

CLUB CAPTAINS AGM STATEMENT

1st SEPTEMBER 2016

The first part of this statement will reflect on the year past and the second part on the future and I hope you will agree that we are in a very exciting position as a club.

I would like to start by thanking those club officers who have served over the past year together with all of those members of the club, captains, players and volunteers who have contributed in their varied ways. I am of the view that if the spirit of the club is measured by the success of the End of Season Dinner then we are in a very good place. I would also like to extend special thanks to Heardy, Jackie and Sophie for organising and running such fantastic summer leagues this year.

Aside from club spirit the most important base for the club is financial security. Smudger has done a remarkable job in turning the finances around through the use of technology and with the assistance of the team captains in the collection of the subs. The financial statements that he has circulated are testament to that. However increased costs are looming on the horizon and we will be putting in place initiatives to help fund those costs. More in a moment.

Much of the playing success last year was documented in various speeches at the EOSD and I don't intend to repeat those. However, important playing developments that have developed since then are:

- Having won the Surrey Cup the mens 1's have now entered the EH National Cup for the first time in many years. After a revised draw we are now playing Brom Bec, who were relegated into our league this season on 25th November. Some of the club's greatest spectator days have been the crowds that used to come to TD to watch our historic cup run back in the late 1990's and a big crowd would be fantastic.
- Having struggled for fixtures for the past couple of years, thanks to the tenacity of Si Duncan the Barnstormers now have a full schedule of fixtures and are also entered into the over 40's National Masters Cup. Amongst other things the success of the end of season tour and the spirit of the team has encouraged many ex-players to return to the sport and to help fulfil our objectives of becoming a Sport England accredited club.
- In order to play more matches, Andy Eve has created a joint super vets team with Surbiton.

In terms of the infrastructure of the Club, I now sit as the Hockey Club's representative on the Thames Ditton management committee along with Martin Williamson, Tony Strachan (OC Society treasurer), Will Fawcett of the Rugby club and JJ. This committee meets bi-monthly and is responsible for directing and overseeing the management and physical structure of the facility. Initiatives that have either been completed over the summer or are planned for the coming months are the laying of the new patio, the refurbishment of the ladies toilets, the decorating of the club room, the installation of a float pump to prevent the flooding of the astro, the repair to the grandstand, the demolition of the kit garage and the construction of a new kit shed behind the grandstand. JJ has also refurbished the kitchen and installed gas cookers to be able to provide an expanded food offering. However, the biggest mountain on the horizon is the relaying of the astroturf and I can confirm that this is currently on the agenda.

And so to the future.

The most significant announcement is the appointment of George Pettit as Director of Hockey. George joined us back in January as player/coach to the mens 1's. Over the summer the committee recognised the need to put in place a club-wide coaching and playing structure that would cover all sides from 1's to colts. We invited George to put a proposal together and to present this to us. As a result he was appointed with effect from the middle of August to coach the Men's 1's, oversee the entire colts coaching programme, oversee the ladies coaching and be responsible for the selection of the mens 1's and 2's. His role may develop beyond this in coming years but initially we are very pleased with this appointment. George and Knappy have been successful in recruiting some new and very talented individuals to the first team squad, a number of last season's 1's players have stepped down to 2's and 3's and Sam Carne has attracted new blood to the 2's squad. At first glance this is a very healthy position to be in compared to a few years' back.

With the migration down the club of former 1's and 2's players we have identified that we may need to start a new junior vets team in 2017/18 season.

We have also identified that following on from the success of the colts programme that there may be a need for a new ladies team in 2017/18 accommodating a mix of colts and former ladies 1's players.

All this will put further pressure on pitch resources and we may well have to take over playing slots currently occupied by outside teams. This in itself will give rise to additional pitch hire and teas costs and is something that Smudger will be reviewing in his budget for the 2017/18 season.

Two drivers of income, both of which are the focus of the committee's attention, are the 100 club and sponsorship.

The 100 club has traditionally been the responsibility of the club captain. Following a degree of success in my first two seasons in post, owing to the incompetence of our former bankers in providing us with up to date financial records, we were unable to hold as many draws as we would have liked or indeed to attract new members. We now have new bankers in place and I will shortly be relaunching the 100 club in an effort to drive the number of tickets from around 100 to 330 per month. Even with increased prize money this will add a considerable revenue stream to the accounts. The 1's are being charged with raising a significant proportion of this in order to fund George's coaching fees of which they are the main beneficiary. Team captains will be required to ensure that as many of their squad as possible sign up to the 100 club.

In terms of sponsorship, Gavin and I are looking to attract a club sponsor for the coming season. The two principal shop windows of success, being the rise of the colts and the success of the mens 1's allied to the well publicised club spirit are key aspects of our push. I would encourage you all to use some lateral thought in terms of potential sponsors and to approach Gavin or I with any ideas. The sums involved are not huge (£5-£10k) but will make a significant difference. Kit wears out, coaches need paying and bills need paying. We have been very conscious this year not to increase subs and the need for external funds therefore becomes more important.

In addition Georgie Sangster and her band of helpers will be putting together a series of social events. The principal here is to make a profit from the winter and spring events and use this surplus to keep

the ticket prices down for the end of season dinner. Once again thanks to all who have given up their time to help, organise and comper these events. As always more help is always welcome.

I am also delighted to say that our newly married Liz Hall has agreed to take on the role of Social Media officer. By pulling together all of the various strands of communication, from website to Facebook, Twitter, Fixtures Live and email Liz can provide a consistent and up to date message to members and the outside world alike. Thank you to all of those who have managed the various strands in the past (Helen, Martin, Sophie, Eds and others.) and thanks to Liz for taking this on. Beware team captains as she will be relentless on requests for match reports and photos.

Ultimately the clubs ambition is to play in the men's national league. Without wishing to be seen as sexist, this would be the biggest advertisement for the club. However, I am also acutely conscious of the impact of the GB ladies hockey team's success will have on the appeal of ladies and girls hockey and will give rise to greater numbers looking to join our Club. Both of these events, should they come to fruition over the next couple of seasons will place huge challenges on us as a club and I believe that the measures that I have outlined above will put us in a much stronger place to deal with them as and when they arise.

We are always on the lookout for more talent both off and on the field. Please therefore continue to drive this club forward and most importantly look forward to yet another successful OCHC season.

Questions to the Committee.