

ESSEX COUNTY BOWLING ASSOCIATION GROUP 6

A.G.M. MEETING 21st OCTOBER 2021 at 7p.m.

Meeting opened at 19.03

Secretary Chris Flack welcomed everyone to the meeting. In the absence of Officers David Jacobi and Jim Bunce, he would be chairing the meeting. He offered his apologies

In Memoriam

A minute's silence was observed in memory of fellow bowlers who had passed away during the past 24 months.

Apologies for Absence

Bournemouth Park, Carreras, Chalkwell Park, Eastwood Park, Gt. Wakering, Rayleigh

Delegates Present

Alexandra: Belfairs; Castle Point; Essex County; Fairwood; Hadleigh; Hockley; Memorial Park; Prittlewell; Rochford; Runwell; Shoebury Park; South Benfleet & Canvey; Southchurch Park; Southend; Thorpe Bay; Whitehall; Wickford

Delegates Absent

Bournemouth Park, Carreras; Chalkwell Park; Eastwood Park; Gt Wakering; Rayleigh

Officers Present

Chris Flack; Chris Chorley; Kevin Robertson; Ken Griffiths; Dave Starkey

Secretary Chris Flack (read a statement from the chairman David Jacobi

Unfortunately, due to health problems I am sorry to say that I have had little involvement with Group 6 matters this season other than being able to take part, from time to time, in the few Zoom meetings held with other officers of the Group 6 committee. Other than paying brief visits to an earlier round of the Ashford Cup and Wally Ball Shield matches that has been the limit of my involvement. However, I was pleased that I was still able to carry on the role as the Group 6 selector for the County friendlies.

As reported back to our Secretary I am happy to stand down if there is anyone within the Group willing to stand, for I am uncertain as to when I will be able to take on the role fully again, but hopefully this will be by the start of the next outdoor season.

I would like, at this point, to thank all officers of the Group for all their hard work during this season, especially with Covid still being prevalent and let us hope that things will be much easier by the time the next outdoor season starts.

Finally well done to all the players and Selectors involved with the Ashford Cup and Wally Ball teams in making it to the finals. Although we were not successful in winning the trophies this was still a great effort by all of those involved.

I would like to offer my congratulations to the five Group 6 bowlers who were awarded their County Badges this year, they were:-

David Birch, Graham Evans, Malcolm Phillips, Derek Scruby, John Ward

Lastly and maybe most importantly, I would like to announce that our very own David Starkey has been elected as County Junior President from next season. This a three-year post culminating in his year as president in 2024.

Congratulations from everyone in Group 6 on this honour.

Approval of Minutes of the 2019 AGM held on 19th October 2019

The chairman asked the delegates if the minutes of the AGM were an accurate record of that meeting.

Proposed by: Runwell

Seconded by: Hockley

The meeting unanimously agreed

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising

Minutes of committee meeting held on 2nd September 2021

Matters Arising

- The delegate from Thorpe Bay Bowling Club questioned the method used by selectors to pick the Inter Group Knockout and Wally Bally teams.

With no success in the Inter Group knockout and limited accomplishments in the Wally Ball over the past few seasons, for a group of our size and with the players we have, who have won many County titles over this period, we are under achieving. Isn't it about time we tried something different?

He suggested that each of the clubs who finish in the first six places of Division 1 of the Group 6 league, should nominate a team of four bowlers (a rink) to represent the Group in the Inter Group Knockout. This approach could also be used for the Wally Ball where the top four clubs could nominate a team of four.

In his view this would give the clubs in Division 1 an extra incentive to finish in the top four or six, rather than the small number of clubs involved of late, as well giving more players the opportunity to play in these competitions.

Responding on behalf of the selectors, Dave Starkey agreed that our recent performances in the Inter Group Knockout had not been good enough and agreed, maybe it was time to try something different and the ideas suggested by TBBC deserved serious consideration.

However Dave did not agree that this suggestion should be applied to the Wally Ball where we have reached the final on more than one occasion, just haven't been able to get across the line and win it. He did select players from around the group and took into consideration where our home games were played and tended to pick more players from that club for obvious reason, home advantage.

Also, is David's experience, some players did not want to play in the IGK and preferred the Wally Ball, as the format was the best of three games rather than just a knockout, as in the IGK.

The selectors also agreed that it was essential that Group 6 had a selector responsible for each of these competitions to deal with the administration

associated with these games.

The Southend delegate expressed the view that we should always select our strongest team, that inevitably means our best players with the best record of performances regardless of which club. If this suggestion goes forward he knows that if Southend BC finished in the top 6 clubs in division 1, they, as a club, do not have four players good enough to play in the IGK. It should not be mandatory that the top six clubs put in a rink of four players, it should be up to the selectors to determine which clubs the selected players come from.

The TBBC delegate said that doesn't always mean that players from Essex County have the best players, as it normally their players who dominate selection on the IGK.

Kevin Robertson suggested that the Group should consider asking clubs to nominate a rink of four players instead of individual players. The group officers agreed that this should be discussed as a further option

The Group 6 Officers agreed that these suggestions deserved serious consideration and would discuss them at the next available opportunity and respond to the TBBC delegate

- Chris Flack raised that matter of Representative Game Venues and highlighted that Group 6 Officers would be taking another look at the current list of clubs nominated as hosts for these games. The reason being that the greens at one or two clubs were undergoing major refurbishment during the coming season and also the final of the Wally Ball will now be played at Essex County, two good reasons why we need to re-evaluate our previous decisions.
- The Wickford delegate raised the matter of moving the Group 6 league games from Tuesday night to Wednesday night. He interpreted the 2nd September committee meeting minutes as this was going to happen in 2023 as a trial, no matter what. The Officers assured him that no change would take place without the delegates approval however the Wickford delegate feels that whatever any future meeting decides a lot of the clubs will be disappointed with the result.

The Wickford delegate suggested that instead of having a fixed date for the fixtures, they are made flexible, with Tuesday or Wednesday to suit individual clubs. Other delegates expressed concern that this would cause a lot of extra work for the club match secretaries.

Another delegate (sorry didn't note the club) expressed confusion as to what was minuted on 2nd September, and also thought we would be changing to a Wednesday in 2023, he asked for clarification on this point and also asked, how do we proceed from here.

The Secretary apologised for any confusion caused by the minutes, but stated, any decision on moving the Group 6 league would be made by a vote of the club delegates at an AGM, following a motion being submitted by a club. The Officers do not dictate group policy or decisions.

The previous delegate intimated that they would be considering submitting a motion on this subject at the next AGM.

The Secretary asked the delegates to seriously consider the implications of moving the league games to a Wednesday, as it appears that some clubs could withdraw from the league if this happens.

- The Essex County delegate asked the chair the outcome of 'County Formal Complaint' minuted under any other business.

The Secretary explained the decisions made at the most recent County Executive meeting on this subject.

The County Competition rule (1n) will be amended to show that extensions

are not allowed in the County Pairs, Triples and Fours competitions (because they are allowed a substitute)

Extensions will only be allowed in the County Singles competition for the reasons outlined in the current rules i.e. when players are engaged in County Association, National matches and competitions and International matches or attending to the business of the Executive Council or Selection Committee. Medical reasons do not qualify

This should be minuted in the County Executive Meeting minutes dated 11th October 2021

Officer Reports

Treasurers Report

The accounts for the year ended December 2020 show a deficit of £180 from the previous year, we have a balance of around £1400 to cover our various expenses. Apart from the income received from the clubs we receive £200 from the County to cover extraordinary expenses.

Our annual expenses are quite modest with Group 6 shirts, website costs, representative game green fees, trophy repairs and engravings as the major items. We plan to continue to provide shirts to players selected for representative games and currently we have a healthy stock.

We plan to continue asking players to contribute towards the representative game rink fees as this also reduces our expenses, especially as we regularly qualify for finals which subsequently increases our expenses.

As always, the financial objective of the Group is to break even each year and with the objective of spending no more than we receive in income and we have more or less achieved that this year.

Secretary's Report

Firstly, I would like to thank every club for returning your 2022 Affiliation Fees & League subscriptions on time, this will allow Kevin to report next year's League structure at today's meeting rather than later. Thank you all.

On the same theme I would like to thank all those clubs who have returned their nominations for next year's Representative games, on time, although some are still outstanding, this is very helpful, they will be passed onto the selectors later this evening.

I would also like to thank the 17 clubs who returned their Green Testing Forms back to us at the beginning of the season, so they could be viewed on our website for everyone to see, hopefully next season will see the same response.

I recently sent out an email to all club secretaries informing them of a change to the way the County will ask for their club officer details, for inclusion in the County Handbook. Historically, I have made this request in early January and forwarded the information to the County.

This year the County Secretary has decided to ask the clubs directly for this information, which I believe they have already done so. All I have asked is the clubs forward me a copy of their return so I can then include the information to forward to all the Group 6 clubs.

I understand the County Treasurer will also contact the clubs directly in respect to their affiliation fees.

The Group 6 Finals Day took place at South Benfleet & Canvey Bowling Club on 26th September with the following results: -

Singles: 17 competitors – John Lloyd/ECBC 21 – Gary Telling/ECBC 12

Triples: 15 competitors -

Rob Meason – Southend	
Steve Laver - Southend	14
Phil Brandon - ECBC	
Ken Smith - ECBC	
Dave Patterson - ECBC	17
Steve Gunnell – ECBC	

Group 6 would like to formally thank South Benfleet & Canvey Bowling Club for the use of their facilities and the help of the club members to make it a successful day. I would also like to thank our officer David Starkey for marking the singles competition and presenting the trophies.

I would ask the clubs to encourage new bowlers to enter these competitions as they are an ideal place to play some competitive bowls without playing the top bowlers (Steve Gunnell being the exception). These competitions don't start until early August and they are finished by the third week in September, so a very short period. The entry list is quite small so good entry level competitions.

Finally, I would like to encourage all clubs to use the Group 6 website for all the latest information about Group 6 bowling.

In addition to all the normal information on leagues, representative games, green testing etc, we are putting more and more information on our website, such as the results of all our games, which hopefully will prove useful to our members.

A lot of time goes into ensuring that it contains all the latest information about Group 6 bowls, so please use it.

League Secretary's Report

I would like to start by saying how enjoyable it has been this year for me in the role of League Secretary.

All the Divisions within the league ran relatively smoothly this year with results being reported generally on time with the league tables updated within days of the games. This was after a slow start from myself as I was attempting to get every result in before publishing. We had a few games that needed to be rearranged for various reasons and they were all eventually played (bar one which had been scheduled after the end of the season – against the league rules). I would suggest that if games are to be rearranged that you do not leave them until near the end of the season – there really is no need for this. Where there have been issues with re-arranged games/ playing surfaces etc, the people I have had to deal with have always been constructive and practical – looking for an amicable resolution. I appreciate this approach greatly.

I apologise for the mistakes that I made with league tables during this season. I have learned a lot from this year and hope to improve next season - if you'll have me back!

For next season, Prittlewell has withdrawn one team and their remaining team will be known as Prittlewell (not "A" or "B"). Eastwood Park have withdrawn their team from the league, and with Rochford adding a team, this means we have a net loss of one team. This has impacted on Division 6 which is now only 6 teams, so there are a few weeks where there are no games.

There are 8 teams in Div 1, 2 & 3, 7 teams in Div. 4 & 5 and 6 teams in Div. 6.

I have a few other points to make:-

1. Given the difficulties recently due to COVID coupled with a gradual decline in the clubs wishing to provide food, the Group 6 Officers have decided to state that clubs do not need to provide food after the league games. If individual Clubs do still wish to do so, then this is their own choice and should be in the knowledge that no other club needs to reciprocate. The Group 6 Secretary empathised the importance of all clubs being aware of this advice.

2. Although this is not generally a problem, I have been concerned during the season about late submission of league results by a small minority. The Group 6 Officers considered whether to introduce penalties for this, deciding not to at the moment, but we will be keeping an eye on submissions for this coming season.

3. I am also concerned about the situation when 2 teams from the same club play in the same division when there is a need to postpone games. Our rules currently make it the responsibility of the league secretary to ensure these fixtures are scheduled for early in the season, which I do, but when teams have to postpone and then play near the end of the season, they leave themselves open to accusations of “fixing” a result. No-one is suggesting this has been the case for last season, but I will be making a rule change for next season which will mean that if clubs need to re-arrange a fixture involving 2 of their teams, then this would need to be played before the next scheduled league match (i.e. within 6 days).

4. The fixture list for next season is almost ready to publish, and as has been requested by some clubs, we plan to publish the results of all games on the website on a weekly basis, along with the tables.

Finally, congratulations to all the Divisional winners and I look forward to summer 2022.

County Competition Results Secretary's Report

In the absence of Kevin Watkins, the Chairman read his report,

COUNTY TWO WOOD COMPETITION

Firstly, I would like to thank Essex County BC for hosting the day and for arranging the markers for the day.

Secondly, I would like to thank the 16 players that turned up out of the 29 that entered promptly and on time.

It was a good final between Ed Morris and Chris Muir, Ed just pulling away on the last few ends.

Next year the 2 wood day will be hosted by Group 9 and normally at Thurrock / Grays Town green.

COUNTY COMPETITIONS / PORTAL

Nearly coming to the end of the 2021 season and from what I have heard the season has gone OK. Not much of a summer weather wise but that's the fun of outdoor bowls.

Ed Morris had another excellent season both county and national, along with Steve and Chris in the Triples at Leamington. Just like to say well done to the Rochford Ladies in the Senior Fours.

We understand there will no changes to the County Competitions Portal for next season as it worked well for everyone. The only request from the County Competition Secretary being that all competitors enter their results on-line rather than ringing him.

It is anticipated the portal will be open for 2022 season competition entries by the end of October 2021

The Essex County delegate asked if the portal could be used by the Groups within the County to run their Competitions. The Secretary promised to raise this with ECBA and report back to the delegate.

NATIONAL/COUNTY COMPETITION FORMATS

Following an analysis of a countrywide survey and feedback from the counties, Bowls England will be running all National Championships using the following formats, the ECBA will be following suit with their competitions:-

Singles (incl Junior Singles) – 21 up

Pairs (incl Junior Pairs) – Four bowls 18 ends

Triples – Three bowls 18 ends

Fours (incl Senior Fours) – Two bowls 18 ends

Two Wood Singles – Two bowls 21 ends

Match Secretary

We had three fixtures arranged towards the back end of the season when we anticipated players would not be involved in so many competition games, plus the Group 6 leagues were finished, we were hoping that this meant more players would be available to play.

The first game at the end of July against the Essex Vice-Presidents played at Essex County and we tried to give the Park Circle clubs the opportunity to provide rinks of four players, that was a complete failure, with only one club responding to my request. We were able to field a full-strength team of 6 rinks with the help of the other clubs around the group.

The second game against Southend BC was a complete failure with none of the clubs invited to supply a rink, doing so. This game was planned for late September but did not take place.

The final game against the Park Circle to be played at Hockley BC which was played with five rinks, with the Park Circle helping Group 6 by supplying some players.

Ken Griffith asked the delegates to think about how the lines of communication with the clubs can be improved, to eliminate this happening.

Ken feels that these games give the clubs and players the opportunity to play against players and clubs they might not ordinarily get the chance to play against, and gives the Group 6 Officers the chance to see players they might not normally see play, this with an eye on the Ashford Cup, Wally Ball and Inter Group Knockout selection.

Dave Starkey asked how long would Ken expect the club to take before responding to his request for players to play in a friendly, a week to 10 days was his answer.

Selectors

Ashford Cup – Another good effort from the squad in winning their group despite having two away matches. The highlight being winning on all six rinks at Braintree. A costly performance, in terms of drinks at the bar paid for by the selector.

In the final we again came up against Group 3.

A really good final with both teams winning 3 rinks and the scores being level at 104 each. An extra end on each rink and we looked like winners until a wonder bowl by one of the Group 3 skips.

A very good team effort and well done to all those who got their County badge this year.

Also, thank you for great support, it was great to see so many Group 6 supporters at all the games.

Finally, I need to make you aware of a significant rule change for the Ashford Cup next year.

'Groups may play one badged player on each rink but cannot skip. The badged player must have only received his badge no longer than two years ago. This rule is for a two-year trial and will then afterwards be re-accessed.'

This rule is not mandatory and it is up to each group to decide if they want to play badged players in their team

Jim Bunce

Inter Group Knockout – Another disappointing result in the first round played at Thorpe Bay BC. There are lots of opinions as to why, some of them expressed earlier in these minutes.

Obviously something has to change to improve our results in the competition, Group 6 Officers will be working very hard during the winter to turn the situation around next year.

Wally Ball – I would like to thank Essex County Bowling Club for stepping in at the last minute because of double booking at the planned venue.

Also, would like to thank all players that supported the Wally Ball 2021 and the supporters that attended the matches. We managed to get into the final again, played at Princess Marie Louise B.C.

We came up against a very strong Group 3 Team that managed to find a very tricky green better than us we lost 3 rinks to 1 the score total 64 to 76.

Also, a very big thank you to Kevin Sadler of Rayleigh B.C turning up as a reserve a number of times. I feel it is important once you commit to all dates you should try and make yourselves AVAILABLE.

That's another story Winter well.

I also need to make you aware of a significant change for the Wally Ball next year.

'The final of the Wally Ball will be played at ECBC next year, on the same day as the Inter Group Knockout Final, this is to allow County Executive Officers to attend both games'

This presents a great opportunity to Group 6 should they reach the final.

Dave Starkey

Motions/Proposals

Two motions/proposals had been received from John Hickman of Hockley Bowling Club

The proposals as received are: -

1. Start of the Indoor Season

Monday the 2nd of May in week 18, 2022 starts the Outdoor Season for 2022. and the first games in the Group 6 Leagues should therefore commence on Tuesday the 10th May 2022.

(This Year, (2021) the League dates were adjusted by 1 day earlier rather than 6 dates later. Week 1 in 2021 moved forward by one week).

It has been usual since 2014 for the leagues to start in Week 19 thus leaving a week to form squads

John Hickman outlined the reasons for his proposal in great detail.
The Group 6 league secretary accepted the points made by John and agreed that the 2022 league fixture list would start on 11th May
The delegates accepted the motion without the need for a vote.

2. Both Skips only are to keep score cards for Outdoor Play
(See Crystal Mark 3.2 Section 3 rules 40.1.7 and confirmed in 40.1.10)
This has caused confusion In Division 5 where some clubs were using the indoors rules which allow the seconds to hold the cards.
Please could this rule be noted in Group6 rules to save confusion next year.
Indoor Rules allow for 2s to keep score cards.

Again John Hickman explained the detail behind his proposal which stems from confusion from a Coach Bowls, level 1 ZOOM meeting, where the documentation specifically stated that only Skips should hold the cards in outdoor bowling. Coach Bowls have now accepted this was a mistake and have corrected their documents.

Everyone agreed that the delegation of cards by the skips has been in place within Group 6 for some-time, however for the sake of clarity the Group 6 league rules will be updated to include the following statement:-

Skips can transfer the cards to other members of the team. However, they must make sure that this duty is transferred to players whose positions, in order of play, are the same in each team.

The meeting all agreed with this outcome and a vote was not necessary.

Election of Officers

All Group 6 Officers are standing un-opposed for next season

The un-opposed positions are: -

<u>Chairman:</u>	David Jacobi
<u>Secretary:</u>	Chris Flack
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Chris Chorley
<u>League Secretary:</u>	Kevin Robertson
<u>County Competition Results Secretary:</u>	Kevin Watkins
<u>Match Secretary:</u>	Ken Griffiths
<u>Selector:</u>	Jim Bunce
<u>Selector:</u>	Dave Starkey

The Secretary asked the delegates if anyone at the meeting wished to stand for election to any of the positions above, no response was received.

The Secretary asked the delegates for a show of hands to support the election of the above officers, the meeting unanimously agreed.

The Secretary asked the delegates to consider if there were bowlers around the group who could be interested in standing for these positions. At some point in the future the current officers will stand down and we will need replacements, so please we ask you to seriously consider recommending anyone who could be interested, don't wait for an AGM, speak to us at any time.

The Essex County delegate asked if the health of our chairman would impede his ability to carry on in his role.

The Secretary confirmed that conversations had taken place with David on this subject, and in light of there being no nominations to stand in his place plus his

recovery from surgery has gone very well, the officers feel the experience David brings to the group was a major consideration when asking him to continue.

Presentation of Group 6 League Trophies

David Starkey (The County Junior President designate) presented the winners Trophies to the delegates from: -

Division 1 – Essex County ‘B’

Division 2 – Castle Point B.C.

Division 3 – Essex County ‘D’

Division 4 – Essex County ‘E’

Division 5 – Belfairs B.C.

Division 6 – Memorial Park B.C.

Congratulations to all the above clubs

A.O.B.

1.

John Foster (Whitehall delegate) asked the meeting is there would be any problems at their clubs with some players needing to use wheelchairs on their greens. He personally is now in the position of requiring the use of a wheelchair to move up to down the green (not to bowl) and is sure there will be others who will be affected. He is grateful to Southchurch Park Bowling Club who have provided a ramp to access the green

David Starkey advised that any club who needed to install a wheelchair ramp should approach their local council for help with funding, his club South Benfleet have done just that and have wheelchair ramps in place for their members and visiting bowlers.

Following a question from the floor, the Secretary asked the meeting if any club did not allow wheelchairs on their green, the response would indicate this is not a problem, however access to the green for wheelchairs maybe a problem for one or two clubs and prior notice would be required i.e. Thorpe Bay BC

A question was asked about suitable disabled toilet availability, this seems to be a bigger issue than wheelchair access. Clubs are encouraged to contacted the club they are visiting prior to their game should they require any of these facilities, don't wait until you arrive at the cub and end up disappointed.

2.

Ken Griffith (South Benfleet delegate) asked the officers if the group can consider adding a Two Wood Singles competition to the current Four Wood Singles and Triples competitions. This format had been very popular in the past with the entries split into various groups, depending on the number of entries and the early rounds played at designated clubs to a finalist. The finalists from the various groups would then meet to play the quarter, semi and final on one evening at a designated club.

In Ken's view this format would provide an ideal format to see how players perform with just two woods, which is the format used in all our representative games. Tom Coster (Thorpe Bay) endorsed the view that this had been a successful competition in the past, but felt an additional competition may not gain sufficient entries, so suggested this should be instead of the current Four Wood Singles. The Secretary took on board these comments and would investigate if there is sufficient interest from bowlers to make this format a credible alternative.

There being no other business; the chairman thanked Rochford B.C. for the use of their facilities and opening the bar this evening, he subsequently closed the meeting at 8:50pm