



Cheshire County Badminton Association

Cheshire Chat – AGM Edition 2024

AGM 2024 Edition

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Notice is hereby given that the 66th Annual General Meeting of the Cheshire County Badminton Association will be held in the Function Suite at the **Hinderton Arms Hotel, Chester High Road, Neston, Wirral, CH64 7TA** on Wednesday 10th July 2024 commencing at 7.15 p.m.

Agenda

- 1. President's Welcome**
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting – 28th June 2023**
- 4. Matters Arising**
- 5. To receive and adopt the Secretary's Report for the 2023/2024 season**
- 6. To receive and adopt the Accounts for the year ended 30th April 2024 and to agree the affiliation fee for 2024/2025**
- 7. To receive and adopt the Match Secretary's Report for the 2023/2024 season**
- 8. To receive and adopt the Tournament Secretary Report for the 2023/2024 season**
- 9. To receive and adopt the Masters' Secretary's Report for the 2023/2024 season**
- 10. Affiliation Fees**

CCBA
Badminton England.

- 11. To confirm appointment of Cheshire Delegates on Badminton England Council**

Representative

Brenda Andrew

- 12. Appointment of Independent Examiner**

Independent Examiner

Jill Jackson

- 13. Election of Officers and Members of Council**

The following have been proposed and seconded:

Chairman	Karl Bergh
Secretary	Doreen Francey
Treasurer	Karl Bergh
Registration Secretary	Vacancy
Match Secretary	Ben Woodward
Tournament Co-ordinator	Alan Nottingham
Masters' Secretary	Derek Neary
Website Manager	Kay Vickers
Child Welfare Officer	Emma Hilton
Chair of Selectors	Richard Morrissey

14. Election of President and Vice Presidents

The following have been proposed and seconded:

President	Mr Roger Ewing
Vice Presidents	Mrs B Andrew, J Berry, P Mascarenhas, D Potter, R Westmorland, C W Evans, D Sumner and Mrs B Hickson.

15. Presentation of Awards

Marjorie Bryce-Smith Trophy
Arthur Evans Memorial Trophy

Minutes of 2023 AGM

Minutes of the 65th Annual General Meeting of Cheshire County Badminton Association held on Wednesday 28th June 2023 at the Hinderton Arms, Neston, commencing at 7.15 p.m.

1. President's Welcome

Mr Ewing welcomed everyone to the 65th Annual General Meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs K Vickers, Mrs B Andrew, Miss B Hickson, Mrs A Minihan and Mr I Thomas.

3. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held in June 2022

The minutes of the AGM held on 8th June 2022 had been circulated and it was proposed, seconded and agreed, that they be signed as a true record.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. To receive and adopt the Secretary's Report for the 2022/2023 season

It was proposed by Council, seconded and agreed that the Secretary's report be adopted.

6. To receive and adopt the Accounts for the year ended 30th April 2023 and to agree the affiliation fee for 2023/2024

The Treasurer had circulated copies of the Accounts and asked if there were any questions.

The Accounts at present were unaudited.

It was proposed, seconded and agreed that the Accounts be adopted.

7. To receive and adopt the Match Secretary's Report for the 2022/23 season

It was proposed, seconded and agreed, that the report be adopted.

8. To receive and adopt the Tournament Secretary's Report for the 2022/2023 season

The report had been prepared by Mrs Jan Bergh and was adopted.

9. To receive and adopt the Master's Secretary's Report for the 2022/2023 season

It was proposed, seconded, and agreed that the report be adopted.

10. County Affiliation Fees**CCBA**

It was proposed, seconded and agreed that the Cheshire County fee remain un-changed and maintained at the pre-covid levels of £4.25 per adult member and £1.10 per junior member.

Badminton England

These fees will be advised by BE in due course.

11. To confirm appointment of Cheshire Delegates on Badminton England Council

The appointment of Mrs Brenda Andrew was confirmed.

12. Appointment of Independent Examiner

It was understood that Mrs Jill Jackson was willing to continue in the role and it was agreed that she should act as our Independent Examiner. Mr Bergh undertook to contact her to confirm the appointment.

13. Election of Officers and Council Members

The following individuals had been nominated by Council and were willing to stand.

Chairman	Mr Karl Bergh
Secretary	Mrs Doreen Francey
Treasurer	Mr Karl Bergh
Registration Secretary	Vacancy
Tournament Co-ordinator	Mr Alan Nottingham
Masters Secretary	Mr Derek Neary
Match Secretary	Mr Ben Woodward
Website Manager	Mrs Kay Vickers
Child Welfare Officer	Miss Emma Hilton
Chair of Selectors	Mr Richard Morrissey

14. Election of President and Vice Presidents

Mr Bergh proposed, seconded by Mr Westmorland, that Mr Roger Ewing should continue as our President and this was agreed unanimously.

It had been proposed that Mr Colin Evans should be appointed as a Vice-President in recognition of all that he had done for junior coaching over the years and this was agreed. It was also proposed that David Sumner be appointed as a Vice-President in recognition of his services to Crewe & District BL. Both were proposed, seconded and it was agreed, that all the other Vice-Presidents should be re-elected en bloc as follows:-

Mrs B Andrew, J Berry, Mrs J Houston, P Mascarenhas, D Potter, R Westmorland and Mrs B Hickson

15. Presentation of Awards

Marjorie Bryce Smith Trophy - Awarded to Ruth Raiswell

Arthur Evans Memorial Trophy - Awarded to Gavin Simpson

Lifetime Achievement Award – Roger Ewing

16. Any Other Business

It was reported that the Wirral Sports Awards were taking place in October. This was an opportunity to put forward anyone in the badminton fraternity for an award. The Wirral Badminton League was affiliated to the forum.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.40 p.m.

Secretary's Report

Where have the last twelve months gone?

Sadly, over the last twelve months CCBA has lost two of its past officials - Mrs Jackie Houston, who was a past Match Secretary and Selector, and John Anderson, County Coach, and we express our grateful thanks to them both for the contribution they made during their time in office. Our thoughts are with their families as they continue to come to terms with their loss.

As is the usual situation, most of the County's activities are covered comprehensively by other officers on Council so there is not a lot left for me to report.

We have been able to hold some CCBA meetings over Zoom this year and have managed a couple of face to face meetings, albeit with low attendance. The last meeting finished at 10.40 p.m. so we must have had a lot of useful discussion!

Once again Derek Neary has been working hard co-ordinating the Masters group. We thank Derek most sincerely for all his efforts on behalf of the County.

We welcomed Ben Woodward onto Council last year as our Match Secretary and Ben has been working hard. Unfortunately, the County teams have not had a very successful season but we look forward with confidence and hope that next season we will reap some rewards from the hard work put in by the team players and the coaches. Good Luck Ben.

Grateful thanks must also go to Gavin Simpson and his team for their efforts in developing our Juniors. We must always look to the future and Gavin is doing a great job in that direction.

The League Representatives play an important part in the County's affairs and again thanks must go to that group of people for their contribution to the meetings which is very much appreciated. David Sumner is standing down this year as the Crewe League Representative and we thank David most sincerely for his contribution to Council meetings over the years! David is now a CCBA Vice-President so I am sure he will be welcomed back to Council meetings from time to time when he can manage to attend.

We must express our appreciation to Kay Vickers who, despite a very hectic personal working schedule, still manages to maintain the website. Ben Woodward has received some training from Kay and he is now able to upload items onto the website relating to match reports etc. The website is an important tool and vitally important in sharing badminton news. Please let us have any badminton related items which you feel would be of interest and we will try and get them uploaded onto the website.

The wonderful game of badminton is key to why we meet and plan badminton for the future and long may this enthusiasm continue.

Sadly, Mrs Annie Minihan has resigned as the Registrations Secretary for personal reasons. Annie has been doing a great job over a number of years and we wish her well going forward. We do now have a vacancy for Registrations Secretary if anyone is interested in taking on this role.

As I have previously stated, the County owes a great deal of gratitude to Karl Bergh for all the work he does as Chairman and Treasurer and in other areas. I can categorically state that without Karl the County would have serious problems. Thank you again Karl for your continued dedication and enthusiasm.

Last, but not least I would, on behalf of the County, like to thank once again our President, Roger Ewing, for his contribution to the County's affairs. He always has a very sensible approach to all problems.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all an enjoyable summer and we look forward to the resumption of badminton next season!

Doreen Francey

Hon Secretary

Treasurer's Report

It is encouraging to see that our Leagues are recovering from the effects of the covid years, but the landscape does look quite different with new and restructured competitions starting to gain increased participation. I am pleased to report that our junior county is also recovering and there is some great work being done by junior county, our coaches and our junior clubs.

At senior county level, our three teams have enjoyed a full calendar and the master's group has seen a return to normal activity levels.

In general terms, whilst our cash flow remains positive, and we have returned a small surplus of £37.65, which is not a surprise, as we have seen costs rise across the board. It does however benefit from a covid provision brought forward of £650.00, which would otherwise have shown a loss in the year.

As in every set of accounts, there are several varying factors that have brought us to this position, some predicted and some not, so I will do my best to outline these for you.

Income

We have seen a continuing improvement in income from membership fees (County Fees) but at £3,640.74, it is still considerably lower than the pre-covid levels that saw this peak at £4,668.00. This is a product of falling numbers within our Leagues and it is thought that we may not ever get back to those levels.

Therefore, predicting future membership income must remain conservative.

During the covid pandemic, we took a prudent view and made a general provision of £2,000.00 to cover for the expected downturn in membership income. Consequently, we have fed another £650.00 in this year with the remaining balance carried over into next year. This provision was funded primarily from the return of previously paid BE entry fees following the cancellation and cutting short of the 20/21 ICC campaign plus our reduced expenditure during the covid lockdown period.

Tournament income, as has always been the case, is once again a major and crucial contributor to our finances. This season we have run three tournaments and hosted two BE circuit tournaments, both of which have seen exceptional entry levels and produced a significant surplus of £2,544.78. This, in total, is very similar to last year, despite fluctuating returns across the three tournaments. I must repeat the same thing each year in that these tournaments are difficult to predict in terms of their viability but if recent years are anything to go by, the Bronze and Silver tournaments are very much a fixture within the players calendar and all the feedback is that they enjoy them and look to play whenever they can.

We must acknowledge Alan Nottingham, our Tournament Referee and Jan Bergh, our Tournament Secretary, who, where once again asked by BE to organise and run the U15 Derbyshire Gold tournament at Derbyshire University back in April 2024, with a county fee of £250.00, after expenses, being received from BE for doing so.

There is no doubt in my mind that the continued success of these tournaments is testament of how well they are run and administered. Huge thanks must go to Alan and Jan, both of whom work extremely hard to prepare for and deliver these tournaments and we are indebted to their dedication and professionalism.

Bank interest has shown a real upturn which mirrors the improvement in interest rates within the general economy. We have also sold our 'free issue' Lloyds shares for a nominal £59.02

Shuttle sales through the County Shuttle Scheme have remained healthy as we have seen the addition of several new clubs taking advantage of the competitive prices and excellent service provided. So, the word is getting out there! Once again, thank you so much to Helen Williams for doing a sterling job holding stocks and continuing to supply clubs in the Chester area.

So, income this year is marginally up on last year, at £8,075.71 and it can clearly be seen that without the crucial contribution made by our tournament team, then we wouldn't be able to finance our activities from membership fees alone.

Expenditure

Generally, expenditure in the period has been a little bit volatile and somewhat un-predictable but we do benefit from a tight rein being kept on the purse strings.

Meeting expenses are down again, as we have had to cancel a few due to the low numbers available to attend. We have again used zoom on occasions, but we always prefer to hold face-to-face meetings wherever possible.

Coaching & Development expenditure has been active this year with £525.00 of financial support being provided to part fund seven new coaches taking their early steps onto the coaching ladder. We haven't needed to make a contribution from this year's accounts as we have a Coaching and Development fund built up over recent years of £2,966.00 and have drawn down the £525.00 from that fund.

We are actively looking to seek out opportunities to support our clubs and coaching groups to increase participation and to assist with the funding of development projects, at all levels. In doing so, we would then actively hope to lever in support from BE wherever possible. Consequently, we do have a Coaching and Development fund of £2,441.00 being carried forward and welcome applications for support.

The cost of the Senior County Squad has significantly increased from last year and this can be put down partly to rising costs from BE but mainly to the steep rise in hotel costs for our 1st team, who have three weekends away per year and then all three teams at the season's finale weekend, where all teams are required to participate over a Saturday and Sunday. It is always difficult to budget at this time of year, as we never actually know where our teams will be allocated to play their matches.

The overall cost of the Master's Group has reduced slightly on last year, partly due to the dropping of our O50's team from the County Championships as we knew we wouldn't have enough ladies to complete our fixtures. Again, we have seen a rise in court and catering costs as well as BE entry costs but have done everything we can to resist a rise in players match fees.

What's more, unlike other counties, we don't make a player charge for the County Challenge event in January each year in recognition of the significant cost that each player will incur in travelling and hotel accommodation. This has cost the group £1,374.00 this year. Whilst this is down on last year because of our reluctant decision not to field an O50's team, it does reflect an increase in the 'per player per match' fee levied by BE

We feel it is important to continue to subsidise the cost of hosting home matches as an economical match fee to cover our costs would be far too expensive and considered prohibitive.

The other disappointing cost was the loss brought forward from the masters practice sessions, mainly due to the tail-off in interest towards the end of the season. Rather disappointingly, this has cost the group £119.00. Following experience gained last year, we did review and cancel the frequency of practices during the season and perhaps this continued tail-off reflects the busy playing season.

We are pleased to see the re-establishment of the Baxter Trophy this season and the contribution towards the cost of running that competition was £146.00.

The rise in Miscellaneous costs reflect the one off purchase of our President's Lifetime Achievement Award plus the cost to refurbish and remake the base to the Marjorie Bryce Smith Trophy.

Summary

The overall result is a small surplus to be carried forward of £37.65.

The budget for next season is as difficult as ever to predict with any real certainty. However, with the usual sprinkling of guestimates based on past experience, we are anticipating a loss of just over £500.00, but I always hope that with careful management of our finances we can find ways to mitigate and improve upon the predicted outcome.

Recommendation

Once again and in support of our clubs and the membership, we do feel that we can continue to maintain our County Fees at the pre-pandemic levels of £4.25 for an Adult Play Member and £1.30 for a Junior Play Member.

Karl Bergh

County Treasurer

Match Secretary's Report

We were looking forward to a good season ahead for our 3 senior teams. Cheshire 1 were relegated into the Championship last season so were preparing for a strong year and Cheshire 2 & 3 now competing in the same division - Division 2 North. Cheshire 2 had eyes on promotion and Cheshire 3 were looking to remain in the division for next season.

Cheshire 1 - Championship

Cheshire's first weekend saw them playing Gloucestershire, Essex and Notts. These were 3 strong teams and resulted in some close games, but sadly, Cheshire only managed a win against Essex, where the score was 8-3, losing 7-4 to Gloucestershire and 8-3 to Notts

The second weekend however was far more successful, beating Lanarkshire 7-4, Sussex 6-5 and Yorkshire 9-2. Some really great performances from everyone, with the whole team having come out on top of some real monster battles! Bring on March and the final weekend...

The final county weekend was going to be a tough one.

With the two top teams to play, and unfortunately only running at half strength, with a few last-minute changes to the team, this was going to be a huge ask, particularly for Owen and James, both making their debut for the first team. The first match gave Cheshire a good start with a 7-4 win over Northumberland. The match against Lancashire was really close and could have gone either way, but sadly, Lancashire just sneaked a 6-5 win. The final match of the weekend was against Kent, the eventual winners of the division, they proved too strong, with Cheshire losing 8-3

This resulted in a mid-table finish, with some excellent performances all round, meaning that Cheshire 1 will be playing in the Championship again next year.

Round	Stage	No	Home - Away	Score
1	5		Cheshire 1 - Gloucestershire 1	4-7
7	33		Cheshire 1 - Essex 1	8-3
3	11		Cheshire 1 - Nottinghamshire 1	3-8
9	44		Cheshire 1 - Lanarkshire 1	7-4
6	28		Cheshire 1 - Sussex 1	6-5
5	22		Cheshire 1 - Yorkshire 2	9-2
8	39		Cheshire 1 - Northumberland 1	7-4
2	6		Cheshire 1 - Lancashire 1	5-6
4	17		Cheshire 1 - Kent 1	3-8

Match Results for 23/24

Championship

	Points	Played	Won	Draws	Lost	Rubbers	Games	Points
1 Kent 1	68	9	8	0	1	68 - 31	149 - 75	4326 - 3649
2 Lancashire 1	66	9	7	0	2	66 - 33	143 - 84	4353 - 3747
3 Lanarkshire 1	65	9	8	0	1	65 - 34	146 - 85	4342 - 3814
4 Nottinghamshire 1	57	9	5	0	4	57 - 42	127 - 97	4167 - 3789
5 Cheshire 1	52	9	5	0	4	52 - 47	120 - 109	4161 - 4062
6 Sussex 1	47	9	4	0	5	47 - 52	100 - 117	3631 - 3904
7 Yorkshire 2	46	9	3	0	6	46 - 53	98 - 116	3687 - 3883
8 Northumberland 1	38	9	2	0	7	38 - 61	87 - 135	3712 - 4148
9 Gloucestershire 1	33	9	2	0	7	33 - 66	79 - 143	3737 - 4286
10 Essex 1	23	9	1	0	8	23 - 76	64 - 152	3346 - 4180

Final league standings - Championship

Player Results – Championship:

Rank	Player	Won	Played	Games	Points
1	Rachel Vickers	12	18	25 - 15	789 - 663
2	Daniel Font	9	17	22 - 18	714 - 704
3	Sophie Taylor	9	18	21 - 21	776 - 782
4	Charlotte Forbes	9	18	19 - 21	696 - 690
5	Mike Roe	8	12	17 - 9	483 - 453
6	Jack Taylor	7	12	16 - 13	523 - 494
7	Ashleigh Mok	6	9	14 - 8	417 - 392
8	Matthew Nottingham	5	6	11 - 4	301 - 260
9	David Edgar	5	10	13 - 11	448 - 434
10	Claire Weaver	5	12	11 - 14	448 - 463
11	Richard Morrissey	5	13	14 - 16	536 - 565
12	Owen Edwards	2	6	6 - 9	267 - 269
13	Aaren SUM	1	3	2 - 5	116 - 131
14	Hayley Rogers	1	6	4 - 10	245 - 270
15	Dominic Ashton	0	0	0 - 0	0 - 0
16	Unknown male player	0	0	0 - 0	0 - 0
17	James Lin	0	2	1 - 4	72 - 102

Cheshire 2 & 3 - Division 2 North

Cheshire 2

The first match of the season saw Cheshire 2 playing Cheshire 3, with a resounding 10-1 win for the 2nd Team. This was followed by a 9-2 win against Yorkshire 2, giving them a great start. On the second weekend, Cheshire 2 played the two teams, who had finished the previous weekend ranked. A tough 10-1 loss against Lancashire 2 was softened by a great win at first men's doubles from Harry and Jon. An 8-3 loss against Isle of Man was a hard-fought game with 6 matches going the full distance!

After the first two weekends, the title challenge switched into a relegation battle with 5 teams having only a 6 point difference between them all.

Unfortunately, players missing from the 1st team for the final weekend meant that key players had to be pulled out of the 2nd team. Sadly, they were unable to secure a win in any of the last 3 matches, Cheshire came out with 7 points against Lancashire 3 and Lothian, meaning that they only needed 4 points against Yorkshire 5 in the final fixture to stay in the division.

After some long and tough games, Yorkshire 5 won the game 8-3, which meant that Cheshire 2 were relegated by a single point.

We will come back stronger next year with a promotion back to division 2 🤞

Match Results for 23/24 – Cheshire 2

Round	Stage	No	Home - Away	Score
4	16	Cheshire 2	- Cheshire 3	10-1
2	6	Yorkshire 4	- Cheshire 2	2-9
7	26	Lancashire 2	- Cheshire 2	10-1
1	2	Isle of Man 1	- Cheshire 2	8-3
3	10	Lancashire 3	- Cheshire 2	7-4
6	23	Lothian 1	- Cheshire 2	8-3
5	19	Cheshire 2	- Yorkshire 5	3-8

Rank	Player	Won	Played	Games	Points
1	Stephanie Rowarth	8	21	19 - 28	834 - 829
2	Owen Edwards	7	10	14 - 7	415 - 357
3	Jonathan Savory	6	14	16 - 19	663 - 661
4	Rachel Green	6	14	14 - 17	565 - 568
5	Jamie Noble	5	13	12 - 20	585 - 632
6	Alexandra Goodwin	5	14	12 - 20	580 - 621
7	Richard Morrissey	4	5	9 - 3	239 - 196
8	Harry Liver	4	9	11 - 12	435 - 426
9	Sammy Hutt	3	4	7 - 4	218 - 186
10	Oliver Harrington	2	5	6 - 8	250 - 269
11	Katelyn Harrington	1	6	5 - 11	289 - 320
12	Danny Chen	1	7	4 - 12	291 - 322
13	Unknown male player	0	0	0 - 0	0 - 0
14	Jenni Shaw	0	4	1 - 8	156 - 192

Player Statistics – Cheshire 2

Cheshire 3

After the first match against Cheshire 2, the 3rd team bounced back and put up a really strong fight against Yorkshire 5. Even though they lost 7-4, there were 3, very close, 3 set matches, all going against them, which could have made the result a very different story.

It was a “tough day at the office” for the 3rd team in their 2nd weekend! There were some very close rubbers, but unfortunately, they came out second best in both matches to Isle of Man 1 and Lancashire 2.

A few of the players gained their first senior caps during this weekend and everyone looked smart in their new shirts 🧡

After what had been a difficult season the 3rd team went into the final weekend with safety only really a mathematical possibility. They battled hard against Lothian, Yorkshire 4 and Lancashire 3 picking up 5 rubbers along the way, despite plenty of tight games and 3 setters, that did not go Cheshire's way! Unfortunately, that was not enough, leaving them to look forward to taking on the challenge next year to regain promotion 🧡

Match Results for 23/24 – Cheshire 3

Round	Stage	No	Home - Away	Score
4	16	Cheshire 2 - Cheshire 3	10-1	
6	24	Cheshire 3 - Yorkshire 5	4-7	
5	20	Cheshire 3 - Isle of Man 1	1-10	
3	12	Lancashire 2 - Cheshire 3	10-1	
1	4	Lothian 1 - Cheshire 3	10-1	
7	28	Yorkshire 4 - Cheshire 3	9-2	
2	8	Lancashire 3 - Cheshire 3	9-2	

Rank	Player	Won	Played	Games	Points
1	Jack Raiswell	3	15	10 - 27	642 - 753
2	Jamie Noble	2	4	5 - 4	172 - 168
3	David Humphreys	2	4	6 - 5	198 - 211
4	Ruth Flatman	2	6	4 - 10	224 - 279
5	Judith Peatman	2	9	6 - 15	346 - 392
6	Tom Clancy	2	9	5 - 16	326 - 420
7	Jennifer Moss	2	10	6 - 16	358 - 446
8	Wai Yee Ina Law	1	2	2 - 2	71 - 69
9	Oliver Harrington	1	4	3 - 7	161 - 200
10	Katelyn Harrington	1	8	3 - 14	273 - 356
11	Natasha Devbhandari	1	10	4 - 18	319 - 437
12	Danny Chen	0	3	3 - 6	167 - 170
13	Emma Hillesdon	0	4	1 - 8	135 - 189
14	Alistair Hawgood	0	4	0 - 8	127 - 171
15	Ewan Cook	0	6	1 - 12	171 - 265
16	Ben Woodward	0	14	2 - 28	489 - 620
17	Linh Ly	0	14	2 - 28	427 - 624

Player Statistics – Cheshire 3

Final league standings –
Division 2 North – Cheshire
2 and Cheshire 3

	Points	Played	Won	Draws	Lost	Rubbers	Games	Points
1 Lancashire 2	60	7	7	0	0	60 - 17	130 - 51	3573 - 3047
2 Isle of Man 1	48	7	5	0	2	48 - 29	106 - 81	3523 - 3233
3 Lancashire 3	45	7	4	0	3	45 - 32	103 - 79	3275 - 3249
4 Yorkshire 4	38	7	4	0	3	38 - 39	95 - 93	3456 - 3469
5 Lothian 1	38	7	4	0	3	38 - 39	95 - 92	3426 - 3435
6 Yorkshire 5	34	7	2	0	5	34 - 43	81 - 100	3260 - 3394
7 Cheshire 2	33	7	2	0	5	33 - 44	81 - 100	3342 - 3338
8 Cheshire 3	12	7	0	0	7	12 - 65	40 - 135	2791 - 3481

Unfortunately, after what has been a tough season for all 3 teams, Cheshire 2 and 3 were both relegated from Division 2 North. Cheshire 2 lost out in the final game of the season and went down by a single rubber! It could not have been any closer. Cheshire 1 finished comfortably mid table so will enjoy another season in the Championship.

It has been a challenging season in terms of players, with some of our top players busy playing internationally. We were also hit with injuries and late absences. This is evident in the number of different players used by each team, with 17 different players representing Cheshire 1 and 3 and 15 players representing the Cheshire 2. The lack of team consistency without doubt played a part in the struggle for results this season and is something that we need to rectify looking forward to next season.

Looking forward to 2024/25, all our senior teams will not doubt look to promotion, especially Cheshire 2 and 3 who would like to bounce straight back up, to where we feel they belong.

I would like to thank the selection committee for their work this season, where it has been extremely difficult to tie players down, they have always found solutions. I would also like to thank all the players who respond promptly and commit wholeheartedly to playing for and supporting our county.

Ben Woodward
Match Secretary

Tournament Secretary's Report

This season we ran the Senior County Championships as well as the Senior Bronze and Silver Tournaments.

They were run at Ellesmere Port Sports Village as usual these days and the levels of entries for both the Senior Bronze in December 2023 and the Senior Silver in January 2024 were very high thus enabling us to run two very competitive events.

County Championships September 2023

There was not a very big entry for this competition, and we did not run either singles event.

Open Doubles

There were some new faces in this event, but the final was a very competitive contest between long standing players. The winners of a good 3 set battle were Mike Roe and Jack Taylor.

Ladies Doubles

This event was played in one group of 5 pairs with some well contested matches. The match deciding the group was a competitive 3 set event won by Rachel Green and Sophie Taylor.

Mixed Doubles

This was a very competitive final contested by the two top seeded pairs of Mike Roe and Rachel Vickers (1) and Jack Taylor and Sophie Taylor (2) who were given a bit of a scare by Ben Woodward and Linh Ly at the group stage, 21-18 22-20. Mike Roe and Rachel Vickers were the eventual winners of a hard-fought and entertaining match, thereby retaining their title.

Event	Winners	Runners Up
Open Singles	Not contested	
Ladies Singles	Not contested	
Open Doubles	Mike Roe Jack Taylor	Dave Edgar Mike Simmons
Ladies Doubles	Rachel Green Sophie Taylor	Emma Hillesden Jennifer Szczepaniak Sloane
Mixed Doubles	Mike Roe Rachel Vickers	Jack Taylor Sophie Taylor

Senior Bronze December 2023

There was an entry of 123 players which emphasises the popularity of this tournament.

Open Singles

40 players entered this event and the standout match was the sem-final between Cheshire's Danny Chen and the number 1 seed Kishen Lee. Danny won the first set 21-17 and narrowly lost the second 22-20 before running out of steam. The event was won by Parth Mehta who was largely untroubled by his draw.

Ladies Singles

There were 5 players in this event which was dominated by Vivian Cheng who won without dropping a set or even being challenged.

Open Doubles

There were 29 pairs in this event which was very difficult to seed for a second year as, again, there were many overseas students representing Lancashire who were unknown to us.

Two of these unseeded pairs had a fairly easy route to the final where Yuming Ding and Yixuan Shen had a comfortable victory.

Ladies Doubles

There were only 9 pairs in 2 groups in this competition. The Cheshire pairing of Charlotte Forbes and Katie Harrington gave the number 2 seeds tough opposition at the group stages but lost 2 close sets with the Yorkshire pairing of Wanwimon Lloyd and Laura Wall going on to win the event.

Mixed Doubles

The final of the mixed was an all Lancashire affair with the third and fourth seeds having had a largely untroubled passage through. Vivian Cheng and Yixuan Shen, who had already won their previous events, won in two sets.

Event	Winners	Runners Up
Open Singles	Parth Mehta (Warwickshire)	Kishen Lee (Warwickshire)
Ladies Singles	Vivian Cheng (Lancashire)	Bodan Yang (Lancashire)
Open Doubles	Yuming Ding (Lancashire) Yixuan Shen (Lancashire)	Yu Sim Chiu (Lancashire) Wai Ming Choi (Lancashire)
Ladies Doubles	Wanwimon Lloyd (Yorkshire) Laura Wall (Yorkshire)	Rebecca Ashton (Lancashire) Jennifer Metcalfe (Lancashire)
Mixed Doubles	Vivian Cheng (Lancashire) Yixuan Shen (Lancashire)	Jennifer Metcalfe (Lancashire) Matthew Tolman (Lancashire)

Senior Silver January 2024

106 players but not very well supported by Cheshire representatives. This in stark contrast to the 30+ Lancashire players.

This tournament was played over 2 days with semi-finals and finals played on Sunday.

Open Singles

There were 5 Cheshire players in this event Aaren Sum being the only one to progress out of the group to the quarter finals. Mark Pratt beat the number 1 seed to reach the final but came up against the Bronze tournament winner Parth Mehta who added a second Cheshire title to his collection.

Ladies Singles

Tin Wing Raye Wan had a very easy route to the final but it became a little more difficult when she came up against Cheshire's only representative Charlotte Forbes. Charlotte fought back well to win the second set after losing the first relatively easily but unfortunately lost the match.

Open Doubles

Harry Liver and Jonathan Savory won their group only to come up against the number 2 seeds Alex Marritt and Mark Pratt, who went on to reach the final. This was a very hotly contested three set match, with the unseeded pair of Lawrence Li and Victor Pang coming out on top.

Ladies Doubles

The Cheshire pairing of Charlotte Forbes and Sophie Taylor unfortunately came across the third seeds in their group. It was an exciting and hard-fought match with Charlotte and Sophie eventually losing 15-21 24-22 21-18. Very unlucky. Derbyshire/Cheshire pair Sophie Brealey and Rachel Vickers lost in the semi-final to the eventual winners Lucy Brierley and Matilda Franklin

Mixed Doubles

This was a very competitive event with many close three set matches. One of those being the final, between the number one seeds, Jacob Weekes and Katherine Arksey and the unseeded pair Kar Hon Luu and Cici Lu, the seeded pair winning 21-19 13-21 21-18.

Event	Winners	Runners Up
Open Singles	Parth Mehta (Warwickshire)	Mark Pratt (Yorkshire)
Ladies Singles	Tin Wing Raye Wan (Nottinghamshire)	Charlotte Forbes (Cheshire)
Open Doubles	Lawrence Li (Warwickshire) Victor Pang (Essex)	Alex Marritt (Yorkshire) Mark Pratt (Yorkshire)
Ladies Doubles	Lucy Brierley (Nottinghamshire) Matilda Franklin (Nottinghamshire)	Abby Downing (Derbyshire) Cici Lu (Yorkshire)
Mixed Doubles	Jacob Weekes (Avon) Katherine Arksey (Yorkshire)	Kar Hon Luu (Lancashire) Cici Lu (Yorkshire)

These two senior tournaments are always busy and keenly supported with players responding well to our attempts to keep play going and appear to enjoy the atmosphere created. We hope that they will be as well supported in the 24/25 season, and we can continue to put on events that players can come to knowing that we do our best to give them a well-run and enjoyable tournament.

The Senior County Championships will be held on Saturday 28th September 2024. The date for the 2024 Senior Bronze is Saturday 7th December 2024 but as yet we do not have a date in January 2025 for the Senior Silver until the calendar is published in the next few weeks.

Jan Bergh

Tournament Secretary

Masters Secretary Report

The season got off to rather a difficult start with us having to withdraw our O65B team having already not entered a team at O50. In both cases it was due to a shortage of ladies. Across the board we nominated 81 gents but only 45 ladies which is a pattern repeated by every other county in the country. We still managed to field 6 teams in the Championship and of those nominated players we had 60 different players represent the county at Masters level. Nationally around 1500 players took part in the championship.

This season all our teams played in the Northern region which meant that we were competing against the very strong Roses counties and the highlight was provided by the O40s who went one better than last season and won their regional title. At finals weekend they were a couple of players short and were narrowly defeated in the semi-finals by Staffordshire but went on to narrowly defeat Devon to claim third place nationally. Congratulations to everyone who played in that team for a very successful season. At O45 and O60 age group Yorkshire are particularly strong and ended up as National champions whilst at O65 and O70 Lancashire are very strong, so we were less successful in those age groups. The O55s did manage a runner up spot but were some way behind a dominant Lancashire side. During the championship season there were 33 matches organised across the age groups and only two remained as not played though we did have to rearrange 4 matches.

The Masters County Challenge was held in the 2nd week of January as usual but for the first time everyone had to nominate their teams in November. This was to prevent late withdrawals as had happened the previous year and it was a successful strategy from the organisers, but it still doesn't prevent all those last-minute difficulties for the captains. We fielded 4 teams at Wolverhampton: the O40s won their division and are promoted to the Premiership, the O45s came a very close 2nd and so will probably remain in Div1, the O65s came 2nd in the Premiership which was a fantastic result and finally the O70s came 2nd in Div1 and so just missed out on promotion. Congratulations to all those teams. Meanwhile at Worcester we fielded an O50s team (mostly made up of O55 players) and an O60s team. The O50s team struggled with injuries and couldn't quite maintain their premiership status but the O60s team won their division and are promoted to the Premiership. There were some venue difficulties at Worcester which resulted in split venues on the Sunday. This is very likely going to happen again next year which could initiate a move to Nottingham in 2026.

The MCC weekend can be very challenging and also very enjoyable. With every age group playing on the same day, it also tests the depth of your squad in that age group as you cannot play one the top players from the age group above if you are short. So which counties proved successful in 2024? In ascending order, they were Cambridgeshire, Yorkshire, Hampshire, Essex, Hampshire, Surrey and Lancashire. Next year there is an option of running an O75s competition at Eastleigh if there is sufficient interest.

Finally, it would be remiss of me not to thank our captains. I know there has been quite a bit of collaboration in some age groups, which is brilliant and helps enormously with what can be a difficult task. Without the effort that our captains put in there would be no Masters matches and so I am grateful for all of their efforts.

Derek Neary, Masters Co-ordinator.