



ENGLISH SHORT MAT BOWLING ASSOCIATION

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ESMBA Chairman's Report 2020

As we all know, this season was stopped short by a Worldwide virus known as Covid 19. Who would have ever thought that a Flu like virus would bring the World to its knees? Well, it did and we have had to follow most other sports and postpone many of our events, for what we hope is only a short period of time.

We did successfully manage to run the National O55s and Mixed fours finals with measures in place to support and protect our members. But it was just not to be, to complete the season as a whole. The remaining ICC Semi Finals and Finals along with the Main National Finals will be rescheduled later in the year.

But this happened only at the end of the season, what and how did we do before then. Well, we had had a pretty successful season, no major problems, and the Association finally seeming to be able to move forward and look to what the future holds and how we need to adjust and manage the ever changing membership.

The ICC, especially the format is always a contentious subject and I guess this year has been no different. We advised on a revised format for the following year and received mixed emotions. As hard as it is to swallow, Counties are losing members and those members they have, are ageing, so we have to change the way we run things to enable those members to continue to enjoy the game they love, the game we all love. Our decisions are sometimes judged as to what we are doing for the elite, when in fact the majority of the time we make decisions that look to benefit the members below the elite tier, after all the elite is such a small percentage of our membership.

Once again, the Association's finances look in great shape. Even with a declining membership we still seem to have a solid business plan in place to keep us financially stable. I thank Simon for his continued work as ESMBA Treasurer. But it is always key to remember although the accounts look healthy it could be one major mistake and we are back on a downward slope, so it is important to remember that we must all play our part in ensuring members continue to join and look for positive cost savings.

No doubt those members out there will once again criticise the England Teams performance, but the summer will see the appointment of a new manager and hopefully a turn in fortune. Only time will tell, and we wish the new manager every success. On the other hand, both the Ladies and U21s good fortune continue to be on their winning paths and continue to promote the Association in a positive light.

Barry Hedges