



ESSEX SQUASH & RACKETBALL COUNTY REPORT July 2017

Chairmans's Report

Annual General Meeting

We wish to thank Kingswood for providing the venue once again this year at Basildon. We are also happy to consider offers from other clubs as an alternative in coming years.

Committee

There was a committee of ten this last year – the ideal number is 12 and one must be a junior representative. David Harris has resigned as junior chair & representative replaced by Matthew White. Geoff Went would like to hand over the secretary role so as to concentrate on league management.

We are looking to refresh the committee and probably restructure to meet the demands going forward under the new 'lean' England Squash' management and Sport England directives. Hence we are keen for anyone with new ideas and a desire to push new initiatives that increase participation across all age groups to join the ESRA committee bringing fresh thinking and to promote county squash.

Intercounty Competitions

Essex Men's Senior Team - Due to three late withdrawals, we went to the National Centre with a weak side and our intentions were only to survive . We lost our first game but won our next two insuring us of staying in the Premier for next year!!! - Team was Richie Fallows, Owain Taylor, Paul Rawdon, Gary Nesbit and Joe Blackmur.

Men's O35s – Having narrowly lost Stage 1 back in October with a group containing Middx and Kent, they won Phase 2 at a canter. 7 wins out of 8 since Paul Wallace took over, and some excellent players in the team.

Men's O50s – Phase 1 was a tough affair for the 50's, having lost their matches due to having to field an under strength side (Jersey Squash Festival being the main culprit, with the fixtures clashing) – but finished the campaign with a strong set of results (Two 4-1 wins) in Phase 2 in February.

Men's O55s – Injuries and late withdrawals saw the o55's lose both Phase 1 & 2, finishing second in both. New recruits next year.....

Men's O60s – maintained their current position in the division after playing only two matches. The Present ES organisation for the region is not very satisfactory.

Ladies Senior Team under the guidance of Sarah Neller finished 6th in the Premier League – an excellent result as several top players were missing. The team which played consisted of Elise Lazarus, Sophie Lemom, Sarah Neller, Jackie Gregory and Michelle Higgins.

Neither the **Ladies O40's** team under Kerry Munn nor the **Ladies O50's** side under Jackie Gregory reached National Finals stage this season:- overall the Over-40s (captained by Kerry Munn) won 1 and lost 3 matches, while the Over-50s (captained by Jackie Gregory) won two matches and lost two.

Funding of the teams is continually reviewed at the committee meetings. Available funds do not dictate but do influence the number of teams Essex is able to field. Sponsorship of the county sides in total or as a team would be very helpful to provide Essex kit, so if you know any wealthy business people who would be willing to support our teams please contact the committee.



Essex Squash & Racketball Association



Essex Colours - The following players are awarded the county colours at this AGM.

Masters	Season	Name	Seniors	Season	Name	Ladies Masters	Season	name
O45 & 50 men's	2013/14/15/16/17	Andy Russell	Seniors	2016/17	Richie Fallows	O40/50 Ladies	2016/17	Michelle Higgins
	2014/15/16/17	Alan Burrows			Gary Nisbet			Maureen Duke
O50 men's	2015/16/17	Kevin Belcher			Joe Blackmur			Dawn Robinson
	15/16	David Harris			Paul Rawdon	O40	2016/17	Dawn White
	16/17	John McComish			Owain Taylor			

Essex Closed Championships

This year the Essex Closed was held at Club Kingswood in Basildon. Thanks to the generosity of several sponsors noted below, we were able to offer significant prize monies and attract some of the counties best players to the event. The tournament was held over the weekend of 21st & 22nd January

The weekend attracted nearly 100 entries from all parts of the county who battled it out over the 3 days. Full draw and results are posted on the Essex SRA website at www.essexsra.com and on our Facebook page 'Essex SRA'

Main Draw Results

Event	WINNER	RUNNER UP
Men's A	Richie Fallows	Rory Pennell
Men's B	Steve Cunnew	Francis Engerer
Men's C	George Rapley (Jr)	Zaid Mushtaq (Jr)
Men's 35	Antony Savage	Paul Wallace
Men's 45	Chris Long	Paul Goodhew
Men's 50	Nigel Bacon	Pascal Dibatista
Men's 55	David Harris	Lee Horton
Ladies A	Alice Green	Keeley Peacock
Ladies 40	Michelle Higgins	Kerry Munn
Ladies 50	Lisa Tolhurst	Maureen Duke

Plates Results

PLATE	WINNER	RUNNER UP
Men's A	Dave Smith	Phil Lavender
Men's B	Darren Vickery	Zaid Mushtaq
Men's C	Adrian Dibatista	Andrew Pell
Men's 35	Darren Vickery	James Ware
Men's 45	<i>Not Held</i>	
Men's 50	<i>Not Held</i>	
Men's 55	Tariq Mushtaq	Wyn Edwards
Ladies A	<i>Not Held</i>	
Ladies 40	<i>Not Held</i>	
Ladies 50	Dawn Robinson	Elaine Oddie

Sponsored By

MILLANE Contract Services Ltd (Basildon)
Keller Williams Property Consultants (Southend)

It is proposed is to hold the Essex Closed on 20th & 21st January 2018, venue TBD.



Essex Squash & Racketball Association



Development

The committee continues to follow its Development Plan and has many initiatives to increase the numbers playing around the county Player (adult & junior) and coaches recruited continues to rise steadily as the table below demonstrates. This is despite losing the four courts at Springhealth this year, with most of those regular squash players transferring to Hamptons Club (formerly known as Marconi). We collect data quarterly which informs the table below and good growth over the last year (May 16 to May 17) has been achieved however at over half the 27 clubs that we receive regular data from. Encouragingly the player per court ratio also continues to rise steadily. NB: As of November 2014 the player/court ratio was 17.01!

Indicator	May 2016	May 2017	Increase	+ or - %
Adults	2182	2483	301	+14%
Juniors	461	548	87	+19%
Coaches	67	77	10	+15%
Player/Ct	23.92	26.98	3.06	+13%

The reason why we are still seeing growth is crucially down to the attitude of the various coaches and club management teams involved. The shared learning is that Squash Development needs to happen continually and consistently, with the player base being ever widened at all levels/ages etc.

The biggest Development achievement in Essex this year however has been the establishment (and funding (£9.6K) from Sport England) of the Essex Developing Squash Coaches Academy – which was launched successfully at Hamptons Club on Monday May 8th 2017 As of the AGM this year – the following clubs and coaches have indicated a wish to be included:

Epping SC (despite courts being threatened with removal – as yet unresolved) – in liaison with Club coaching team and Places for People

Ongar Squash Club – in liaison with the club management team and Catherine Honeywell

David Lloyd Club – Hornchurch – in liaison with Niall Engerer (former England U15 player) now full-time coach

Walthamstow Squash Club – in liaison with Vicky Te Velde and Chair Rob McKill

University of Essex – in liaison with Club Coach Kurt Beaumont

Park Drive Maldon – in liaison with new coach Amanda Smith, and owner Peter Alexander

All the above facilities/coaches are undergoing the initial processes of the formulation of Development Plans: targeting supporting infrastructure, Schools/colleges outreach, coach (team) development, and Business skill acquisition (via workshops the first of which (Business Development) happened on Thursday June 15th. A performance coaching workshop led by ES Coach Paul Carter also happened on Tuesday June 14th. The main aim of all of these initiatives/workshops is to increase player numbers (juniors/adults), encourage clubs to take responsibility for their own development and to grow good, well rounded, trained and developed coaches.

We are also collecting good “case studies” and have them available if you are interested. Richard Pilcher from Felsted School and Robert McKill (and Vicky Te Velde) from Walthamstow have produced a club study and a Squash 101/Junior Squash Academy case study – please use the contact details below if you would like them sent?

Finally, as every year I would welcome anyone (club/coach/centre) who would be interested in a targeted and focused Development Plan, we (in Essex) as part of the South East Regional Development program have learnt much and would love to share this knowledge with you? Who knows, now that Squash is to be a “show sport” at the Youth Olympic Games in 2018 – we could be on the edge of a major surge in our sport!

Contact: Chris Vine – Essex Development Officer & Director CSV Consultants Ltd (m) 07768 67044, email: chrisakv@btinternet.com



Essex Squash & Racketball Association



Summer 2017 season The summer 2017 season is underway with {32} teams entered, one more than last year. With tree teams resting over the summer

League Management System - Online

On line LMS system is now up and running with very few issues

Men's League Results for 2016/17

Essex S.R.A Summer 2016

Premier Champions – *Redbridge Orange*
Division 1E Champions– *Kingswood #2*
Division 1W Champions – *Connaught Cappuccino*
Division 2E Champions – *Clements #2*
Division 2W Champions – *Bishop Stortford Panthers*

Essex S.R.A. Autumn 2016

Premier Champions – *Bishop Stortford*
Division 1E Champions – *Kingswood #3*
Division 1W Champions - *Connaught Cappuccino*
Division 2E Champions – *Clements #2*
Division 2W Champions - *Bishop Stortford Swifts*

Essex S.R.A. Spring 2017

Premier Champions – *Kingswood*
Division 1E Champions – *Maldon #2*
Division 1W Champions - *Epping #2*
Division 2E Champions – *David Lloyd (Gidea Park) #2*
Division 2W Champions – *Woodford Wells Apollo*

Essex ladies' League

Essex Ladies' League-

There were 2 divisions in Autumn15 and Spring16, with 14 teams in the autumn and 12 in the spring; the current Summer League has 11 teams in 2 divisions. **All of these numbers are slightly DOWN compared to last year.** Congratulations to Marconi (now Hamptons) who won all the year's Division 1 titles (Summer 16, Autumn 16, Spring 17).

County Teams-

The senior team under the guidance of Sarah Neller finished 6th in the Premier League – an excellent result as several top players were missing. The team which played consisted of Elise Lazarus, Sophie Lemom, Sarah Neller, Jackie Gregory and Michelle Higgins.

Neither the Over-40 team under Kerry Munn nor the Over-50 side under Jackie Gregory reached National Finals stage this season:- overall the Over-40s (captained by Kerry Munn) won 1 and lost 3 matches, while the Over-50s (captained by Jackie Gregory) won two matches and lost two.

County Closed Championship-

This was held at Kingswood in January 2017 – a welcome return to the Essex squash scene. Alice Green emerged as County Champion, Michelle Higgins won the Over-40 event and Lisa Tolhurst the Over-50s.

Juniors-

Essex juniors (boys and girls) are run by the Junior Committee and are fully reported elsewhere. However the county's 2 outstanding girls - now aged 16 - are still producing some excellent results. Elise Lazarus won the British Closed Under-17 title in November, with Alice Green as runner-up, then Elise went on to reach the final of the British Open Under-17 competition in January. Both Elise and Alice have been selected to represent England in the World Junior Championships in New Zealand in July 2017.

(1) Ladies' League winners Marconi (Hamptons Sport & leisure) was victorious all year!

Ladies Essex S.R.A Summer 2016

Division 1 Champions– *Marconi*
Division 2 Champions – *Connaught #A*

Ladies Essex S.R.A. Autumn2 016

Division 1 Champions – *Marconi*
Division 2 Champions – *Epping #2*

Ladies Essex S.R.A. Spring 2017

Division 1 Champions – *Hamptons Sport & leisure*
Division 2 Champions – *Connaught #2*



(2) Alice Green and Elise Lazarus

See my ladies' report. Summary:-

- Elise was runner-up in British Open Under-17 Championships in January. A superb achievement - first time for some years that an English girl has reached a British Open final
- Elise won the British Closed Under-17 title in November, with Alice as runner-up
- Both girls were selected to represent England in the World Junior Championships in New Zealand in July

(3) Masters Results

World Masters in Johannesburg (September 2016):- Only three Essex players entered – all women. Lauren Briggs (Connaught) was runner-up in the 35-39 age group, losing to American (and former South African) Natalie Grainger 1/3 in the final. At the other end of the age scale, Barbara Sanderson (DW Fitness Brentwood) won the 75-79 group, while Joan Witton (Redbridge) finished in third position.

British Open Masters (June 2017)

Lauren Briggs won the 35-39 age group

Secretary's Report

Committee –Six meetings were held in; July, October, November, January, February and May. The average attendance was 4 from 11. The committee comprised 9 elected members but there is provision for 12 members... We averaged 4 per meeting.

The meetings were held at Kingswood. Minutes have been published on the website after approval at the following meeting. All members not retiring are willing to stand again and have been proposed and seconded en- block.

Any number of nominations can be made for the twelve places, which can be made up to 7 days in advance of the AGM or else the remaining positions can be filled at the AGM. Your committee comprised the following persons for this last year season 2016/2017:

Chairman & ES Council Delegate	David Neller
Treasurer & Deputy Chairman	Elaine Oddie
County Secretary	Geoff Went (Volunteers?)
Junior Representative & Junior Chair	(New) Matthew White
Referee & Marking Coordinator	Sue Woodhouse
County Development Officer & Coaching	Chris Vine
League Secretary	Geoff Went
Ladies Coordinator	Barbara Sanderson
Men's Senior Captain	David Lazarus
Inter-County Coordinator	Mark Kirkman
Media Secretary	Vacant (Vicky te Velde)
Website	David & Philippa Neller
Masters/Off Peak League Secretary	TBD - NEW
Racketball Manager	Vacant



Essex Squash & Racketball Association



We intend to ask the meeting to concur the new members and re-elect the remainder of the existing committee en bloc.

Affiliation – England Squash keeps us updated with the progress of club’s affiliation each month. We are expected to withdraw clubs from our county league if they are not affiliated and only ESR affiliated clubs are affiliated to Essex.

Springhealth Leisure unfortunately went in liquidation and ceased trading in January 2017. Additionally there is a pending closure of two courts from Epping. The committee made representation to the new owners of the club and the local council, this is still in discussion with ES & SE.

Current affiliated clubs are:-

1	Clements Squash Club	12	Redbridge Squash Club
2	Club Kingswood	13	The Connaught Club
3	Earls Colne Recreation Club	14	Tilbury Squash Club
4	Epping Squash Club	15	University of Essex Sports Centre
5	Halstead Leisure Centre	16	Walthamstow Cricket Tennis and Squash Club
6	Frinton Lawn Tennis Club	17	Woodford Wells Squash Club
7	DWF Brentwood	18	Hamptons Sport and Leisure
8	David Lloyd Gidea park	19	Saffron Waldron Squash Club
9	Lexden Squash Club	20	Redwings Squash Club
10	Old Brentwood’s Squash Club	21	Off the wall Squash
11	Ongar Squash and Rackets	22	Park Drive Squash & Fitness
		23	Bishop Stortford

Leagues

The men’s leagues have stabilised with 16 clubs playing with many additional teams from just one club.

The ladies have declined and now have only two divisions.

Again this last season Racketball league has not been continued..

League Management System (LMS) – The LMS is now very well established with very few issues. We are now in our fourth session with the system.

The LMS also includes a very comprehensive on-line shop for all squash and sports equipment at discounted prices, and can be linked from the Essex SRA website www.essexsra.com

Website- www.essexsra.com has continued to offer an easy access to county information.

Updating requires much dedication to maintain up to date information. More information to the county secretary and Chairman will result in more updating.

There are county team manager’s pages which can provide up to date reports if provided by the team managers. Also we have an active Facebook page which is updated at regular intervals

League Structure for Spring/Autumn 2016/17 seasons

Due to a reduction in Premier teams it was proposed and agreed that the Premier Division would align with the lowers leagues. i.e. that there would now be an Autumn/Spring and Summer sessions.

This would mean that no playoffs would be required and the winners of Div#1 EAST and DIV #1 WEST would gain automatic promotion to premier.

Team Start times

Due to some club facilities closing early there had been incidences of teams arriving late and the clubs shutting at 10:30. There was a proposal to:

1. Impose a (5) point penalty if only two players had arrived late from away team
2. Impose a (5) point penalty for a late start time no matter what the reason

At this time the agreement would be to monitor the next the next season activities on the designated start times to see if there is still an issue.



Essex Squash & Racketball Association



Away Team Contribution

For the 2016/17 season, the contribution to the home team from the away team will remain at £35 per match.

Essex Closed Championships

This was scheduled for the 21st January 2017 and was a successful tournament enjoyed by all.

This tournament was a first as the categories were available for the Essex Closed bookable using the On-line league management system

It is proposed is to hold the Essex Closed on 20th & 21st January 2018, venue TBD

Player Rankings

The Player rankings are now available via the inline LMS. This has promoted much interest.

Essex SRA Referee & Marking

For the 2016/2017 season so far only one R&M Workshop has been run in Essex which is very disappointing

Walthamstow SC had (7) candidates and (2) were successful in obtaining Club Grade Referees status

I would urge all clubs to run these workshops regularly as we have all become very rusty about the rules, especially with the interpretation of the rule changes as well. It is important that all candidates attempt the exam after attending the workshop as this is a very effective way of reinforcing the knowledge of the rules obtained from the workshop!!

I look forward to holding a workshop at your club in the 2017/2018 season.

The current version of the rules is the 2014 edition updated/revised in January 2015

The Rules can be downloaded from the website.

http://www.worldsquash.org/ws/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/150601_Rules-of-Singles-Squash-2014-V2014-03.pdf

Please contact Sue Woodhouse if your club would like to host a workshop and as Sue covers eight Counties, is kept very busy, early booking would be very helpful.

These workshops are able to include juniors (aged Under 16). However a dedicated bespoke U16 Junior Workshop is also available on request.

Good Luck for the coming season

Sue Woodhouse Tel: 0208 505 7094 email: sueden41@yahoo.co.uk



Successful School Squash!! – Felsted School & Richard Pilcher Case Study - April 2017



Richard Pilcher started coaching squash at Felsted School (Essex) in Oct 2014 as a volunteer assistant to the Level 1 coach (semi-retired staff member) Alisdair Thompson. Alisdair had started a club night at the school termed “Friends of Felsted” and introduced squash activities and games sessions in the senior school as he started to rejuvenate the squash offering. Alisdair retired in July 2014. Richard, after taking his level one coaches course, took over the delivery and development of squash at the school from that point on and has progressed the sport to a stage where the (2) courts are very busy both in the evening, after school and during the day. He is assisted in this effort by one of the teachers at the school, David Smith, who is a Level 1 coach and current Essex age group player with many years’ playing experience.

Richard’s love of the sport, enthusiasm and passion comes across when he starts to describe the development journey from those formative days in 2014. In the early days there were people (both adults and juniors) that expressed an interest in playing but had no established pathway or structure to follow. Clearly in order to get meaningful progression and formally establish the sport in the school as a part of curriculum delivery changes had to be made. Due to his persuasive and encouraging nature it wasn’t long before this happened and the school began to realize how potentially quickly the sport could reach a higher profile in the mainstream sporting environment and a Development Plan was drawn up.

The junior squash development program really started to “take off” in the 12-18 month period from Oct 2015 to 2016. He passed his Level 2 coaches award and in the Sept of that year (2015) Richard started a full program of activities for pupils in the preparatory school as well as the senior school. He is paid by a mixture of the schools, parents and players working 30-35 hours per week. His focus is mainly on squash but he also has involvement with rugby and girls’ cricket.

In the academic year 2015-2016, the school started to play friendly/competitive matches against other schools and the Off The Wall Squash Academy. Pupils also participated in the Independent Association of Preparatory Schools (IAPS) National Squash Tournament. Pupils also continued to play in the National Schools Competition and other open events. At the end of 2016 season 3 players Abdulla Akbar (U15), Jessica Baxter (U13) and Max Watts (U13) were selected to play for Essex. Abdulla the schools top boy player won the Essex Junior Grand Prix title (U15) and Jessica was runner up (U13 girls). They have now been joined in development squads at U-11 and U-13 level by 5 other players: Ben Bushell, Austin Kershaw, Tom Hart, Olly Hart and George Sweeting.

During the 2016/2017 school year Jessica has won the Girls Intercounty National Team Trophy with Essex in January and the Gent Cup as girls’ national champion at the IAPS tournament in April. She, Max and Abdullah have played in other events for Essex and taken part and been well placed in the County Open & Closed Competitions. George and Jess also lead the Essex Junior Squash Grand Prix standings as at April. Ben Bushell was plate runner up at IAPS in the U-11 category. Players new to the game also took part in the squash section of the Essex Games. A full program of school matches and participation in National Schools Competition continued.

In this Academic Year already the longer-term effects of the program are starting to show and adult participation numbers have grown from 15 in (Dec 2015 to 42 regular players Feb 2017) Junior numbers not surprisingly have also dramatically increased from 20 (Dec 2015 to 66 (Feb 2017) – testament to the great effect and enthusiastic, determined, passionate and well organized coach can make.

His development focus going forward for the short term is to focus on girl and female player participation growth and he will be utilizing the assistance of top girl player Jessica Baxter to act as a positive role model for those girls who in the past have seen squash as a “boys’ only sport”. The more experienced players will also start to focus on competitions above the Grand Prix level.



Richard believes for school's squash to be successful the following are essentials:

- Key to have a structure and pathways for performance and participation development
- Introduce internal leagues/ladders for all age groups. Provide trophies and awards for winners and most improved players.
- Implementation of Off The Wall Squash Awards to provide players with measurable challenges and rewards for progress.
- Link in with other schools to give competitive opportunities at the right level
- Expose as many to the sport as possible kids/teachers/parents/adults etc.
- Link with the club "Friends of Felsted" – parents who used to play squash encouraged back into the game as their children now play
- Develop a "squash community" including all ages who act as role models for the younger ones
- Include all standards in some form of match play to widen the base and develop depth. This can be internal as well as external.
- A Driver is essential! Their sole focus should be squash.
- Promote the better players and increase their profile. This also helps to emphasize the importance of the sport in and to the school. Use newsletters, Twitter and Facebook.
- Build a link with other development partners (locally and regionally) and play lots of friendly matches! ie Essex Junior Squash and Off The Wall Squash Academy.
- A flexible attitude is essential in terms of dealing with all the academic demands of the school and non-curricular and curriculum usage
- Support from sports management at school and parents.
- Well maintained, clean and warm courts.

In the future Richard would like to see the school qualify for the main draw of the England Squash Schools National Champs consistently, get more girls playing on a regular basis, and continue to increase the profile of the sport in the school.

Clearly a pretty successful last two to three years! – if anyone would like to speak to Richard about how this has all happened and some of the key points and detail please feel free to contact him via email on rdpilcher@gmail.com or via phone on 07803 702 934/01371 822 902.



Chris Vine – Essex Squash Development –



Junior Report

The 2016/17 Season has been extremely hard work for the enthusiastic, dedicated volunteers that make up the Essex Junior Squash committee.

We have continued to build on a structure that has seen the introduction of a increased number of new juniors to Essex Squash playing inter county and Essex GP events.

County Trials – Open to any young player who would be eligible to play for the county that has not previously been involved. 4 trials were held during the season, promising players are directed to either to the County Squads or Development Squads. The 2016/2017 season saw our trials identify an additional 25+ players for development training.

Development Squads – We have held 4 training squads at 4 different clubs around the county aimed at supporting and encouraging those players who show potential but are not quite ready for county training.

County Squads – We have held 4 main training squads and now have a total of 125 juniors involved in county coaching/training from which our Inter County teams are selected..

Grand Prix Series – Now completing its 3rd season, this series has gone from strength to strength with 8 events around the county aimed at giving players from school year 10 and below their first taste of competitive squash. The success of this competition has meant that we will again run 7 events next season. This year 81 juniors took part across all 8 rounds. Series winners for 2016/17 were: GYr6 Amelie Brooke, GYr8 Lara Newton, GYr10 Daisy Newton, BYr6 James Sydenham, BYr8 George Sweeting and BYr10 Lewis Dumas. The prize for these winners will be a 2 hour training session with World No. 55 Ben Coleman.

Essex Junior Closed was held in September with 97 competitors, a 24% increase over last year's tournament. Girl's winners were U11 Renitha Srin dran, U13 Hannah Morley, U15 Aliza Sheikh and U17 Eleanor White whilst Boys titles went to U11 Alex Banhidai, U13 Yusuf Sheikh, U15 Oliver Green, U17 Harry Kitchens and U19 Aaron Allpress.

Essex Junior Open – saw an increase of 25% in entrants from last season with 124 players entered from 10 counties. Essex victories went to GU11 Renitha Srin dran, BU11 Alex Banhidai, GU13 Hannah Morley, BU13 Stanley Sykes and BU15 Oliver Green.

Inter- County Competition/Trophy Finals - With the increased number of players available to EJS we were able to field an additional 2 teams this season compared to last season's 9 with some notable successes coming from our girls teams. In the National Finals our U13A team came runners up whilst our GU17 team finished 3rd. In the Trophy finals our GU13B team won, whilst our GU15 team finished runners-up. A magnificent effort!

Inter-County Friendlies – 4 events took place involving Essex, Kent, Surrey and Middlesex. Essex had winners in all U11, U13, U15 and U17 categories during the course of the season. These matches have provided much needed competition for players on the fringe of the main inter-county squads and a further programme is planned for next season.

National Rankings – England Squash are undergoing a process of upgrading the way rankings are created but at the last count Essex had 72 players in the top 100 of their respective categories, an increase of 21% over last season.

This season also saw the continued growth of two of our most respected junior girls with Elise Lazarus and Alice Green representing England in the European Junior Team Championships with both girls featuring extensively in the team's U17 European title win. Further honours were bestowed on these two players when it was announced they had both been selected for the England team to play at the World Junior Team Championships in New Zealand on the 12th July 2017. Congratulations to both these players!



Essex Squash & Racketball Association



Sponsorship & Funding – This season has seen a continued improvement of EJS Players nationally and this has without doubt been helped by the monies invested by two sponsors and other initiatives for 2016/2017. Early discussions with The Physiotherapy Practice in Colchester resulted in a Silver package deal. Later in the year and following a competitive challenge match where a group of 9 EJS Girls took on Lloyds Squash Club the event resulted in a Platinum sponsorship package from Mills Smith Insurance Group. Our 200 Club initiated at the beginning of last season has given us a steady and consistent revenue stream to help backup the sponsorship programme. We were also successful in a funding request to England Squash via the East Regional Forum that saw us receive a grant of £1726 towards Player Development, Coach Development and Fund raising.

As a result of this sponsorship and funding we have been able to enter more teams in the national finals as well as start a Schools Initiative Programme, the first of which has taken place at Walthamstow Squash Club. This programme has been successful enough to engage 3 new schools in the area. It is hoped that we will be able to roll out further such initiatives following discussions with Essex Coaches.

2016/2017 has been a hugely successful season for Essex Junior Squash as our teams, activities and presence continue to grow. Media interest has seen our website www.essexjuniorsquash.com go from strength to strength. Our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/essexjuniorsquash) and Twitter accounts (www.twitter.com/essexjrsquash) have had in excess of 80,000 hits in the last year and we continue to receive publicity in various local newspapers in various districts in Essex. 2017/2018 will see a further increase in number of players at Inter County and Development training; an increase in the number of teams competing at National Inter County level; the continued growth of a six counties GP series; a stronger and consolidated Essex GP series and the continued success of our players at England National Events.

The Committee of Essex Squash will continue to look at growing the sport in our County as well as representing Essex to the highest level nationally.
David Harris - Essex Junior Squash Chairman

Contributions

All Elected Committee Members

Prepared & Edited

David Neller
Geoff Went

Chairman
County Secretary & Men's League Manager

Essex Squash & Racketball Association