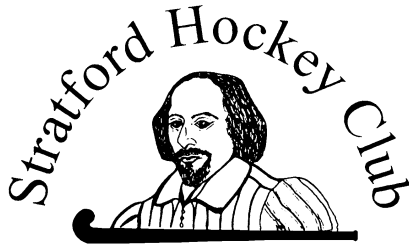


Newsletter – January 2008



Welcome to Stratford Hockey Club's mid-season Newsletter.....

Firstly a Happy New Year to everyone, and best wishes for the second half of the season. It has not been an easy first half of 07/08 with the club closing and the pitch lights failing, causing disruption on Saturdays as well as mid-week. The best thing about all of these difficulties is that they're over!

Everyone has worked really hard to get back to 'The Bell' and to keep the club 'feel' going but we won't have to for much longer. The clubhouse is hoping (builders pending) to re-open w/c 7 January and be ready to accommodate us from 12 January onwards.

As we enter the second half of these season it is worth mentioning the AGM which will be held on 4 April. We anticipate some good news about kit which was a key topic last year as well as the excitement of the election of officers. Several roles will be up for grabs both on the playing and the administrative side, so don't be shy.

A message from the goal scoring free spirit that is our Chairman....(Nigel Wood)

As we come out of the Christmas break we can reflect on an enjoyable first half to the season. Results have been variable with the Ladies 1st X1 and the Men's 4th X1 being the pick of the teams but all teams have room for improvement as we enter the second half of the hockey year.

I would like to thank the committee, particularly Ian Powell, for the work they put into the running of the club. The coaches have continued their efforts to develop the playing side of the club and I understand that many of the men's New Year's resolution is to train more regularly. I know mine is !

As you will all know the club has been closed for some weeks for post flood refurbishment. The Bell has provided a good substitute but I am sure we are all looking forward to the re-opening of the improved (main) club-house in January. I think the tireless (and unpaid) work put in by the Club Chairman **Joe Harvey** should be recognized by all of us in the section.

Ladies Section (Ladies Rep - Janice Kerse)

The ladies section is doing very well in the first part of the season. The 1sts, under new captain Kate Heritage, are in 2nd place with a game in hand over the leaders. The 2nds under new captain Emma Van Der Hayden are finding the new league they were promoted into quite tough but they are playing better than last season. The 3rds under new captain Emily Finlayson are top of their league. Keep up the good work.



A big goodbye and good luck to **Sarah "Blayne" Charlton** who is leaving the club for pastures new (somewhere up north) after playing for the club for over 8 years.

Also good luck to **Jane Murphy** whose baby is due beginning of January.

Numbers have dropped over the past few weeks at training and it is important that you train with your teams. A big thank you must go to **Matt Hyatt, Hayley Nichols, Emma Van Der Hayden** and **Richard Stokes** for giving up their time to coach on a Thursday night.

Newsletter – January 2008

Ladies AGM will be held at the club on **Friday 14 March** at 7pm. Start thinking now if you would be interested in applying for any of the roles within the ladies section i.e. captain, vice captains, junior rep, social organising or ladies representative. Job descriptions for the roles on the committee will also be available prior to the AGM to let you know what these roles involve.

Men's Section (Men's Rep – James Chorley)

The Story So Far.....Some good, some bad. Lets not dwell on it too much and look to the future!

A Skipper's hopes and fears for the coming year....

- More wins!
- Improved attendance at training. *It's in all our interests. Thanks for all your comments. We promise we're working on it.*
- An influx of young talent (players that is).....some more keepers would be good
- A few more 30th birthday yards
- A major sponsorship deal from Diet Pepsi. That is if Dom keeps drinking it.



“Eighty percent of success is showing up” – Woody Allen

The Seconds and Thirds are battling away in their respective divisions. The Seconds are in the lower half of their division whilst the Thirds really need to amass some points as they are at the foot of theirs. Of all the teams in the club it's the seconds and thirds who have borne the brunt of the lack of availability and the shortage of keepers. This has been reflected in the results. On the plus side, the seconds do have the biggest pot of 'fines' cash so a top tip for the new year is to make friends with a second team player before their annual bun-fight.

The fourths are sitting pretty at the top of their division and setting a fine example to the rest of us.

Special thanks to the following people for all their help so far this season....

- All the captains: Muscles Hyatt, Sparky, Tequila Dave, E-Man Eric.
- Our coaches: Matty, Stuart 'Still Captain of the Town' Guise
- All our umpires: Geoff Blundall, Nick Stokes (and wife) Richard 'Traffic Lights' Stokes, Nick Russell. Numerous others
- Cheer leaders - The Happy Hockey Hookers. You know who you are.
- Last but not least, the players, fit or not, on time or not, hung-over or not.

Mention should be given to **Bruce Ricketts** who is returning to South Africa after long service to the club. Bruce has played in 3,558 games, scored 9,531 goals and won us promotion 768 times. Also best of luck to **Steve Gray** who is due to undergo a spinal operation in early January - We'll bring you some grapes. You'll be fighting fit in no time. Just hope Crowley isn't working on you.

Forthcoming marriages (in this particular order): Hyatt M, Hyatt O, Simpson E, Ainscough S, Russell N, Stokes R, McKee C, Chorley J



Juniors (Co-ordinator Sarah Davies)

The Juniors have had a successful first half of the season with 67 paid up members ranging from age 5 to 14. There has been good attendance at the training sessions on a Wednesday evening where we do age 5-10 from 6pm-7pm and age 10-14 from 7pm to 8pm. They have played a

Newsletter – January 2008

tournament each month with a mixture of Banbury and Warwick and there are 2 more of these scheduled for the New Year. **Nick Russell** trains the Junior boys from 7-8pm and we are seeing a lot of potential coming through. **Sarah Davies** and **Matt Hyatt** train the 5-10years and the girls 10-14years which is also showing some great potential at all age groups and we are progressing the girls through to the ladies at regular intervals. We are starting to get more help from within the club and parents which has been a real help this year, so thank you to all involved, you know who you are!

Here's hoping you all had a good Christmas and we will see you all revitalized in the New Year.

Finance (treasurer Simon Ainscough)

The membership for 2007/2008 is more or less finalised, apart from the odd straggler! At this time, we have 85 Senior Members, and 98 Junior Members. It is fantastic to see so many juniors involved. Of more relevance to my role is the fact that the subs are all banked, and the club is in a good financial position, building on previous years. Just to note, any costs incurred by the club being closed for refurbishment will be covered by the central club's insurance policy.

Our search for sponsorship continues:

- A big thank you **Dominic '2 Cokes' Howkins** for organizing our future kit and securing a £600 sponsorship deal with Cox's Yard.

New Kit – Available Next Season:

- The new kit will be more modern in design, made of breathable materials. Prices are being finalised and the club will subsidise the cost to players, although there will probably be a slight increase
- There will also be shorts/skorts available,
- We are also working on a tracksuit, but these will be bought by the individual player at the cost price.

The various prices are being worked on and more will be revealed as we know it. We are hopeful of obtaining some samples for people to see, and possibly even size samples. Orders will be taken from players throughout the remainder of the season, the order will be placed in the spring, and everyone will be in new kit for the beginning of next season.

I hope everyone is enthusiastic about this as I have heard grumbles recently regarding the quality of the opposition kit compared to ours; this will hopefully make us competitive in the fashion stakes!

Social Events(Social Sec – Giles Stagg)

What we are all here for the social life....Next one is on 26th January (Boys vs. Girls) – A bit pointless really as we know who is going to win....the Boys! No, the Girls. No, the Boys, or perhaps.....

Loads more planned too, Monopoly, End of season party, Annual dinner, the Tour.

Watch your email for news and.....**Bring it on!**

Happy New Year!!