**Kent County Short Mat Bowls Association.**

**Minutes of the Thirty First Annual General Meeting.**

On the 12th July 2019 at Burham Community Centre.

Representatives from the following clubs attended.

Burham, Hollingbourne, Aylesford, Langley, Tunstall, Kemsley, Ryarsh, Tunbury, Bluett Street.

A list of names can be provided on request.

Committee members Present.

R Offord, A Doorey, G Allard, T Rycraft, A Plowman, L Wynn, N Tresadern, B Baker.

**Apologies for Absence:**

The secretary informed the meeting she had received apologies from:

The President Mrs A Rycraft due to holiday, Mr M Doorey who also was unable to attend.

The following club also extended their apologies:

Tunbury.

Previous meeting minutes:

The minutes were agreed as a true account of the previous meeting. Proposed by Mr A Ellis, Seconded by Mrs J Davey, Agreed Unanimously.

**Matters Arising:**

There were no matters arising.

**Chairman's Report:**

Welcome to the thirty first annual general meeting.

It's been a challenging first season as chairman. This season saw the county moved back to the New Line Learning Centre, with a four-year fixed contract. We have installed shelving for the mats, refurbished all the fenders and blocks started to renew the jacks.

As you may recall Rob Berry stepped down as secretary last season and nobody wanted to do the job so as a committee we muddled through. After twisting Linda Wynn arm, she agreed to take on half of the job as in registrations and I would like to thank Linda on behalf of the association for a job well done. The other half of the job has been done by Rob and Tim thank you and well done. Over the last two or three months we have co-opted Angela Doorey into the roll and a grand job she is doing for us thank you Angela.

The domestic and national competitions have all gone ok with the exception of the fours where we run out of time, but it was the first time we had run the competition on one day, so we have learnt from that. I would like to thank Nicky for his efforts in doing a difficult job with the help of Barry of course.

I would like to add a big well done to Nicky Tresadern in being selected to represent England for the seventh season running and that this year we have seen Matt Harwood gain a place in the England under twenty-ones squad good luck to both of you. Finally, I would like to thank the whole committee for their support this year it's been a pleasure working with you all.

**Treasurers Report:**

Mr A Plowman talked the meeting through the season accounts. Sheet attached. He reported that this season accounts have been audited. The report was proposed by Mr A Ellis, Seconded by Mr T Coles, Agreed Unanimously

**County Team Managers Report:**

Once again it is my pleasure to make a report on behalf of the county squad for the 2018/19 season.

This was my seventh season as Squad Manager. Our points system provided ten new players; unfortunately, one player didn't take his option. However, and perhaps most pleasing we had one junior earn his badge. Those that played made a significant contribution to the squad and added to the successes of the teams. Thank you to those players.

On behalf of the county and squad I would like to take this opportunity to thank my deputies, who included Alan Ellis and Martin Matthews for the B side, Ray Offord and Peter Richards for the A side and Michael Doorey for the Premier. We had the added pleasure of finding a number of new sponsors which allowed us to sport new uniform in the guise of shirts. These shirts definitely gave the squad a new vitality and helped put Kent back on the Short Mat map.

In addition to the thanks to the deputies I would like to do the same to the players who commit themselves, they get up in the early hours during those cold winter days and bowl their hearts out in the name of Kent. There is little or no recompense for them, just the pride and joy of representing Kent. I would like to thank them all.

Before moving to the team reports, I would like to say that again this bowling season had its challenges with regards bowling commitment, and I know that a number of players were upset by this. This is a very difficult situation and can only be resolved on a game by game basis I apologise to the individuals that this effected. Let's move to the team reports: -

**The B team: -**

Under the management of Alan Ellis and Martin Matthews the Kent B side did their normal thing and started well notching a win against our fiercest rivals in West Sussex. In the end the team played ten matches with an excellent 80%-win rate only losing out to West Sussex on their ground and Kent Invicta, fifty-two players helped represent the B side.

A highlight for the B team was retaining the annual shield against West Sussex with a close twenty-eight points to twenty victory and 295 shots to 258 shots. For sure West Sussex will be looking to grab the cup next year when they host, I know we will be ready and waiting!

**The A team: -**

Under the new management team of Peter Richards and Ray Offord we stared the season with a bang scalping Surrey with a thirty-eight points to two win. This sent a strong message of intent to the new Kent management and also our opponents. The team took this early spirit and won all of their group games beating sides from West Sussex, East Sussex and Surrey. They finished the group stages as clear winners and waited for news on the next stage of the competition. Finally, after what seemed an eternity, we found out that Kent would play Suffolk. This was quite an unknown as it had been quite a few years since Kent played Suffolk.

Unfortunately, the early results in season one all went against Kent meaning that they were needing a big turnaround in the next sequence of games. Session two was more encouraging for Kent as they spilt the available games two apiece. At half time we were behind but still potentially in the match. The half time score was twelve points to four in favour of Suffolk. Session three was now critical for Kent as they needed to turn around the morning results. In the end and despite great Kent sprit we only won one game and drew another; with the shot bonuses this session already saw Kent out. Session four was played even though we were out, it gave us the chance to grab some honour back and improve the scoreboard. Perhaps Suffolk relaxed knowing they were through or Kent dug deep wanting those final games, what ever it was the triples and fours won

three and drew one out of the final sequence of games. In the end it was disappointing, particularly seeing how good we were in the group stage, however the final results seemed fair as Kent lost to a good Suffolk team by twenty-two to eighteen point. This year's journey was over. The Kent A side also played in the fours team event having qualified from the local heats. They played on finals day in a group including Dorset, Hertfordshire and Northampton. It was a long day and a day that wasn't meant to be. Kent could only muster a win against Northampton meaning they did not qualify into the final. From our side of the group Dorset took that place.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Peter and Ray along with the twenty-three players who represented the A side this season; week after week they put their soles into each game. Finally, a thank you too all the families who supported our players so quietly. Without them our teams would be so different.

**Premier Team; -**

The premier side again drew a difficult group that included the previous season's losing finalists Norfolk. The first match for Kent saw them away to Norfolk and due to the early date Kent were missing some key big hit players. It was a tough day and Kent took some hard results, in the end we lost thirty -five points to five. There was never any doubt that a defeat was fair, however none of the players felt that this score line was justified. To their credit the players dug deep and started a recovery as they desperately sought to qualify into the main knock out event by taking second spot. This was accomplished as Kent beat Northampton and Essex into second place.

Kent was fielding some new players this season and as the games came and went the team started to look and feel revitalised. The 'old' Kent was starting to show its head again reaching a climax in the group stages when we just lost to Norfolk in the home leg. In the knockout stages Kent faced bitter rivals Hampshire in a preliminary game; this was expected to be a tough match as Hampshire have also been growing stronger and have had some good individual performances in recent National competitions. this was going to be a good test for Kent. Kent dominated the early games taking three out of four games from the first session. The team consolidated this with another three games in the second session Kent stood the very real prospect of qualifying after three session if they took the lions share of points in session three. They did exactly that with the only defeat landing with Tim Rycraft when he lost on his last end. Kent had qualified after three sessions. Hampshire had a team talk to decide whether to play the fourth session or concede. I am pleased that they decided to play and after this final session Kent were official winners by twenty-five points to fifteen. Dorset beckoned in a quarter final clash. Dorset are mooted through the sport as the up and coming team, not champions yet but up and coming. Kent could not wait to play them for this reason and there was the added bonus that the winner would go on and play the reigning holders West Midlands. The Kent ethos is simple 'to be the best you have to play the best, and you have to beat them' The match started bad for Kent, in fact very badly as the first session of singles and pairs took a four to zero defeat. This meant Kent were very much on the 'back foot' however the old Kent was stirring, the second session arrived on the mats and were buzzing. You could feel the electricity in the air. The session went well for Kent as they won two and drew one out of the four games. This meant that at half time Kent were eleven points to five behind.

With hearts racing session three started and Kent managed to split the session two games apiece. However, when you added the shot bonuses Kent were playing the last session nineteen points to nine behind. This meant that Kent were almost out definitely mathematically out, the old timers were talking of some famous victories when Kent needed to win all four games in the last session to beat a high flying old West Midlands side. The triples and fours were on tender hooks to get started. Kent was up for it, shouting in every shot, teams were taking big scores against very good and experienced Dorset players. Kent were well on top in three games and even on the fourth. Could the dream of a semi-final v West Midland happen? In the end it all hinged on the penultimate end for a rink skipped by Chris Bull, during the play by the threes the jack was moved, unfortunately it landed squarely between some Dorset bowls. This small quick of fate meant that Kent went from nine- seven down to thirteen – seven down with one end to play. Despite an excellent finish where we secured three Kent lost the game by three shots and the result by twenty- one points to nineteen.

This was definitely the style of old, the spirit of old and hopefully the start of something new.

We had to field twenty-seven bowlers through the season playing eleven matches across the two Inter County Competitions. the rinks tournament did not go well for the premier side as they crashed out in the group stage losing out to Hertfordshire, Northampton and Cheshire.

It has been a difficult year for all three teams; however, it does feel that with the return of some old hands and the introduction of some new county players we are once again becoming stronger and able to compete on the top stages. I know our players are looking forward to the September again, as am I. Let's start where we left off and get some decent results under our belt. Other highlight for the squad included a squad day at the start of the season and an end of season dinner organised by Alan Ellis in Cobtree Golf Club, practice sessions in Swale IBC organised by Mike Doorey, and agreement to further develop the team uniform with new jackets.

Despite the results this season I remain proud of the team's contributions to the county; all of the players give their time freely, travel some distance often being left out of pocket. The use of coach travel is still under the spotlight but without improved fund raising shows no real signs of becoming available.

We are all aware of the ongoing financial pressures for the sport and more specifically our county. I am aware this does have an effect on the availability of certain bowlers and is a difficult situation to resolve other than to be sympathetic to those individuals and try to help them locally wherever we can.

I am looking forward to bowling again in September, not to wish away our summer of course. The squad will be ready to start the new season and will continue the development and continue to drive the sport as best we can.

I would like to add a thank you to the county committee who have all supported me throughout the season. Finally, I would add that this job puts you in line to some critics, however, I say as I do each year this is an enormous job that is relentless and consumes vast amounts of time. Being human I make mistakes; however, I take great pride in the bowling county of Kent, our history and the players who support this cause each and every year and as such I say that I enjoy every moment. With the members agreement I would like to present this report to the AGM for approval and ratification.

Yours in bowling

Tim Rycraft

Kent Squad Manager.

This report was proposed by Mr M Matthews. Seconded Mr T Drew. Agreed Unanimously.

Election of officers:

Nomination were posted for G Allard, (Chairman) A Plowman, (Treasurer)A Doorey, (Secretary)N Tresadern, (Competition Secretary)

Mr B Baker was proposed by the umpires.

Voted in on mass Unanimously.

Nomination for committee were posted for Mr M Doorey, Mrs L Wynn and Mr A Ellis. Voted in on mass Unanimously.

Mr R Offord was asked to stand again for Vice Chairman. He agreed. Proposed by Mr T Drew and seconded by Mrs S Wicks. Agreed Unanimously.

Proposals:

To reduce the number of committee members down from 3 to 2 and to add the new position of registration officer to the Kent county short mat association committee. Proposed by Mrs S Watson Seconded by Mr T Drew. Agreed Unanimously.

An allowance of 50p per member is to be paid to the county secretary.

An allowance of 50p per member is to be paid to the registration officer.

Both officers agreed,

Proposed by S Wicks Seconded by M Matthews Agreed Unanimously.

**Membership fees and financial proposal:**

A financial proposal was put to the members by the committee for approval; The proposal was discussed at length and it was proposed by Mr T Coles that tea and coffee at match's be made free to all. This was seconded by M Matthews and Agreed Unanimously. While the payments amounts would be recalculated due to the changes above it was agreed.

Meeting closed at 8.39 pm