

Ipswich - East Suffolk Hockey Club

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Associate Member Club of Rushmere Sports Club Ltd.



Annual Report for 2000 / 2001

Editorial:

The Club achieved a great deal of success during 2000/2001. The Mens 1st X1 maintained East Premier 'A' status and the Ladies 1st X1 retained the Suffolk League Championship and were promoted to the East League.
<Continued after the results table>.

Summary of match statistics for games listed in the Fixtures Card 2000/2001.

<u>Squad (X1)</u>		<u>Played</u>	<u>Won</u>	<u>Drawn</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Goals For</u>	<u>Goals Ag'st</u>	<u>% Success</u>	<u>League Position</u>
Mens 1st	League	22	6	4	12	30	52	36.4	10 (12)
	Friendly	3	2	1	0	15	2	83.3	
	Total	25	8	5	12	45	54	42.0	
Ladies 1st	League	22	20	1	1	113	16	93.2	1 (12) C P
	Friendly	6	4	1	1	21	7	75.0	
	Total	28	24	2	2	134	23	89.3	
Mens 2nd	League	22	13	5	4	66	32	70.5	1 (12) C P
	Friendly	4	1	1	2	5	12	37.5	
	Total	26	14	6	6	71	44	65.4	
Ladies 2nd	League	22	8	1	13	34	51	38.6	9 (12)
	Friendly	4	1	1	2	9	7	37.5	
	Total	26	9	2	15	43	58	38.5	
Mens 3rd	League	20	5	4	11	24	54	35.0	8 (11)
	Friendly	3	1	0	2	3	6	33.3	
	Total	23	6	4	13	27	60	34.8	
Ladies 3rd	League	22	7	6	9	27	25	45.5	7 (12)
	Friendly	5	3	0	2	11	7	60.0	
	Total	27	10	6	11	38	32	48.1	
Mens 4th	League	20	9	2	9	50	31	50.0	5 (11)
	Friendly	4	2	1	1	11	8	62.5	
	Total	24	11	3	10	61	39	52.1	
Mens 5th	League	22	9	0	13	42	52	40.1	7 (12)
	Friendly	3	0	1	2	8	10	16.7	
	Total	25	9	1	15	50	62	38.0	
Mens 6th	League	21	13	2	6	56	35	66.7	2 (8) P
	Friendly	5	3	0	2	14	12	60.0	
	Total	26	16	2	8	70	47	65.4	
Mixed X1	Friendly	12	6	0	6	31	40	50.0	
Totals		242	113	31	98	570	459	53.1	

* (Note that the above data excludes the cup, trophy and tournament matches and 'extra' mid-week Mixed friendlies).

<Editorial continued from above the results table>

After an outstanding season, winning the Suffolk Ladies League for the second successive time, the Ladies 1st X1 were at last able to fulfil our ambitions to play at the higher level. The Mens 1st X1 held their form and deserved a bit of luck in the end to maintain East Premier 'A' status and can look forward to the challenges of the new season with great confidence. The Mens 2nds were promoted for the 3rd successive season and will now be looking forward to hockey at East Division 2 level. The Mens 6th X1 - the former Veterans - came second in division 11SE to gain promotion. Our other league teams all competed well to achieve mid-table positions. We won the Suffolk County Mens Cup, Indoor Cup and Indoor League and the Harleston Mens Veterans Tournament.

We continue to build excellent relationships with Rushmere Sports Club - grateful thanks are due to Sonia Smith (for the Teas), Tony Elsom, Roger Osborn and others - and hope that progress can be made soon on development of our own artificial pitch. Ongoing sponsorship from 'Thermecon' and 'Broadleaf Tree Specialists' continued to provide funds for coach and umpire development and additional training resources. Off the pitch it is worth recording that IES provided a considerable part of the Suffolk HA's management including Secretary (Avril Adams), Mens Treasurer & Handbook Editor (Chris Hatch), Ladies League Secretary and Web Site Manager (Dawn Claxton), Ladies League Player Registration Officer (Yvonne Nunn), Mens U-21 Manager & East League Rep. (John Adams), Mens U-21 Coach (David Taylor), Schools & Youth Treasurer (Ian Reed) and Boys U-13 and U-14 Manager (David Walsh). No other Suffolk club comes remotely near this level of commitment to organising the sport in and around our County.

The Club would like to acknowledge with thanks the work done by Suffolk HA President Brian Perks to run the Indoor League & Cups throughout the season at Rushmere. We entered four squads in total and enjoyed both playing in the competitions and a good deal of success in them.

The Club's social & fundraising programme was again most successful, enjoyable and of considerable financial benefit to the club and Avril Adams is thanked for the considerable effort put into leading this activity.

Our youth coaching programme again proved highly popular and of enormous importance to the long term future of the Club and for which the Youth sub-committee and coaches under the leadership of Charlie Farrow deserve special recognition and thanks.

EHA Mens Cup & Ladies Vase. Summary of results

Competition	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	GF	GA	Venues
Men, EHA Cup	2	1	0	1	6	7	0 Home + 2 Away
Ladies, EHA Vase	2	1	0	1*	3	2	1 Home + 1 away
Totals	4	2	0	2	9	9	

* The Ladies were eliminated from the EHA Vase on penalty strokes after drawing with Wallington (Surrey).

Tournament results during 2000/01 (to semi-finals or better):-

Ladies	Runners-up, Suffolk Indoor League
Men	Winners, Suffolk County (Outdoor) Cup, Suffolk Indoor Cup and Indoor League Cup
Veterans	Winners, Harleston Veterans Tournament
Mixed X1	Semi-finalists, Harleston Mixed Tournament
Boys U-14	Semi-finalists, RAF Cup
Boys U-13	Runners-up, Felixstowe U-13 Tournament

Representative Honours during 2000/01

England Men Over-60 Squad	John Taylor
Suffolk Men Senior X1 Squad	Charlie Farrow, Danny Mayhew, Colin Mannall.
Suffolk Men U-21 X1 Squad	Will Fulker, Mark Lloyd
Other Suffolk Junior Squads	Megan Adams, Hannah Golding, Lizzie Pipe, David Messant, James Howe, Robert Hauxwell, Rhodri Davies, Jacob Rubin, Jamie Pinner, Will Sheppard, James Hughes, Michael Tomiak, Joe Broughton, Tom Kesterton, Nick Card, George Pinner, Tom Parry, Tim Fletcher, Charles Coulson, Alex Borwick, Geoffrey Reed. (David Messant also played for the East of England).

News from the Annual General Meeting on 15th May 2001

The following elections were made at the AGM (or by subsequent committee appointment):

President, John Taylor; Chairman, John Adams; Secretary, Sue Stenson;

Business Manager, Men's Team Secretary, Astro Pitch Liaison & Umpire Appointments Officer, Chris Hatch;

Club Promotions Officers, Charlie Farrow and Guy Marshlain, Peter Elsom;

Social Secretary, Avril Adams; Youth Committee, Charlie Farrow, Ian Reed, and David Walsh, Claire Pearsons, Jane de Boltz.

Position

1st X1
Captain/Secretary/Manager
2nd X1 Captain/ Secretary
3rd X1 Captain/ Secretary
4th X1 Captain/ Secretary/
5th X1 Captain/Secretary
6th X1 Captain/ Secretary
Mixed X1 Captain / Secretary
Indoor League Captain 'A', 'B'
Fixtures Secretary
Press Officer
County liaison
Communications Officers

Men

Charles Farrow /
Danny Mayhew
Guy Whiting, Ian Watson
Richard Adams, Darren Clark
Neil Slade, John Bentley
Vacancy, Stuart List
Chris Hatch, Ray Black
Steve de Boltz
Andy Keedle, *Vacancy*
John Adams
Stuart Gooderham
John Adams
Stuart Gooderham

Ladies

Steph Cook/Fran Poppleton/
John Adams
Mandy Minter, Mel Maguire
Yvonne Nunn, Gill Burch

Tara O'Reilly
Fran Poppleton, Tara O'Reilly
Louise Carter
Maria Whelan
N/a
Stephanie Cook

Other Matters reported on at the AGM:-

(i) Chairman's Report (John Adams);

Firstly, thanks are due to our sponsors, Broadleaf Tree Specialists, and Thermecon. Thermecon have renewed their sponsorship for another 2 years and this welcome contribution will help to fund additional training time, as a first priority.

Many achievements should be recorded:

The Mens 6th X1 were promoted from their first season of league hockey.

The Mens 2nds - were league champions of Div 3 SE and will move up to Div 2 North.

The Mens 1sts won the Suffolk Cup for the first time in our history and retained a place in the East Premier 'A'.

Our two Mens squads won one each out of the Suffolk Indoor League and Suffolk Indoor League Cup

The Mens 4ths & 5ths both finished just 1 place off promotion and the 3rds maintained their place in Div 4 SE.

Most of the successful Suffolk Youth (mens) Indoor squad were IES players.

For the Ladies, at last the 1sts are promoted to East League after winning Suffolk League for the 2nd successive year and this should be recognised as a great achievement. The Ladies 2nds comfortably retained their place in the Suffolk Premier Division whilst the Ladies 3rds also did well in Division 1. The Ladies indoor 'A' squad were runners-up in the league to Ipswich Ladies.

For the outstanding work done with the youth coaching programme, everything is said in the report by Charlie Farrow (*see below*), other than to thank him and all the helpers through the season. There is no doubt that this has all helped to keep the Club running its 6 mens teams and it is to be hoped that more players will come through to the senior Ladies teams in the next year or two.

We need to provide more junior hockey next year and Charlie will try to get one or two games per month for all age groups. Our objective is to ensure all our junior teams will have a parent manager and a club coach next season but there is no doubt that more helpers are needed !

Thanks are due in some cases to people for giving up their own game to umpire on some occasions. The umpires tend to be the most difficult item to fill and Chris has had to put in a lot of effort to get umpires in place each week. The Social & Fund Raising activities have been as usual a very important part of our make-up, including financial. The social atmosphere is vital and thanks are due to Avril in particular and Sue Stenson for the Craft Fayre and other events. It is essential that these events are a success. Lastly, the Annual Dinner was most enjoyable. It was an excellent meal and venue. Again thanks to Avril !

Finally, thanks to the Committee. A lot of voluntary work is done during the season. Thanks are fully due to all Committee Members for the work. Helen Clark is thanked after 3 years as Secretary and also for her help with youth coaching and fundraising.

Finally, a plea for more volunteers to come forward and help run the Club. It's been very difficult to fill some positions for the new season and this is the first time I can remember this happening since I joined the Club. Those on the Committee put in an awful lot of time into the Club and for that I thank you all.

(ii) Business Manager's Report (Chris Hatch);

At the end of our 3rd season after moving to Rushmere Sports Club, it is a pleasure to report that we have continued to pay our way and look forward to the future in an adequate financial position although much remains to be done if we are ever to come near financing an astro at Rushmere and there is no room for slack or complacency. Please make every effort to pay subscriptions and match fees promptly and support the magnificent Social & Fundraising programme.

(iii) Social & Fundraising Report (Editor's report);

As mentioned in the Chairman's Report, the Social (and fundraising) activities of the Club were a great success and a vital part of our fabric and cohesion as a Club. Avril Adams, as Social Secretary, deserves our thanks and admiration for another sustained year of effort and enthusiasm in leading the organisation of all this. Sue Stenson and Avril put a great deal into organising our 3rd Craft Fayre - which is now a well-known annual event and which was highly successful for all concerned and provided the largest single sum of fund-raised income for the Club. The other events run, with credit to the main organisers were:

Halloween Party (A. Adams, S. Stenson); Christmas Karaoke (A Adams); Summer Volleyball (A. Adams, H. Clark); Sweaties (A. Adams); Race Night (A Adams, D. Taylor, S. Martin, A. Keedle); Triathlon, (A Adams and 7 other Ladies). The Social and Fundraising activities raised some £2194 for the Club.

(iv) Youth Coaching Report (Charles Farrow);

It is fair to say that our youth coaching programme has made a lot of progress during the 2000/01 season.

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge and thank David Walsh for running the RAF cup teams (U-14), our regular youth coaches, Abigail Adams, Karen Hollands, Jo Dexter, Helen Clark, Jane de Boltz, Geoff Reed, Claire Pearsons, and our youth match umpires including Chris Hatch, Steve de Boltz and Darren Clark.

Great cooperation has been found from Parents, who have always have brought their kids on time to matches and training - no problems at all and thank you for the enthusiasm & support !

I would also like to thank Cerys Davey for the teas and shirt washings.

Successes: Harleston were beaten by our boys U-16 team despite being one of the strongest clubs in the area. In the RAF Cup our U-14, team members were mostly 1 to 2 years younger than the opposition and we got to the semis before losing on grass. We were 2nd in U-13s at the Felixstowe tournament (and should have won it again !).

Without doubt though, the biggest highlight has been seeing the involvement of the kids !

Finally, it is a pleasure to record the awards made to our juniors in each of the age group categories:

U-9 girl: Amber Davy; U-9 boy: Josh Godfrey; U-11 girl: Jessica Davy; U-11 boy: Max Underwood; U-13 girl: Beth Golding; U-13 boy: Tom Davey. Junior players of the year; James Howe, David Messant.

(vi) Umpires and Umpiring Report (Chris Hatch);

For the record, the Mens 1st X1 Premier 'A' league matches were umpired by ECHUA appointees whilst the 1st X1 friendlies and most of the Mens seconds games and were umpired by members of the SCHUA and the Club is grateful to these organisations for this essential contribution. Ladies 3rds and Men's 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th X1 games were umpired by Club appointees. In addition, we had to provide 2 'neutral' umpires for each of our two Suffolk Ladies Premier teams on the neutral exchange scheme. For our official Saturday and Sunday programme, 5 or more games were umpired by Chris Hatch, John Pope, John Bendall, Nigel Munson, John Wright, Jon Oakley, Mark Gray, Ian Reed, Ray Black, Anne-Marie Edney, John Adams and Trevor Everard.

John Jay (with Alan Fairweather and Sheila Elden) organised a Umpires Level 1 qualification course at Rushmere, from which the 3 IES candidates Tara O'Reilly, Mandy Minter and Darren Clark passed the exam. Darren, along with Steve de Boltz, subsequently completed the Level 1 qualification assessment and were added to our 'qualified' list. The Level 1, or better, qualified umpires list of current IES members by the end of the season was as follows:- John Adams, John Bendall, Ray Black, Peter Blake, Graham Brookman, Darren Clark, Steve de Boltz, Anne-Marie Edney, Trevor Everard, Charlie Farrow, Jacqui Gooderham, Stephen Harris, Chris Hatch, Helen Jay, John Jay, Eleanor Knowland, Mel Maguire, Simon Martin, Nigel Munson, Jon Oakley, Cathy Piddington, John Pope, Ian Reed, Simon Rose, David Taylor, and John Wright.

Chris Hatch will again act as the Club's non-pool umpire appointments coordinator for the coming season. The

Suffolk Ladies Premier Division umpire exchange scheme has been discontinued and Club appointees will now be made for these games. All members are encouraged to acquire formal umpiring qualifications – it will help to sustain the Club and it will help your game.

End of Season Team Reports: (2000/2001)

Mens 1st X1 (Martin Reader);

What a season that was! I don't think anyone could have predicted the ending. <Editor - *In a nutshell, Blueharts up, Harleston down and IES retaining a place in Premier A as the inter-league play-offs finally turned in our favour !*> We saw everything - the highs of beating teams such as Cambridge City and the lows of losing to Letchworth. Inconsistency and unavailability of squad members proved to be our biggest hurdle.

Having said this I believe we played at times the best hockey since we were promoted two years ago. These performances should be the foundation for which the first team squad has to build on for a successful next season. It's a shame to lose Colin Mannall who is relocating closer to London. He has proved to be a key member of the team and will be greatly missed. However on a positive note a number of the junior players have improved no end and should feature in the coming seasons for experience in Premier A.

Finally I am sure I speak on behalf of all of us in wishing Charlie the very best of luck as the new captain. With hard work in training and on fitness through the summer we should at least be looking at a mid table position next season. <Editor's note - *and many thanks to Vaughn Dearing for his commitment to coaching the squad*>.

Ladies 1st X1 (Abigail Adams);

The Ladies 1st X1 set out with the aims of consolidating what had been achieved last season and gaining East League status. With these goals set, motivation, determination and commitment, coupled with superb team spirit, became invaluable attributes of the team. Although encountering stumbling blocks such as defeat in the first league game, the squad gained in strength and once securing the top spot, stayed leaders and became fearful opponents of any side in the league. The efforts paid off with the success of gaining promotion - undoubtedly a challenge to be relished for next season. The 1st X1 also had an impressive record in the EHA Vase competition, despite extensive travelling commitments. This gave the chance for other players to play for the 1st X1, strengthening the squad and the different possibilities within.

All in all, an extremely successful season, provoking positive vibes for the team's challenge in the East League.

Mens 2nd X1 (Peter Elsom);

It is no secret that I didn't want to captain for a second term of office but felt a moral obligation to the players. The response from the players to win a second league title in a row has made me extremely proud and honoured to have been their captain. In summary of the season I have concluded that we were not the most skilful side in the league and man for man we were not the fittest side in the league. However we were second to no-one in terms of determination desire to win and team spirit. This really was a team effort and everyone who played even those that only played a few games played their part and can be proud of their achievement.

In every season there are turning points and November 4th 2000 was our turning point. We started the season with 2 wins 2 draws and a defeat, hardly championship form. Some sides might be happy with a start like this but when you are "use to winning " nothing short of victory every game is considered failure. So by Nov 4th we made the short trip across town to Henley Road with rumours beginning to rumble that the skipper should quit. At half time with the vocal Ipswich spectators in jubilant mood that their side were two nil up a little soul searching took place, words were said that are best not repeated. The rest as they say is history. The response of the side was unbelievable and we ran out 3-2 winners. It was a very quiet Henley Road after the game, almost deserted.

This victory instilled the confidence in the side and they now had the belief that perhaps they could win back to back championships. They did win back to back championships and deserve all the praise and adulation that they get.

It was very much a team effort but I must praise individuals as well. Steve Deboltz was committed and determined at left defender, Paul Fletcher returned to the club and scored some memorable goals, Graham Bendall has developed into a very accomplished defender, Nick Aveling showed sublime skill at left midfield and then there was the trio of youngsters in the side Reed, Ashton and Watson proving that the future is bright.

The player of the year award went to Kevin Day and was the choice of not only his fellow players but also spectators and umpires alike. He thoroughly deserves this accolade as he was "the thinker" that dominated midfield. I myself would like to thank the people that have supported me over the last two years by playing for me and putting up with "my style of management" I would also like to thank them for their kind and totally unexpected gift at the

club dinner. It is with a degree of sadness that I am standing down as captain, retirement beckons and it is time for a younger man to take the helm. I wish my successor well he could not have wished for a nicer more committed bunch of guys.

Ladies 2nd XI (Tara O'Reilly);

Another tough season for the 2nd Team in the Suffolk Ladies League. Building on last year's experiences of competing in the top division, we began this season knowing what was ahead of us – stiff competition. Unexpected changes throughout the year added to the pressure, such as an ever-changing starting 11, changing of Vice Captains, loss of Andy Keedle's coaching due to work commitments, a fuel crisis and a year of using almost every goalkeeper. As always, the Ladies 2nds rose to the challenge without exception. A blend of new and young blood together with the steady experience from the 'regulars' proved to be just the stuff to make us stronger. Sure, we had our big defeats and felt deflated afterwards, but the great thing about the Ladies 2nd team is our amazing ability to bounce back and every Saturday is a fresh start. Our opposition commented more than once that we were an unpredictable team and I once heard 'Wow, if that's their second team, I don't fancy our chances against IES first'.

Our big games of the season were almost beating Carlton Park right at the start (I think we were more shocked about it than they were!) and our Big Win against Sudbury. Sheer determination and grit proved to us on that day that we can be a truly great hockey team and the fact that we helped to secure promotion for our first team made the victory just that much sweeter. Ladies 2nd Team Player of the Year goes to Mel Maguire who has had an excellent season. Steady and cool in defence, often showing that she still has a few tricks up her sleeve (and some oranges!) to get us out of a scrape. Off the pitch she has promoted enthusiasm for the game and signifies what I hope we will bring more of next season. A personal thanks to all those who have supported me as captain this year, especially Cath Piddington who stepped in as Vice Captain when Claire Pearsons was promoted to first team. Also, a big thank you to all the girls who doubled up throughout the season, ensuring that all games were played and I didn't tear all my hair out!

Good luck to next year's Captain – I'm sure she will receive the support I did from a great bunch of people. Let's have a few more of those 'Sudbury' games, eh ?!!

Mens 3rd XI (Richard Adams);

2000/2001 was a tough season for the 3rd XI. Following promotion last season, this year was always going to be littered with ups and downs and looking at the league results over the year (5 wins, 4 draw and 11 losses), there seemed to be more downs than ups. However, ask any of the players of the 3rd XI and a different story will emerge – one of roller coaster excitement and discovery (well good fun at least). Amongst many others, particular highlights of the season included a gutsy 2-3 win away to Rochford Casuals, having been 2-0 down at half time; an elegant 7-0 victory over Wivenhoe; and a nervy 3-1 win away at Romford to ensure survival in the division. Many players over the season showed vast improvement. The side was a true mix of youth and experience. The younger members of the side deserve particular mention for their skills and commitment, with many of the members of the 3rd XI winning county honours in their age groups. Week-in week-out, Marc Lloyd showed hunger and aggression (his performances on the pitch weren't bad either), Alex Borwick's silky stick skills improved constantly and Charles Coulson has been a true rock in defence, showing maturity and intuition in his play beyond his years.

While the experience of Ian Suckling, Darren Clarke, Danny Cripps and Bob Gair proved a stabilising influence and all contributed tremendously off the field by offering to be drivers for the majority of away matches. Up front, scoring goals proved troublesome at times, however credit must go to Andy Heaton and Sam Boutell, an unlikely centre forward scoring some memorable goals and occasionally managing to stay on his feet through entire matches! The player of the year award went to Andy Murray for his overall team commitment to training, playing and also driving through the season. Only he knows where his energy came from to undertake the many twisting and turning runs, dancing through tackles and mesmerising opponents – however, the image of a headless chicken does keep springing to my mind for some reason! The achievement to survive promotion can never be under-estimated and I feel that there is considerable potential to build to the future – to quote a few 'things can only get better' and 'you ain't seen nothing yet'. *<Editor's note - great credit is due to the captain Richard Adams for taking on the role midway through his first season with IES>*.

Ladies 3rd XI (Gill Burch);

The most rewarding aspect of the past season has been the amount of work and dedication which all members of the 3rds have contributed to the team. We've enjoyed many excellent games and always had a lot of fun, despite the fact that performances have often been hampered by injuries to key players.

Whenever players have been called upon to help and fill in - often at short notice - they have always responded positively. We've also been indebted to members of the other teams who've also been prepared to help out when we've been short. It's been really encouraging to see the younger players excel themselves. They have gained in experience, skill and confidence – especially Rachel Nunn, who's shown many of us how to play on grass remember that?! It all bodes well for the future. The achievements of the season give us so much to build on for the next campaign. There's also been great spirit and even when we've left the pitch without the right result, we've always had heads high and a smile. We're sure everyone's looking forward to next season immensely and, once again, I'd like to place on record my sincere thanks for everyone's commitment and support.

Mens 4th X1 (David Walsh);

The 4ths started the season without several of the seniors from last year, and five straight defeats in the league didn't bode well for the rest of the campaign. However, we turned the corner with a fine win against Colchester in November and never looked back, finishing just one place off promotion from division 7SE. The highlight was a home win against Harlow 2nds in February when we played our most assured hockey, passing the ball well and only dribbling where appropriate. On the whole we had a good blend of youth and experience with Tom Ashton (centre back) the pick of our U16s, Neil Slade improving all the time up front and John Bentley scoring regularly from midfield. Of the younger players, James Klug and Tom Parry look to be particularly fine prospects for next season. 'Keeper Mark Howlett was named player of the year for his help off as well as on the field, in what was a difficult season for the captain due to problems finding umpires and matches being cancelled due to bad weather or opponents conceding. Neil has volunteered to take on the captain's role next season and I wish him every success. Thanks are due to those who umpired, often at short notice, as well as to the senior players who drove, more or less, to every away game.

Mens 5th X1 (Andy Whiting);

With the start of the season the hopes were high of a strong start to match the end of the prior year. A good 5-0 win at Romford for the first match of the year seemed to signal that the team was still in good shape but with the next three matches being conceded against us and then being beaten 8-1 by Ipswich we soon came back to earth with a large bump. The season was to follow much of this pattern. As an overview, the season was not a particularly memorable one with four matches being conceded to us (i.e a 3 - 0 win but no actual game) and the inclement weather also taking its toll. An added problem for the squad this year was the high turnover of players for the team, 37 different players turned out for the 5th team. Thanks is extended to all, whether regulars or occasionalists.

On a more positive point, the younger players who took their chances with us have proved that there is a strong pool of talent for the club to draw upon in the future. It is vital that their talents are recognised and put to use in the correct level for the club as these players have proved their worth and dedication to the club in a sometimes forgotten side. Steve Peck, new to the Club, being worthy of the player of the year award for the team. Thanks, as always, has to go to the umpires and club officials that have helped in any way for the running of the side. I wish my successor well in a difficult, and sometimes disheartening, role and I look forward to getting back to just playing again.

Mens 6th X1 (Chris Hatch);

The decision by the former Veterans to try their hand at league hockey proved to be highly successful with a combination of generally enjoyable hockey and a good measure of success on the field to reflect on at the end of the season. Apart from a rather young, aggressive and technically strong Crostyx team (league winners with a 100% record) we mostly came up against other teams comprising veterans and a few young players, which meant a fair and close contest in most games. We were good enough to win 13 league games including doing the 'treble' over Upminster 5th, Saffron Walden 5th and Romford 4th (8 teams in the league playing each other 3 times) and two wins each against Clacton 3rd and Witham 4th. Three friendlies were also won. Terry Murray always kept us in the game and when he was unavailable for a protracted period after Christmas, Dave Gooch or Mark Burrows stepped into the goalkeeping position with good performances. Barrie Whelpton was comfortably leading scorer (league & friendlies) with 18 goals followed by Brian Mitchell (6), John Taylor (6 - in two hat-tricks !) and Jerry Hindle (5). All the juniors who played from time to time produced highly promising performances, especially James Howe, James Hughes and Steve Peck and James Klug. Many thanks to all the umpires and other stalwarts in the side not mentioned above (including Ian Reed, Ron Woolgar, Hugh Rowland, Ray Black, Tom Grant, Jon Oakley and Kevin Foster) for contributing to a very satisfactory season. Oh yes - I nearly forgot to mention that we got league promotion as well !

Mixed X1 (Annette White);

Yes, it's been another rip-roaring roller coaster ride of excitement for the mixed team this season. The fixtures were once again organised with military precision by Simon Martin (who receives my grateful thanks) and although some games were cancelled, those that we did play usually resulted in a positive outcome. Herne Bay this year was to say the least interesting, with a certain degree of cross-dressing (nice skirt, Rob) and the team adopting a new mascot (a 2ft gnome answering to the name of Nobby). Results in our games can be best described as suffering a slight 'downturn' but thanks to all those that made it, I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did. Congratulations to Duncan Vaughan who was the mixed player of the season. Thanks to those players who helped out when we had a player crisis (most weeks) and also to our dedicated umpires who were Darren Clark, Dave Barham, John Pope and Chris Hatch. Finally I'd like to thank Andy Murray for his enthusiasm and support in organising the team and to wish Steve De Boltz and Tara O'Reilly an entertaining and successful 2001/02 season.

Information concerning the build-up to the 2001/2002 season

1. Training, Coaching and related activities for 2001/2002

i) The summer 'Sweaties' club - every Monday evening 8.00 - 9.00 until end-September. Varied 'social' sport other than hockey. Session fee of £2.00

ii) Pre-season fitness training for all men and ladies will take place at Rushmere Sports Club on Mondays at 6.30pm from **Monday 2nd July** until further notice (*sorry if this information has arrived after the start date - Editor*). (Training takes place before the 'Sweaties' session). Please try to arrive promptly and ready-changed. This is basically running and related exercises on the Rushmere sports field grass and is free of charge.

iii) Main skills training will again take place at Copleston School each Wednesday evening mostly between 7pm and 9pm. This year it will again be Men 7 - 8pm and Ladies 8 - 9pm (subject to review). This will begin on **29th August**. (From 6pm until 7pm preceding this we will be continuing our coaching of Copleston and other junior players). Skills training sessions at Copleston are free to fully paid-up members who play and pay regularly in the Saturday and/or Sunday Mixed match programme.

2. Social Tennis - Sunday 12th August 2001

Fun Mixed Doubles Tennis & Strawberry Cream Tea, Rushmere Sports Club, 2.00 pm

Families - you can bring a picnic and support Browns CC in a Cricket Cup match

Call Avril 01394 282766 to book a place in the Tournament, so she has numbers for catering. There will be a few pounds entry fee to pay for the tennis courts and the cream teas.

3. Start of the 2001/2002 playing season

There will no 'Club Day' as such, due to the unavailability of a double pitch site. The Club is booking friendly fixtures for a full programme on **Saturday 1st September** (i.e - up to 6 Mens games + 3 Ladies games) as part of the preparation for the League campaigns. The Ladies League starts on 8th September and the Mens league on 29th September. The full season's fixtures programme will be posted on the Club web site as soon as possible.

4. Arrangements at Rushmere Sports Club during 2001/2002

The arrangements are expected to be very similar to what was established during the past three seasons. Good luck to everybody for the new season !!

5. Reminder to Members and Prospective Members - extract from the Club Rules

Members and prospective members of all ages, including Juniors, must note that the Club takes part in a physical and competitive sport and that all individuals participate entirely at their own risk. The Club only buys 3rd party liability insurance and is unable to provide for personal player insurance.

Arrangement of personal injury insurance is strongly advised. This may be done, for example, through John Wilkinson of Adams Wilkinson Insurance Brokers (Tel 01473 714224) or the insurance department of the English Hockey Association (Tel 01908 544644).

*****END*****