey. It is, in our view, the right way forward assuming the successful candidate understands that there is balance needed between grass roots hockey and international success. However some other changes piggy-backed onto the Articles under the excuse of complying with the Companies Act 2006 are in our view inimical to the interests of the grass roots. Too much power is now vested in a central organisation that believes it must be company first, not hockey first.

It will be interesting to see how hockey responds to the Sport England Strategy 2008-2011 that states "NGBs themselves will also be expected to deliver and operate at high standards of internal organisation and *democracy ensuring that the voices of all levels and participant groups are heard.*" (my italics)

The reduction in the size of the EHL was completed this spring. Our regional league winners Fareham Men and Southgate Ladies had to enter a playoff competition to gain entry rather than gain automatic promotion. Regrettably Fareham was unsuccessful but Southgate has been promoted.

The Men's South League has now completed its plans for an entirely open league, with exception of the Premier Division, from 2009-10. This has required considerable planning. The Women's League has expanded Divisions 3A and 3B to twelve teams for next season. This will give more continuity by reducing the movements in to and from the five county leagues. Further details on the regional leagues can be obtained from the two web sites; www.southleague.org.uk/ and www.south-league.com

This season the Association fielded representative sides for regional competitions in all age groups from U14 boys and Under 15 girls to Over 70 men.

In what were the final inter regional junior tournaments both the girls U15 and U17 squads came second and in the boys the South West squad won both the U15 and U17 age groups. We are greatly indebted to all who have participated in our very successful junior hockey over the years.

Veterans hockey is now dignified with title Masters and goes from strength to strength. The Association men's squads achieved notable results in this years regional tournaments: Over 40-2nd; Over 45-2nd; Over 50-1st; Over 55-1st; Over 60-2nd; Over 65-1st. In the Women's Mastera the O40's were third, whilst the South O45's successfully defended their Title, winning all four matches, scoring 11 goals and conceding none.

Congratulations go all the players selected for our squads. Our thanks go to the managers, coaches and physiotherapists who provided the essential backup to make our squads such a success. Congratulations too go to all Association squad members selected for places in the national sides.

Regrettably the implementation of the single system sees the loss of our junior representational sides. In future the youngsters will progress from county academies through the twelve Junior Regional Performance Centres (JRPCs) and by way of selection of four cluster squads and competition to selection for the national squads. Only time will tell if players of the future will relish having been selected for the one of cluster squads. How the new system will create a loyalty base for future volunteers for the management and development of county and regional hockey remains to be seen.

The Association's counties have made it very clear that they wish to maintain our junior county competition. It is therefore the current intention to continue the junior county championships by selecting squads from the county academy or academies. We sincerely hope that playing for a county will help players retain a sense of loyalty.

The emergence of the JRPCs has been a painful process. We are well aware of our makeup, our limitations and the facilities within our region. We would have welcomed the opportunity to define where the JRPCs in the region were to be located. However a doubtful emergence of 'national democracy' saw us mandated to find sites in Oxford, Winchester and Oxted; this notwithstanding we have a heavy concentration of youth hockey which seemed to indicate a centre somewhere South or West of London would be highly desirable.

Up to now EH has been none too clear as to how the JRPCs are to be managed and funded. The Management Committee took the view that the Association's existing funds were provided by our members to support the running of our regional squads. It did not immediately see that it should use members' funds for start up costs of an EH driven initiative. Only as we came to the end of this reporting period did some clarity start to emerge in that funds from EH would be available for kit. In order to better manage our efforts Council set up a Development Working Group, replacing the former Development Committee, under the Chairmanship of Tony Eade which has been working hard to get the first programmes underway. This Group will be able to recommend what financial support should be provided to support the early stages of JRPCs.

Thanks are due to the members of our junior committees who successfully managed the year's development work, the county championships and the junior clubs and schools tournaments. These competitions take a great deal of detailed organisation not often apparent to the occasional supporter, parent or club or school member who turns up on the day. Finding venues in a tight programme is not easy. We are grateful to the clubs and schools who provided facilities for both outdoor and indoor competitions.

The South Round of the national mini tournament is an important event. This year the festival was held at Cranleigh School with separate days devoted to the boys and girls. We are again indebted to Sandra Marlow and Richard Nixon who did a not insignificant amount of work in bringing this tournament together. Kent College (U13 boys), Canterbury HC (U11 boys) and St Georges College (U13 and U11 Girls) went forward to the national finals. There was

enthusiastic support from the South Young Umpires. Once again some of young umpires were selected to appear at the national mini finals.

There is a new emphasis nationally on indoor hockey. This year tournaments were organised for Boys U18 preliminary rounds (two venues) and Boys U18 Finals. The boys U16 required two venues. The Girls required only U18 Finals and U16 Finals as separate county rounds had been held. The women 's South Indoor league ran over four days and there was a one day's Men's tournament. The winners progressed to either the EHL or national finals. Supporting this activity the SCHUA made 78 umpiring and 13 Umpire Manager Appointments using 37 umpires.

Given the extent of our current programme we will find it difficult to find both dates and venues to extend our limited season. We notified EH that we would be unable to run separate youth schools and clubs competitions in 2008-09 but will consider it for 2009-10.

The Southern Counties Hockey Umpires' Association (SCHUA) and the county umpires' associations continue to provide superb support at all levels of the game. The SCHUA provided umpires for the full programme of the men's and women's leagues top two divisions and well as appointments to the later rounds of various EH competitions. Eight members of SCHUA successfully qualified as L3 umpires. There is a great need to encourage good county L1 umpires to progress to L2. The SCHUA offered coaching support to the county HUAs. Four members of SCHUA successfully obtained L2 umpire coach awards.

One of key issues surrounding umpiring is discipline. The Association continues to stress that umpire abuse either during or after a match is entirely unacceptable. County Disciplinary Officers have been asked to award a minimum 30 day penalty for any red card or match day misconduct involving umpire abuse. We must ensure that players, coaches and clubs, including spectators, recognise that attitudes to umpires must be welcoming and understanding if we are to retain and develop our successful cadre of umpires and in particular our young umpires.

That said it is pleasant to report that the number of red cards this season was 46. This is the lowest number since records were begun in the 1998-9 season. Regrettably there were twelve Matchday Misconduct Offences nearly all of which were related to both verbal and physical abuse to umpires after the match finished. On one occasion three people were involved and physical violence was cited. Four suspensions will be carried over to the start of the next season.

The independent appeals panel under the Chairmanship of Colin Howard dealt with only three appeals.

Technical officials were again ably organised by John Gawley. They supported all the indoor activity and appointments were made to a number of outdoor events. Although we have a long nominal list of technical officials there were availability issues and fulfilling all the requirements was quite difficult.

The Association's Council met three times and the Management Committee on three occasions. The major issues which have caused considerable debate include the introduction of the single system and its impact on our established activities, communication problems with EH, dealing as best we could in the time available with the various consultation documents sent out by EH and the issue of our own management succession.

The single system issues have been largely dealt by the Development Working Group. The Group issued two information bulletins explaining what was happening and how JRPCs would be operated. We will be looking to see how the web site may be used to speed communication on these matters.

I reported last year that we were concerned about the problem of communication with the national governing body. We have tried hard to persuade EH that volunteer effort can only be effective if it is given proper time to consider proposals and plan subsequent agreed action. Our requests for adequate consultation times, which reflect the pattern of meetings in the Association and our counties, have largely fallen on deaf ears. In spite of numerous requests for a coherent and consistent pattern of information flow the picture remains disjointed. Information from national committees still does not reach the Association in a timely or digestible fashion.

Both Council and Management discussed the issue of succession. This year's AGM sees proposals to change the officers which we trust Members will support.

After eight years as our Chairman Shelia Plant is standing down. Sheila is a stalwart supporter of regional and county hockey. She has a vast experience of hockey as player, umpire, national selector and administrator. She took on the onerous responsibility of becoming our first chairman – note Chairman – when it was decided to create the single association from its three predecessors. She actively encouraged each of our counties to support the move. We were soon faced with the disastrous failure of the EHA. With colleagues from other regions Sheila was instrumental in the creation of England Hockey, a company limited by guarantee designed to protect hockey from any future unlimited liability. As a founder director Sheila worked hard to create a company ethos that reflected our vision. However she was not fully supported in her approach and when faced with the unpalatable choice between England or her region she chose to continue with the Association.

Sheila has worked hard as our Chairman always ensuring that all opinions could be expressed and considered. When ill health forced the resignation of Celia Tullett Sheila took over the role of Chairman of Girls Youth a position she is willing to continue at least in the short term.

We are pleased that Sheila has agreed to be nominated as our next President.

Our President, John Gawley, has had another tremendous season. He has regularly appeared at all Association events. Both at Council and Management he has continued to offer support and wise counsel. Like Sheila, John has had his office renewed in this case to the extent of bending our constitution. In his words "seven years is too long". He has twice had his last year and this Year he has formally declined re-appointment. He firmly believes that appointments as officers of associations like ours should be for a limited period. John has been a distinguished hard working President and his service is deeply appreciated.

The nominations being made for the to the position of Chairman and Vice Chairman are in the view of the candidates transitional appointments. An essential action next year must be to identify younger people willing to take part in the management of the Association. This is easy to say; more difficult to accomplish. The working pressures today seem to limit the people who are available and willing to take on voluntary activity.

I would like to thank formally members of Management, Council and our committees for their contribution to the work of the association. The Association is grateful to all who participate, whether it is at school, club, county, league or Association level or as player, coach, umpire or administrator. Hockey has all the elements which makes it a fully participative sport for the whole family from 7 to 70 plus.

Sport has come to the forefront of national consciousness particularly with the award of the Olympics. But medal chasing is but one dimension of sport. Hockey in the Southern Counties meets the needs of 220 clubs involving some 30-40,000 players, coaches, umpires, and other volunteers. We have been and are a very successful and dynamic region. We must surely be able to find people to take on the baton of managing our activities.

Neville Wrench

June 2008

Hon Treasurer's Report and Accounts for Year Ended 31 March 2008

I am pleased to present the Accounts of the Association for the year ended 31 March 2008, its eighth period of operation. The Accounts comprise a Summary Income and Expenditure Account, a Detailed Income and Expenditure Account and a Balance Sheet, in the same format as last year, to reflect the activities of the Association in a clear and consistent manner. In essence where funds are generated by specific activities and are then to be expended only on those activities, a ring fenced fund has been set up and Income and Expenditure during the year is set against this fund. The balances on each individual fund are carried forward on the Balance Sheet and comprise the Coaching Fund, the Minihockey Fund, The South Youth (Boys) Fund, the South Youth (Girls) Fund, the Women's South League Fund and the Youth General Fund. The entire balance of the Mixed Hockey fund has been paid out this year.

All other activities of the Association during the year are shown on the Income and Expenditure Account and are set out in such a manner to show clearly from what sources our Income is derived and where it is spent as compared to the previous year.

The Accounts are drawn up to include all items of Income and Expenditure relating to the period under review which were notified to me by 12 June 2008 and any other Liabilities or Income due of which I am aware and which have a material effect on these Accounts.

The Summary Income and Expenditure Account shows a surplus of £ 11,216 which represents the balance of Affiliation Fees remaining after the net financing of the various competitions as shown in the Detailed Income and Expenditure Account. Affiliation fees for the year at £8,781 are some £428 lower than the previous year because no Fees have as yet been received from Berkshire due to a change of Treasurer in that County. I am assured that these fees will be forthcoming in the near future. The year's income from Affiliation Fees has been enhanced by contributions from the 2007 Men's and Women's Indoor tournaments and the Women's Veterans Tournament together with a significant increase in Bank Interest. Income has also benefited from not having to fund under 21 Tournaments this year. All these factors have contributed to the increase in Income over last year of £5,088.

Overhead Expenses have risen by some £330 due to late submission of committee expenses for last year which have fallen into the year under review, offset by a saving in Room Hire Expenses. After administration charges the excess of Income over Expenditure for the year is £92,18, an increase of £5,757 over last year. Over provisions made in earlier years and cheques not presented which are now out of date, totalling £717, have been written back to retained profits this year and this offset by the contribution to Youth Boys and Youth Girls of £3,000 apiece leaves the Association with £25,956 available for future support of South Hockey. Out of this sum £6,000 has already been committed to the youth programmes for 2008/09.

The Balance Sheet shows an Accumulated Fund for the Association £30,956 which, after retention of £5,000 in reserves agreed by the Management Committee and the £6,000 for Youth mentioned above, leaves £19,956 available for South Hockey Programmes in ensuing years. In addition to this the Balance Sheet shows further funds available of £40,909 which are ring fenced for Coaching and Development, Minihockey, Women's South League and Youth.

I am pleased to report that the Association remains in good financial health and Affiliations at the current level will enable it continue to do so. I therefore propose that Affiliations for the 2008/2009 Season remain at £6 per team although this may need to be reviewed next year when the financial requirements of the new single system are better understood.

I am indebted to County Treasurers and all those members of the Association who organise Competitions, Leagues, Training and collection of monies for the efficiency with which they go about this task to achieve the financial stability mentioned above.

P M M Taylor
Hon. Treasurer

12 June 2008

Report of the Independent Scrutineer to the Southern Counties Hockey Association

This report on the Accounts of the Southern Counties Hockey Association (SCHA) for the period ended 31 March 2008 which are set out on pages 3 to 5, is in respect of an examination of the financial statements and the financial records of the SCHA presented to me by the Honorary Treasurer.

Basis of this Report.

My examination was carried out and included a review of the accounting records kept by the Honorary Treasurer and a comparison of the accounts with these records.

The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the financial statements

In my opinion proper accounting records have been kept; the SCHA accounts agree with the accounting records and no matters have arisen from my examination which give cause for concern.

BRJ Gill FCA
Micheldever

Income and Expenditure Account at 31 March 2008

	Income	Expenditure	Net	31/03/2007
	£	£	£	£
Affiliation Fees	8,781	0	8,781	9,209
Men's Indoor	839	806	33	-217
Men's U21 Regional Tournament	0	0	0	-1,510
Women's Indoor	1,863	1,310	553	0
WomensU21 Regional Tournament	0	0	0	-1,880
Women's Vets Tournament	595	386	209	-93
South Veterans Hockey Kit	75	35	40	-639
Disciplinary Committee	0	55	-55	146
Bank Interest less Charges	1,647	0	1,647	1,104
Interest Received -War Stock	8	0	8	8
	<u>13,808</u>	<u>2,592</u>	<u>11,216</u>	<u>6,128</u>

Administration

Committee Expenses -915 -447

Insurance	-663		-663
Room Hire	-265		-400
SCHA Website	-155		-157
	<u>-1,998</u>	<u>-1,998</u>	<u>-1,667</u>
Excess of Income over Expenditure		£9,218	£4,461
Add :- Retained Profits brought forward		<u>22,021</u>	<u>19,439</u>
		£31,239	£23,900
Add :- Past year provisions no longer required		<u>£717</u>	<u>£2,121</u>
		£31,956	£26,021
Less :- Support Grants paid out			
South Youth Boys	3,000		-£2,000
South Youth Girls	<u>3,000</u>	<u>-6,000</u>	<u>-£2,000</u>
Retained Profits carried forward		<u><u>£25,956</u></u>	<u><u>£22,021</u></u>

Detailed Income and Expenditure Account

Year Ended 31 March 2008

INCOME	Affiliation Fees	South Men's Indoor	South Women's Indoor	Women's Vets	South Vets Hockey Kit	Discipline Committee
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fees, Sales etc	8,781					75
Entry Fees & Players Contributions	2007	839	1,863	595		
Appeals Fees less Refunds						
Interest Received - Bank						
- War Stock						
Total Income	<u>8,781</u>	<u>839</u>	<u>1,863</u>	<u>595</u>	<u>75</u>	
Expenditure						
Kit Purchase						35
Pitch Hire		681	1,310	386		
Umpires and Officials Expenses		125				
Committee Members Expenses						
Bank charges						
Total Expenditure		<u>806</u>	<u>1,310</u>	<u>386</u>	<u>35</u>	
Surplus/ Deficit	<u>8,781</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>653</u>	<u>209</u>	<u>40</u>	

Notes: Discipline Committee Expenses relate to an appeal which was unsuccessful but the appeal deposit of £100 has been returned. Umpires expenses for the Women's Indoor competition have been borne by The Women's South League

Balance Sheet at 31 March 2008

	Current Year		Previous Year	
	£	£	£	£
Current Assets				
Bank-- Current Account	0		0	
-- Reserve Account	<u>72,326</u>	72,326	64,540	64,540
Sundry Debtors		<u>3,925</u>		<u>6,761</u>
Total Current Assets		<u>76,251</u>		<u>71,301</u>
Other Assets				
3 1/2% War Stock		250		250
Total Assets		<u>76,501</u>		<u>71,551</u>
Less: Current Liabilities				
Sundry Creditors	4,636		3,208	
Coaching Fund	7,627		7,747	
Minihockey Fund	2,079		1,092	
Mixed Hockey Fund	0		2,604	
South Youth (Boys) Fund	10,406		8,350	
South Youth (Girls) Fund	13,210		11,809	
Women's South League	5,252		5,885	
Youth Fund	<u>2,335</u>		<u>3,835</u>	-44,530
		<u>-45,545</u>		
Total Net Assets		<u>£30,956</u>		<u>£27,021</u>
Accumulated Fund				
Capital Introduced		5,000		5,000
Retained Earnings		25,956		22,021
Total Accumulated Fund		<u>£30,956</u>		<u>£27,021</u>

Report of the Regional Disciplinary Administrator

I would like to pass on my congratulations to all the Counties and their respective Discipline Administrators because the number of Red Cards issued this season is the lowest total since records were begun in the 1998-9 season.

There have been 46 red cards issued to players of clubs in the South. The numbers of Red Card offences have been significantly reduced and for Kent and Surrey it has been their best season regarding the low numbers of Red Cards issued.

Thankfully, only three went to appeal, one of which had the suspension decreased, one where the appeal was cancelled and one where the appeal failed. Three cards were issued to ladies and there are eight suspensions that are being carried forward to next season.

There were 12 Matchday Misconduct Offences and nearly all relate to both verbal and physical abuse to umpires after the match had finished but on one occasion three people were involved and physical violence was cited. The punishments given for the verbal offences varied between

16 and thirty-two days. The standardisation of these offences will be brought to the attention of all the CDAs prior to the start of the 2008-9 season in order that the recommendations of the South are adhered too. Four suspensions will be carried over to the start of the next season.

Split between the counties, the following details appear, this season Middlesex and Sussex have had the most Cards and Bucks who have had the least. The details by comparison with earlier seasons are:

Berks	3	(3, 4, 4, 3, 2, 2, 0, 0, 3, 3)
Bucks	2	(1, 2, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 0, 5, 2)
Hants & Dorset	9	(11, 16, 19, 8, 11, 15, 12, 15, 16, 7)
Kent	5	(20, 10, 11, 12, 9, 12, 16, 13, 7, 4)
Middlesex	11	(18, 11, 5, 10, 5, 13, 10, 8, 7, 10)
Oxon	4	(2, 2, 1, 2, 1, 3, 2, 1, 5, 3)
Surrey	3	(16, 6, 8, 4, 9, 8, 6, 8, 7, 3)
Sussex	9	(10, 9, 5, 9, 8, 4, 8, 14, 10, 9)

Appeals take up a considerable amount of time and we are, as ever, very grateful for the panel's work and particularly for the umpires and witnesses who attended the hearings. This year some of the appeals did not require an oral hearing and this speeded up considerably the response time to the appellants. Colin Howard, as the South RDAP, chaired the appeals in his normal efficient and fair manner and additional thanks go to the CDAs and other officials who gave up their time to assist Colin on the appeal hearings.

Considering the number of appointments made throughout the region the number of Red Cards issued is very low, but we must not get complacent and the training and education that has made such an impact this season should be continued next year.

Currently, Berkshire and Kent do not have deputy CDAs and both Counties should ensure that there is a person nominated in case of long-term accident or illness, which prevents the County responding in accordance with the Code of Discipline, should a Red Card be issued.

A meeting for all CDAs and deputies will take place at Ashford (Middlesex) HC on Wednesday 10th September, it is hoped that Norman Stott the England Hockey Discipline Officer will be able to attend.

Ray Strudwick South RDA
6th June 2008

