

GLOUCESTERSHIRE HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

Junior Festivals Organiser report for GHA Committee Meeting on Thursday 24th March 2022.

In the period from January to March there were a number of Festivals (mostly 2) for each age and gender group the number being lower than before Christmas because of the County rounds of the EH In2Hockey and the long February half term. The total entries were as follows (assuming all those committed to play this Sunday 27th March attend):

U8 Mixed	U10 Girls	U10 Boys	U12 Girls	U12 Boys	U12 A Girls	U12 A Boys
24	34	16	36	24	5	3

Overall a total of 142 teams entered. Again the U12 A Teams festivals were not as popular as the other events, but there was only one occasion of these. Overall though attendance was excellent and the popularity of the Festivals had returned to pre-Covid pandemic levels. The challenge really is to provide enough opportunities for all those that want to play to be able to participate.

Invoices from before Christmas have all been paid and the invoices for the second half of the season will be sent out following the last Festivals this weekend, Sunday 27th March.

The Gloucestershire rounds of the EH In2Hockey were held on 6th February and 6th March, U12s on the earlier date. In U12s there were 12 girls and 10 boys teams. Champions in U12 girls were Lansdown, runners-up Cheltenham Junior. Champions in U12 boys were Cheltenham Junior, runners-up Cirencester. I do not know the results of the West Area competition that took place on 20th March.

In U10s there were 12 girls and 9 boys teams. Champions in U10 girls were Westbury & United Banks, runners-up Lansdown. However, subsequently it was learned that Westbury had participated in the Avon rounds of the In2Hockey and had qualified there so instead Lansdown were promoted to the top place for the West Area round and Lydney to the second place who had been in third place. Champions in U10 boys were Cheltenham Junior, runners-up Wotton-U-Edge.

This issue with Westbury was disappointing as they participated in all the Gloucestershire In2Hockey events despite me specifically asking if they had played in the Avon rounds when they first applied to play. I put this down though to a misunderstanding on their part due to the inexperience of their junior coordinator who was new and for whom I suspect the language we all use was unfamiliar.

I attended the West Junior Competitions Committee meeting at the end of January. West Clubs who had progressed to the Supra-League were as follows:

Girls U14 T1 – Clifton, Taunton, Bath
Girls U16 T1 – Clifton, Bath, Cheltenham
Boys U14 T1 – Bath, Wotton-U-Edge, Isca
Boys U16 T1 – Clifton, Taunton, Isca

The issues around Clubs struggling to fulfil fixtures with the combination of travelling and Covid had continued and there was a long discussion about how to finish the season with the original plans being disrupted by the number of Clubs dropping out, particularly in the south of the Area. Paradoxically in the north the clubs had almost too much hockey taking place. It was agreed to hold a planning meeting to decide this in March, but the outcome is unclear.

Feedback on the Junior competitions regulations had been collected and would be provided to the Areas meeting.

Lastly there was a discussion around County hockey and the feeling in the meeting was very negative. I gave them the feedback from the CSC NWG meeting that EH were now listening to the county feedback and counties actually still had a major role in delivering opportunities for higher quality coaching and competition. As yet though I have seen nothing from EH on this topic although they had committed to issuing a new communication to clarify this.

Ian Harvey
24th March 2022