

East of Scotland Squash Association

I would like to highlight the following points from season 2007-2008.

East of Scotland Leagues

Ladies League – At their meeting on 14th May 2007, with all the ladies teams' representatives, agreement was reached to radically change the Ladies League structure. This started in season 2007-08. It consisted of 3 divisions (with 6/5/5 teams). There were 2 entire sets of fixtures – the first and second halves, with promotion and relegation at the end of both halves. This resulted in 20/16/16 matches in the 3 divisions. I believe the new format was an unqualified success and will continue next season. If any of the lady players think otherwise, then please let us know at the AGM. The undisputed winners, since they won both halves, were C.L.A.S.S, 88 with the undisputed runners-up being Watsonians 1. Both Kirkcaldy and Grange achieved the rare feat of being promoted and relegated in the same season. The winners of Division 2 were Grange (first half) and Kirkcaldy (second half). The winners of Division 3 were David Lloyd (first half) and Next Generation 2 (second half). Thanks are due to Yvonne Ferguson for making it all happen.

Open League – Due to the late withdrawal of Colinton Castle 2, there were various last-minute changes. The end result was a less than perfect divisional structure of 6 divisions of 10/9/10/10/10/9. However Edinburgh University Staff (division 2) and David Lloyd 1 (division 3) did not complete all their fixtures. At this stage of the year it is impossible to be sure how many teams there will be in season 2008-09, but it looks very likely that it will be 1 or 2 less than season 2007-08. While I don't have any hard statistics to prove it, I am sure that the average age of the league player continues to increase by at least 6 months per season. Given that "fact", it is not surprising that the number of teams continues to decline from its 1993 peak of 102 teams to the current 74.

In Division 1 Edinburgh University Students 1 took full advantage of their late reprieve from relegation to win the division by 18 points from Colinton Castle 1. Waverley 1 consolidated their yo-yo status by yo-yoing for the 4th consecutive year. Agilent Technologies 1 won Division 2 comfortably. Divisions 3/4/5/6 were won by Colinton Castle 3/Waverley 2/C-Rooks 1/Dalgety Bay 4 respectively. Congratulations to them all.

After 25 years Marco's Leisure in Grove Street closed its doors in March 2008. Although its 5 courts, latterly, were in a somewhat dilapidated state, it represented the biggest single loss of courts in the East of Scotland, not to mention the 2 teams that competed in the Mens League. Hopefully other clubs will benefit by way of inheriting some of the homeless members.

Refereeing Bonus – At its meeting on 15th May 2007 the East Committee reviewed the whole initiative and, considering feedback from players, decided to postpone the roll-out of the initiative for 1 year to allow time for more players to attend the "Introduction to the Rules" course, and become qualified Level 3 Referees. This one year postponement will shortly end and the roll-out will continue at the start of the 2008-09 season. Full details of the roll-out are on the website (www.essasquash.co.uk/referee2007.pdf). Here are the changes:

After October 2008 teams will only get the 2 point bonus if:

For Open Divisions 1/2 teams must have a qualified Level 3 Referee.

For Open Divisions 3/4 and Ladies Division 1/2 teams must have a player who has either attended an "Introduction to the Rules" course, or is a qualified Level 3 Referee.

There will be the opportunity to be assessed as a Level 3 Referee before the start of season 2008-09

League Sponsors – For the last 7 (yes seven!) years we have not had one, and at the time of writing we have not secured one for next season. There must be someone out there willing to sponsor the ESSA Squash Leagues?? - 74 teams – approx 750 players – and a comprehensive website (WWW.ESSASQUASH.CO.UK). Please contact me or any other committee member if you can help.

This year's presentation of trophies to the winners of the 8 divisions will again take place during the **AGM at Colinton Castle, on Tuesday 24th June 2008, 7:30 p.m.** Can each divisional winner please send at least one representative to collect their trophy?

Finance

The funds of ESSA continue in a good state of health. The bottom line of the accounts for 2007-2008 will show a surplus of roughly £1,500, despite not having a League Sponsor. Full accounts will be available at the AGM, as will the Treasurer, Dave Ireson who has been successful in generating extra development income.

Over-35 Team Cups

A new organiser materialised in the form of Richard McIntosh. In the Mens event Watsonians beat Hatton in the final to retain the trophy. Grange beat Dean in the plate final.

SRA Inter-County Event

Due to an administrative oversight we did not have a team from the East of Scotland in this year's (English) SRA Inter-County event. We do plan to enter one next season, but limit its budget. The fact that we did not have team this year played a significant part in this year's financial surplus.

East of Scotland and Scottish Squash

This was the fourth year of the new single-tier "Board". Regions now nominate a single Regional Vice-President (in our case Ron Pearman). Ron is also Vice-President of Scottish Squash itself.

At the 2006 Scottish Squash AGM a completely new system of affiliation fees was approved. This new system is far simpler and more open than the current one. As with any new system, there will be winners and losers, but the hope is that the new system will enable Scottish Squash to "sell itself" more effectively. It remains to be seen whether or not the "disaffected"

