

Chairperson message,

Sometimes in life it never rains but it pours down with the passing of 3 members of the DBE bowls family - George Pierpoint, Keith Brenton and Jeannette Maisey. It was a very difficult time for everyone who had the pleasure of playing with and against them for both DBE & VIBE.

But as always, our members stayed strong, rose to the challenge, and delivered one of the most inclusive English Indoor National Finals Championships and showcased once again their Ability not Disability whilst receiving a very warm welcome at Nottingham IBC.

The icing on the cake after a very difficult Easter weekend trying to rearrange our plans for the IBD World Championships after the sudden passing of Keith, was driving around the M25 to Watford IBC for a Development & Charity fundraising day organised by Watford & District Bowls Association. I was totally blown away with the reception we received from the time we drove into the car park until we left after a fabulous day of bowling, fun, enjoyment and kindness which will stay with us for many years to come and lifted all our spirits to continue what we do best - "Play Inclusive Bowls"

As we come to end of the planned Indoor season and start moving outdoors, I hope that some of our members who don't play outdoors will enter the EIBA Summer Competitions and continue this very strong link with our fellow indoor bowlers and clubs. May is a very busy month, not only do we have a Team of 16 going to the IBD World Championships in South Africa, and we wish them all the best and success on the greens, but we also have the Bowls England Bowls' Big Weekend (24-27 May) and I hope many of you will be out and about helping your clubs to sign up more members.

Finally, Thank You to all our amazing Volunteers.



Steve DBE Chairperson

DBE Championships at Nottingham.



What a fantastic time we had during the first week of the EIBA National Championships at Nottingham IBC.

It began with the final of the DBE Open Pairs, between Dave Fisher and Jonathan Stokes and Fynn Kyser and Jack Pullin. What a good game it was. We were fortunate that it was televised on the EIBA TV service, and I was part of the commentary team. The game was close most of the way through, although with Dave and Jonathan getting big scores and Jack and Fynn only scoring in 1s or 2s, the first pair had the upper hand. Jonathan and Fynn matched each other with an excellent display of leading. Both skips played some important bowls but Dave just edged it, and after a great game Dave and Jonathan came out as the winners.

The Plate Pairs event was more uneven with a convincing win for Joe Peplow and Gary Swift against Alison Yearling and Stephen Hartley with directors Helen Wall and Gilly Ainslie, although the score did not reflect the play with some great skills demonstrated by both teams. The audience were impressed by the players' abilities.



The Champion of Champion singles was a very one-sided affair. Sadly Jonathan the B7 winner had had to withdraw due to work commitments. It was decided the fairest way to play off was to have a round robin between the three players, Craig Bowler, Chris Gray and John Greaves.

With John fresh from his success in skipping a rink for Wellingborough IBC to win the final of the Egham Trophy the previous Sunday, he was imperious on the day and won both his games convincingly; Chris was runner up.

Congratulations to all of them.

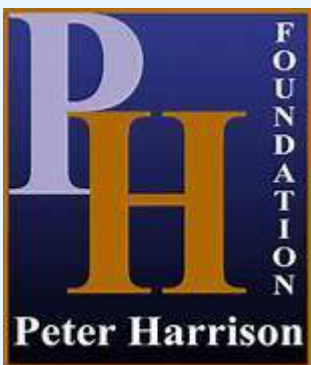
Maggy Smith MBE North v South

What a great afternoon we had during the EIBA National Finals at Nottingham IBC. This year the North v South dividing moved again as it does most years to make the numbers even.

This year it was a win for the South and captain Jonathan Stokes was delighted to be presented with the trophy by President Maggy Smith MBE..



Peter Harrison Foundation



A massive thank you to the Peter Harrison foundation for their financial support for our Development and Taster Sessions. Without their help these could not happen and this year it has resulted in 85 new members joining DBE and given people with disabilities the chance to find a sport that they can enjoy and take part in.

Thank you!

Without the financial support they have given us and the outstanding support we receive from our volunteers these days could not happen and those new people who have been introduced to our wonderful sport may not have taken it up.

Watford and District Bowls association



When our chairperson Steve was approached by John Hay in a bar at Leamington last summer, asking about the possibility of Watford & District Bowls Association (WDBA) having a game with DBE as a fundraiser and to highlight disability bowls, did any of us expect it to be such a wonderful occasion.

The game was arranged for the 6 April at Watford IBC, and from the moment we arrived it was obvious they could not do enough for us. They had set aside parking spaces near the club's entrance, and arranged parking permits for the players so that they didn't have to pay to park - the club is part of a local leisure centre and it is a very popular and busy park.

The welcome we received was second to none as was that of the WDBA. The association covers 24 clubs in the south of Hertfordshire and aims to promote bowls to everyone. Secretary Simon Johnson explained 'The WDBA organised this charity fundraising event to promote the inclusivity of the wonderful game of Bowls that allows all ages, genders, abilities, and disabilities to play on the same level on the same green together and against each other be they male, female, or a member of the LGBTQ+ community. In the charity match we had a 96-year-old playing alongside Thomas a 13-year-old with learning difficulties and mild cerebral palsy, as well as able-bodied county/national champions (in fact, Thomas' brother Dylan played for the WDBA - he also represents Bowls England Juniors) playing alongside brand-new players who were putting on a District shirt for the first time'.



The association had arranged a raffle in aid of DBE beforehand, asking local clubs to sell tickets and almost all of them had. They also ran two 'spiders' - one before the game, and one halfway through asking for donations to DBE. Marcia Dunstone gave Steve a cheque for £250 from Hertfordshire's Benevolent fund and the umpires gave him another for £50.

The game was played in great spirit with the rink of Luke Smith, Judy Plater, Craig Bowler and John Greaves being our only winners, however some of the others were close and everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves, although Captain Colin Wagstaff was, on occasions, playing for the opposition and knocking his lead Katie King's wood off the jack!

Taking part in the game was 13 year old Thomas Martin whose dad Dave had given an interview to BBC East , explaining how bowls had been such a support to him and his three sons, after his wife had passed away. He had gone on to say how much Thomas enjoyed playing with the other DBE members as everyone was so friendly and supportive. Dave gave a follow up interview with the BBC after the match. You can access Dave's interviews by clicking the links; <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cg3qzmv7p14o>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-68803658>

As well as the players there were numerous spectators from clubs and associations in the area, all keen to see the bowls and learn about our work. Judy and Steve had taken some of the bowling aids along to give people a chance to try them or see what was available.

After the game we sat down to an excellent meal and listened to speeches from WDBA President Arthur Devereaux, in which he revealed the raffle and spider had raised in excess of £1500, to say we were all stunned was an understatement. He asked everyone to contribute to a tip for the kitchen staff, but they insisted on donating this money to the DBE as well, making a grand total of approximately £2000.

Steve said emotionally, "I was overwhelmed by the generosity of everybody involved in organising such a fabulous day at Watford IBC. A massive thankyou to everyone who purchased a raffle ticket which will help change the life of someone with a disability who wishes to play bowls, and this day is something that will remain with me for a very long time as we continue to make our sport totally inclusive".

It was a fabulous afternoon and we look forward to playing them again this summer in September.

More photo's from a great day at Watford.



Thank you to everyone involved in this special day every penny raised goes towards helping disabled players enjoy our sport.

DBE Jackets and Shirts

Just a quick message about the jackets and shirts as I know a number of you have been trying to order them but are unable to.

Because of the current financial situation the Trustees have put on hold ordering anymore stock for the time being. We cannot just order one or two items but have to send a bulk request and at the moment we are not in a position to do this.

Please be patient with us and as soon as things change we will let you know. Finance Director Mike Robertson has a very small number of shirts left but stock is limited and not all sizes are available.

Keith Brenton

1952 – 2024

A celebration of a remarkable bowler by his good friend Nigel Morgan.

In 2018, I was introduced to Keith Brenton at Clarence Park, Weston-Super-Mare, when I was delivering a coaching course for the VI bowlers. At this point I was totally inspired by the ability of all the bowlers and their great outlook on the sport and life in general.

It was not long before we formed a partnership which over the years led to many great achievements from his first England B1 Men's Singles title in 2019 and the following four tournaments being undefeated. In 2022, he gained the UK B1 Men's Singles Indoor champion title and the 2023 B1 Men's Outdoor title. In 2022, he partnered Richard Carey in the England B1 Pairs championship, and they won it at their first attempt and retained it in 2023.

Keith was inspirational to many bowlers and supporters in his diligence and passion for his beloved sport. He first started playing in Wales. At this time his sight was starting to suffer. In 1996 he was selected to play in the Paralympics and won the Bronze medal as a B4. Along with Alan Lyne (Gold) and George Wright (Silver) the Great Britain team made a clean sweep of all the B4 men's medals. Also, the Lawn Bowls Team won the overall title.

He was a very dedicated bowler and was always pushing himself to achieve more. There is a great video where he sets up an indoor rink completely himself. We had planned many sessions with a great many friends around the UK including Ron McArthur to name but one. He was so much looking forward to the IBD World Championship and had plans to win the gold at this or the IBBA World Championship in New Zealand.

Keith will be missed around the world. Thanks to all who helped Keith over the years.

I will leave the last words to Richard Carey who was mentored by Keith:

"A truly inspirational man who helped me. I will miss him deeply and will honour him at the World Championships in South Africa along with my great friend Jeannette Maisey who passed away on 9th April. I know they will be with me, and I hope I do them both proud. Rest in Peace Keith and Jeannette"



Keith with his two UK, two England and Open trophies in 2024



Jeanette Maisey Funeral

Wednesday 1 May at 9.30am at North Wilts Crematorium, Swindon Rd, Royal Wootton Bassett, Swindon SN4 8ET.

No Flowers or wreaths it was Jeanette's wish that a collection be taken and the money split between DBE and VIBE.

If you would like to wear your DBE/VIBE/International attire that would be appreciated otherwise the dress code is casual.

After the service we will gather at the Phoenix Bar in Royal Wootton Bassett for refreshments.



As we now reach the end of the indoor season, club and county finals are taking place and we wanted to say a huge well done to all our members like Johnathan Stokes and Jennie Sandford who have won their club singles making them eligible for next years EIBA Champion of Champions competition.

We are sure they are not the only ones to have been successful and congratulations to all of you.

Proving how Inclusive Bowls can be!



Terry pictured with Terry Gripe (Oxford City & Co Past President), Vera Logue (Oxford City & Co Secretary & Member of the Club's Management team), Steve Gillow (Oxford City & Co member)

Oxford City & County Handover of New Powered Bowls Wheelchair

On Saturday 20th April 2024, Past President of Oxford City & County Bowls Club - Terry Gripe - handed over a new electric wheelchair to the Club. The wheelchair is for the use of any player needing some assistance on the green. It took over 2 years to raise the monies required (over £2500) but Terry was successful in his aim and the result was there for everyone to see.

Attending the event were several members of the community that helped raise the funds, I was invited as a DBE Ambassador and spoke to the attendees. I pointed out how much the wheelchair will be appreciated by players with certain disabilities as it enabled the Club to be even more inclusive. I also reminded everyone that Bowls is one of the few sports that allows people of all ages, gender and ability, or disability, to play on an equal basis.

A club member, Steve Gillow, showed off the chair on one of the Club's indoor rinks. However, the chair can be used outdoors as well - with the caveat that the wheels have to then be thoroughly cleaned before being allowed to be used again indoors.

Terry



Thank you Terry it is great to highlight the work our Ambassadors do promoting the sport and championing disability and inclusivity in clubs.

2nd Annual Friendly Bowls Match

Friday 27th September 2024



versus



Organised by MS Swale, disabled bowlers are invited to participate in a friendly bowls match to be held at Swale Indoor Bowls Club in Sittingbourne, ME10 2BJ

Disability is no deterrent to enjoying sport, so whether you have MS or Parkinsons, have suffered a stroke, are blind or partially sighted, deaf or non – verbal, an amputee or disabled in some other way, come and enjoy a friendly game of bowls with bowlers from across the South.



**Entry fee £5.00 donation to DBE
The event is Sponsor Funded
For further details contact
Peter Fathers 07890 198663 or
email msswalegroup@gmail.com**



OUNDLE BOWLING CLUB

Oundle Bowls Club would like to invite Disability Bowls England to our annual charity match, which this year is in aid of the extremely worthwhile Fire Fighters Charity. This organisation is totally funded from collections and events arranged by the local fire stations and helps support injured fire personnel and their families.

If you would like to support this event it will be taking place at 2pm on the 2nd June at our Occupation Road location, as in previous years we are looking for teams of three.

If you would like to be included in a DBE team please let Judy know and she will give your details to the club.

LimbPower Games at Stoke Mandeville Stadium Aylesbury



On Saturday 13 April we were invited to send a development team to the LimbPower games. This is an event for amputees or those with limb loss to try out various sports and take part in exercise classes.

This is the second event we have attended and were able to use the bowls hall this time to allow people to try the sport for themselves. Judy was assisted by her husband Derek and Craig Bowler and would like to thank Craig for his help and support.

There were four groups who went around trying various activities including cycling, running, badminton, wheelchair basketball and archery as well as taking part in exercise classes.

In the first group was Ben a double leg amputee who had played bowls as a child with his grandparents, and four other amputees who agreed the game was addictive and not as easy as they had first thought.

Later Craig was able to help Dave from Telford who was very keen to get involved, he currently plays walking cricket and one of the team he is a member of already plays bowls.



Later in the afternoon another group including Rebecca , came to have a go; she went on to say 'I really enjoyed it, I never believed it was so difficult but also so much fun'.



Organiser Kiera Roche said how pleased she was to have bowls involved with the day and she looked forward to working with DBE in the future'.

Judy