

# PETANQUE ENGLAND DIRECTORS REPORT – 2019

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This is not how I expected to be delivering my final report as President, but in these strange times we must all adapt and I would like to thank all who have been involved in ensuring we could hold a meaningful AGM, whether that be by researching our legal options, putting them in place or simply by submitting a proxy vote.

As this **is** my final report, I would like to take a few words to express some of the highlights and successes of my time in office, I am sure you won't mind. There have been a lot of changes over the 5 years, not least of which is the change from the English Pétanque Association to Pétanque England and the associated change in legal structure. This process leaves the organisation in a better position to face whatever the future may bring. Ken Buchan and David Baxter deserve particular thanks for this, I know it took up many hours of their time.

There has been a huge increase in the number of coaches available around the country, thanks in a large part to the dedicated work of Colin Roper. It has been great to see the number increasing with every report Colin has submitted to the Board.

Unfortunately, Covid-19 has delayed the start of a new umpiring development campaign as a number of courses and exams had to be cancelled but I am sure this will restart as soon as the circumstances allow.

The provision for our junior members has gone from strength to strength with a fantastic National Youth Academy providing a programme for all the under 18s who want to take part, not just those players with international potential. It has been particularly enjoyable to see the regular Facebook posts of exercises and challenges that the younger members have sharing over the last few weeks and I thank Toni Gates and her team for their dedication and inventiveness.

I have enjoyed seeing everyone at the Inter Regionals every year, watching such a large number of people playing the sport we all love is immensely satisfying and reminds me just how accessible pétanque is, something which we should never lose sight of.

As you should know by now we are not going to have an Inter-Regional this year. It was a difficult decision in many ways as the Board are well aware how much of a highlight to the pétanque season this event is for many. However, discussions with IOW Tours and Mill Rythe demonstrated that it would not be possible to hold the competition in a way that we would recognise. The expected social distancing rules would likely mean that the capacity of the site would be reduced by at least half, we would have a maximum of half the pitches available and we may need to redesign the format to allow for dining at different times. Additionally, given the age profile of our membership we were not certain that enough players would wish to take part even in the restricted format. We therefore took the decision that it was best to decide earlier rather than later so that everyone knew exactly what the situation was.

This could have led to a large financial liability for Pétanque England under a contract written for very different times. However, David Mason and Cary Bush have worked extremely hard with our travel partners, IOW Tours, and this has been minimised to an acceptable level.

You may also be aware that Away Resorts, the owners of Mill Rythe, are planning to close Mill Rythe for a complete refurbishment and will be reopening with a different format, more in line with their other parks. As a result of this we knew that 2020 was going to be our last year at this venue and work had been done to find alternatives for 2021 and onwards. Indeed, the intention was that the March Board meeting would be held at one of those possible venue but unfortunately Covid-19 got in the way. Work is continuing on this and an announcement will be made in due course.

The Home Nations qualifier and the associated Championship has been another annual highlight, allowing me to be involved in supporting so many people achieve the opportunity to pull on an England shirt. I particularly enjoyed presenting the trophy to Brian Eldridge as our representative squad member when England retained the trophy at Mill Rythe when it was our turn to host the competition. It was rather more tense the following year when we retained the title in Jersey, the Jersey team maximising the benefit of home advantage and coming very close to taking the trophy.

Work has prevented me from travelling overseas to support our international squads as often as I might have liked but the trips I have been able to make have always been enlightening and have shown both how far we have come and how much further we have to go.

When I became President, I thought 5 years was a reasonable amount of time to occupy the role, and I stand by that view. Annette & I are stepping away while we still love the sport, and the many friends we have made through it. We are going to give our successors the opportunity to carve their own path by opting to stay away for the foreseeable future so that we are not peering over their shoulder watching their every move. Obviously, we will be available to answer any questions and provide counsel should they ask, but it is on to the next stage for everyone.

I would like to thank all those who have served on the national committee / Board for their support, dedication, and hard work during my presidency. It has always been a team effort and they have been a great team.

I would also like to thank anyone and everyone who has supported and worked with me over my time in the world of pétanque, whether that be as a team-mate, club associate or at the Regional & National level. I hope I have done my best to make you proud.

Finally, as has become traditional, I would like to finish with thanking Annette for everything she has done in helping me achieve as much as I have. Without her backing me up I would not have been able to do the job. And she has asked me to remind you to keep wearing sunscreen.

**Martin Eggleton**

## GOVERNANCE

The directors who have served during the year have been: -

**Martin Eggleton** – President

**David Baxter** – Events Secretary

**Kathleen Brooks**

**Ken Buchan** - Company Secretary and Disciplinary Officer

**Cary Bush** – Treasurer

**Clive De Silva** (appointed 20/04/19)

**Annette Eggleton** (appointed 20/04/19)

**Glenn Floyd** (resigned 18/01/19)

**Alan Forse** (resigned 23/03/19)

**Martin Hughes** – Vice-President & Chair of the National Performance Panel

**Ray Keemer-Richards** – Membership

**Jim Marstin** – Clubs Administrator

**David Mason** – Chair of the Events Group

**Robert Parker** – Chair of the Umpiring Commission

**Alan Roden** – Eurocup administrator

**Colin Roper** – Chair of the Coaching Commission

## TREASURER'S REPORT

### Summary

In 2018 the net assets of the association were £28,205. By the end of 2019 this had been reduced by an annual loss in 2019 of £10,380 and our net assets now stand at £17,195.

Membership Fees were increased by £2 in 2019 which saw an overall increase of £4,753

During 2019 the domestic competitions by design became self-sustaining – expenses covered by revenue. However, the net investment in our representational teams grew by £8,842 which at the current rate of growth is not sustainable. When I first took on the role of Treasurer in 2013, we spent approximately £17.5k net on International representation and at the existing fee of £13 that equated to approximately 50% of the membership Fee. In 2019 we spent approximately £42k international representation which with an existing membership fee of £22 represents approximately 70% of the membership fee. While the actual venues cannot be predicted with any reasonable certainty we do know that they do follow a 2 year cycle and while in the year following 2019 we would have expected a lower number of tournaments and therefore expense, the following year would have replicated 2019 with higher net costs. Should the membership fee increase be approved it will only go part of the way to covering this projected deficit.

If the association is to be financially sustainable it will need a substantial rethink to either identify additional source of funds or reduce its level of expenditure. It cannot continue in its existing format or it will ultimately run out of funds.

## **Income and Expenditure**

2019 has been another year of investment in our representative teams which has resulted in a loss for the year totalling £10,380, up from £7,248 in 2018 despite a fee increase of £2 per member.

The income generated in 2019 increased by 1% to £79,551. 81% of this revenue is generated from membership and club registration fees which represents an increase of 7% over 2018. The balance of the revenue comes from competition entry fees, miscellaneous income and players contribution.

The expenditure for 2019 increased by £4,583 to £90,381 and 88.7% of this expenditure related to Competition Expenses, Insurance and Travel & Meetings.

### **Travel and Meeting expenses**

Totalling £53,387 accounts for 59% of the expenses, up from 53% in 2018. The main categories of the expense are

- Mileage £7,406 (2018 - £6,612)
- Hotels £21,840 (2018 - £17,838)
- Air fares £17,553 (2018 £10,722)

These have largely been driven by our international representation (Women and Juniors in Cambodia) and the veterans which compete every other year.

### **Insurance**

The cost of the insurance has increased from £5,798 to £8,362. This has largely been driven by the change of Insurers in 2019 as a result of part of the coverage being dropped by the initial provider. Terms have also been improved. It also appears that in 2018 we were undercharged by approximately £1,500 which related to the personal accident policy. The good news is that we were able to actually reduce our premiums slightly in 2020 by £155 and at the same time increasing coverage to worldwide (excluding US and Canada) – previously only Europe.

### **Competition Expenses**

Competition expenses are made up of 3 main categories.

- Competition prizes: (£7,374 - 2018 £11,351) which should be approximately cost neutral against competition revenues (£8,355 in 2019) after deducting umpires and organisers expenses.
- Trophies: Costs are down in the year from £3,348 to £1,256 due to a bulk purchase to cover 3 years medals and catch up in 2018
- Shirts and Kit: Up by £3,013 which includes £1,282 for Umpire Shirts, £520 for shirts for the titles weekend, increased cost of £662 for the Home Nations and the balance for international competition kit.

## **Balance Sheet**

The balance sheet continues to remain relatively simple year over year. Funds in the bank of £51k cover the outstanding creditors, miscellaneous accruals and the development fund totalling £44k leaving a net cash balance of £7k.

The difference between the available funds and the net assets of the association is accounted by £9,671 owed to the association by a number of its members. Accounts receivable (Debtors) continues to be an ongoing issue for the Association. Progress has been made during the first 5 months of the year and the current balance stands at £4,621 with a number of members paying by instalment after we signed up to GoCardless allowing the members to pay down their balance on a regular basis.

**Cary Bush**

## **MEMBERSHIP**

A summary of our membership is set out below with comparative figures for 2018.

	<b>2019</b>			<b>2018</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Veterans (over 55 years)</b>	<b>1257</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>1931</b>	<b>1132</b>	<b>549</b>	<b>1681</b>
<b>Adults (23 to 54 years)</b>	<b>494</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>644</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>1038</b>
<b>Espoirs (18 to 22 years)</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Juniors (17 years or less)</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1842</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>2715</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>908</b>	<b>2819</b>
<b>Number of Clubs</b>			<b>160</b>			<b>167</b>
<b>Affiliated Leagues</b>			<b>3</b>			<b>3</b>

It is gratifying to note that our junior membership has increased by 36% and that there has also been a modest increase in the number of espoirs. However, our adult membership has declined significantly by 38%. Much of this loss is attributable to adults moving up to the veterans age group but there is an overall drop of 3.6% in our total membership.

## **UMPIRING**

The umpiring commission is headed by Bob Parker who is supported by an executive group consisting of John Thatcher (Secretary), John Edmondson, Gareth Sullivan and Mike Pegg. Throughout the year our umpires have officiated at all national events including the titles weekend and the Inter Regional Championships. Our active umpires have all been kitted out with new uniforms sourced through the CEP. In November, an umpires course was held for 12 candidates seeking to qualify as club umpires and 5 existing umpires seeking to upgrade their qualifications. Those attending the course will be able to sit the qualification exams during 2020.

## **COACHING**

PE's coaching activities are monitored and managed by the Coaching Commission under its committed and energetic chair Colin Roper. Colin is supported by an Executive Committee comprising: -

**Phil Boarder**

**Paul Lancaster**

**Joe Sheffield**

The Coaching Commission consists of its chair and the Regional Coaches. At the annual Coaching Commission meeting held in May it was decided to reclassify the coaching grades as follows: -

Category 1 - Club Coach

Category 2 - Club Coach Advanced

Category 3 - County Coach

It was noted at that meeting that many club coaches were not submitting quarterly coaching reports to their Regional Coaching Co-ordinators and consequently the Commission is not fully informed about the extent of coaching activities throughout the country. A new Club Coach Assessment report has been introduced and it is hoped that this will provide a fuller picture of what is happening at the local level.

During the year, a further ten members obtained their Club Coach Qualification, bringing the total number of qualified Club Coaches to 138. For the first time we now have coverage in all sixteen regions. Two Club Coaches successfully upgraded their qualification to Club Coach Advanced bringing the total number of Advanced Club Coaches to 12. The Coaching Commission is always on the lookout for suitable club venues at which to hold the "workshop" elements of the Advanced Club Coach course. The facilities required are a meetings room with access to a nearby terrain and the Chair of the Coaching Commission will be pleased to hear from any club which can provide those facilities.

The Chair of the Coaching Commission, Colin Roper, and Paul Lancaster as pathfinders for the newly formulated Category 3 qualification have undertaken most of the constituent modules. The Category 3 Coaching Course has now been reviewed and modified and the course will be opened to other candidates in the Spring of 2020.

In March Colin Roper and Paul Lancaster attended the inaugural "Coaching for Coaches" course organised by the CEP. The course took place over 2 days at the National Bouledrome in Luxembourg and was conducted by a team of 4 Coaching experts from France, Denmark and Germany. Our delegates were relieved to find that much of our domestic coaching courses is founded on what the course tutors recommended as being best practice, but they found the sessions relating to the mental side and approach to the game particularly helpful. The CEP Course is designed to be one of a series of three culminating in the opportunity for participants to become "European" qualified coaches.

During the year the Coaching Commission monitored and processed 28 DBS certification renewals upon the expiration of existing certificates. Some coaches had not responded to the first stage of the application within the stipulated time and this had caused delay and additional cost to PE.

The Coaching Commission Executive has increased the course fee for the Club Coach Course to £30 and has set the fee for the County Coach Course at £40.00. No fee is charged by the Coaching Commission for the Advanced Club Coach course although the external modules will attract a fee applied by the external provider. The Coaching Commission expects the member's own club to bear the cost of the club coach course and the member's Region to pay the cost of the DBS certification fee.

Another task taken on board during 2019 was the attendance of various coaches at National Ranking events in order to record individual playing statistics of senior players to assist the NPP lead members in squad/team selection.

## **EVENTS**

The Events Group chaired by **David Mason** is responsible for planning and organising national events. The group comprises various regional representatives and also includes the following :-

**David Baxter** (Group Secretary),  
**Alan Roden** (Eurocup Organiser)  
**Annette Eggleton** (Board Member)  
**Hassi Leverett** (Women in Pétanque)

### **Women in Petanque**

The Women in Petanque Group is a small band of volunteers headed by Hassi Leverett set up to promote pétanque to women. It has proved to be an excellent initiative helping to showcase the achievements of our female players, share news and information and generally raise the profile of women in pétanque. This year the group introduced a women's doubles tournament to celebrate International Women's Day on 8 March. 98 teams took part in regional qualifiers spread over nine regions with the 32 qualifying teams competing at Oxshott on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April. Southern Counties' **Hassi Leverett** (who came up with the idea for the tournament) won with partner **Karen Lombard**, defeating Mercia's **Caria Jervis** and **Carole Sheppard** in the final.

In May Hassi compiled and issued a newsletter to report on the regional and national stages of the inaugural Women in Pétanque Doubles Competition and which featured inspirational articles from Toni Gates, the National Youth Squad lead coach and Ella Slade one of our top female players.

### **World Transplant Games**

This year England hosted the World Transplant Games. These games are organised by the World Transplant Federation, an organisation dedicated to promote the success of transplant surgery and the need to raise public awareness of organ

and tissue donation. The event is open to athletes from all round the world who have undergone transplant surgery. One of the disciplines is pétanque and PE were invited to organise this part of the games. Our president Martin Eggleton headed the team responsible for planning the event and for the organisation and umpiring during the tournament. Over 300 athletes took part in the Singles and Doubles Pétanque events which took place in the Sage carpark in Gateshead and the success of the tournament was undoubtedly attributable to the hard work of Martin and his band of volunteers.

## **Euro Cup**

The 2018/2019 Eurocup competition resumed in early April with the 16 club teams remaining from the 2018 knockout rounds competing in the round 4 group stage which took place at Luton and Leicester. Baldock Town (Chiltern), Cobbetts (Southern Counties), London and Manston (Kent) won their groups thereby qualifying to go through to the finals which were held on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> April. At the finals Baldock Town won a decisive round against London to achieve a fourth consecutive victory in the domestic Eurocup competition and the right to represent England in the CEP Eurocup championship. In the PE Trophy competition held on the same weekend for the runners up in the Round four groups, British Sugar (Anglia) were the eventual winners. This year saw the introduction of a plate competition for the clubs losing in the first 2 knock out rounds of the main Eurocup competition. This part of the competition culminated in a round robin competition between the last 4 teams of which Duke of Wellington (Kent) came out on top.

## **National Rankings Competition**

The National Rankings competitions commenced with a triples competition which took place on 11<sup>th</sup> May in Nottingham. In the women's final **Claire White** and sisters **Kaylee** and **Sammy Thatcher** won against **Hannah Griffin**, 12-year-old **Ella Slade** and **Sabrina Seville**. In the men's format **Reece Gould**, **Sam Blakey** and **Dean Seville** were the victors against **Jeremy Huntley**, **Ross Jones** and **Rowland Jones**.

The National Titles weekend was again held at Gravesend in the May bank holiday weekend. In the men's doubles **Ross Jones** and **Sam Blakey** won the title after defeating **Sofiane Lachani** and **Monty Quaia** in the final. In the singles **Rowland Jones** lifted his first ever title defeating **Jason White** in the final having just edged a tense 13-12 battle with **Barry Wing** in the semi final and a similarly tight 13-11 match against **Callum Lombard** in the quarter final. In the women's competitions **Emma Longstaff** pulled off the superb double of Singles and Doubles titles, winning against **Aimee Colley** in the singles final and winning with partner **Sarah Huntley** against **Becky & Carolyn Edwins**. The mixed doubles (not part of PE's National Rankings) was won for the first time by **Callum Lombard** and **Kaylee Thatcher**, defeating serial winners **Jack Blows** and **Sarah Huntley** in the final.

The National Rankings series concluded over the weekend of 29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> June at Worthing with both doubles and triples competitions. In the women's rankings **Claire White** and **Sammy Thatcher** won in the doubles final against **Sabrina Seville** and

**Hannah Griffin**, while **Claire White**, **Kaylee Thatcher** and **Sammy Thatcher** defeated **Sarah Huntley**, **Emma Longstaff** and **Lisa Goliger** in the triples final.

The top 6 ranking positions for men and women were as follows: -

Position	Men	Women
<b>1</b>	<b>Rowland Jones</b>	<b>Emma Longstaff</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Sam Blakey</b>	<b>Claire White</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Jason White</b>	<b>Sarah Huntley</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Ross Jones</b>	<b>Samantha Thatcher</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Dean Seville</b>	<b>Kaylee Thatcher</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Reece Gould</b>	<b>Rebecca Edwards</b>

During 2019 PE introduced a series of three veterans (over 55) ranking triples competitions all of which were won by the trio of **Simon Bird**, **Ian Barnes** and **Cliff Campbell** all of whom were ranked equal first. The second most successful trio were **Hassi Leverett**, **Duncan Brown** and **Graham Elcome** who were each ranked equal fourth. The entry for the veterans qualifiers was disappointing and only 6 teams were present at the final qualifier which was also the national veterans title event. Subsequent feedback suggests that scheduling clashes and travel distances may have contributed to a poor turnout.

### **Home Nations Qualifier**

On 12<sup>th</sup> May 32 teams competed in Nottingham for the honour of representing England in the Home Nations Championship to be held in Cardiff in August. One team ended the day with the maximum 5 wins – **Clive De Silva**, **Phil Bradshaw** and **Steve Daykin**. There were a further six teams on four wins and after the Buchholz tie break was applied (and an 8<sup>th</sup> place play off), the eight qualifying teams were:-

England 1	<b>Clive De Silva, Phil Bradshaw and Steve Dakin</b>
England 2	<b>Dean Ashby, Jason White, Jeff Booth and Rob Booth</b>
England 3	<b>Carol Woodward, Glenn Woodward and Hannah Griffin</b>
England 4	<b>Matt Blyton, Jamie Blyton and Lee Edgar</b>
England 5	<b>Jitendra Bharania, Kammles Modha and Rohit Damodar</b>
England 6	<b>Duncan Brown, Steve Brown, Gary Kelynack and Tim Edwins</b>
England 7	<b>Colin Smith, Pat Rowlands, Simon Cotton and Jacob Smith</b>
England 8	<b>Fay Golder, Steve Golder and Margaret Eldridge</b>

### **Inter-Regional Championships**

PE's flagship event was held once more at Hayling Island in September. For the third successive year **Chiltern** were the Division 1 champions with a nine-win margin over the runners-up London. The best individual team was the London trio of **Sofiane Lachani**, **Monty Quaia** and **Hamza Mouni** with 11 wins. The Championship Division 2 winners were **Anglia** with a comfortable nine-win margin over runners up **Isle of Wight**. Divisions 1 and 2 of the Challenge competition were won by **Chiltern** and **Heart of England**, respectively. In the youth championship, the

**Southern Counties** team of **Francesca Evans-Jones, Will Read, Sam Rattue** and **Sally Sin** were crowned champions while **Ella Slade** of **Sussex** won the Junior Precision Shooting Championship.

Hayling Island was also the venue for the adult precision shooting championship. After the preliminary rounds, **Sarah Huntley**, the reigning champion from **Chiltern** was ranked in first position but lost in the semi-final stage to **Scott Ashby** of **Kent** who went on to defeat **Frederico Faucher** of **London** in the final.

This year a new award was introduced, the Presidents Cup, which is awarded to the region that amasses the largest number of wins across Youth, Championship and Challenge competitions. This year the clear winners were **Chiltern**, followed by **Southern Counties** in second place, **Kent** in third place and **Anglia** in 4<sup>th</sup> place.

### **Champion of Champions**

The domestic playing season concluded in early October with Regional Champions and Runners-Up competing for the honour of becoming the champion of champions. 20 teams took part in the doubles competition and the final was an all Chiltern affair in which Chiltern 2 (**Sean Prendergast** and **Kai Sheffield**) overcame Chiltern 1 (**Matt Eversden** and **Phil Winston**). The triples champion of champions team was Kent 1 (**Tracey Spillett, Kevin Spillett, Dean Ashby** and **Scott Ashby** with the runners-up being East Midlands 1 (**Joe Sheffield, Lisa Edmondson, Drew Roe** and **Stone Williams**)

### **NATIONAL YOUTH SQUAD**

The NYS aims to provide encouragement and coaching support to all young players through open competitions and coaching sessions. The main objective however is to select and prepare a team for youth championships (World/European). This is achieved through a series of squads helping to capture and nurture talent at all levels culminating in the A squad from which the championship team will be selected.

The first event of the year which was held in March was an open coaching day held at Cottered which was open to all juniors, licensed and non-licensed. This was followed later that month by the Junior Singles and Precision Shooting Championships held at The Plough, Langford. In the main competition **Kai Sheffield** narrowly defeated **Jamie Brooks** in the Singles, while in the younger group, **Ella Slade** was the victor over **Francesca Evans-Jones**. **Kai Sheffield** also won the shooting with an impressive 34 points in the qualification round and then prevailed in the shoot out against **Davy Blyton**. **Ella Slade** also made it a double by winning the precision shooting in the younger group. **Francesca Evans-Jones was runner up**.

The NYS selection day took place on 13 April, attended by 24 of our young hopefuls. Those selected to form the NYS "A" Squad were: -

**David Blyton** (Northern), **Jamie Brooks** (Southern Counties), **Liam Floyd** (Southern Counties), **Angus Hamilton** (Northern) **Soeli Leverett** (Chiltern), **Alfie Potter** (Heart of England), **Daniel Raine** (London), **Kai Sheffield** (Chiltern).

From the “A” Squad, **David Blyton, Jamie Brooks, Daniel Raine** and **Kai Sheffield** were selected to form NYS England 1 to represent England at the world junior championships in Cambodia and **Liam Floyd, Angus Hamilton, Soeli Leverett** and **Alfie Potter** were selected as NYS England 2. For personal reasons **Daniel Raine** withdrew from the squad mid-season and **Liam Floyd** was promoted to England 1.

The following juniors were chosen for the “B” Squad, a developmental squad which was set up for to prepare for future ‘A squad membership.:-

**Callum Hickman** (Kent), **Baillie Inglis** (Anglia), **Francesca Evans-Jones** (Southern Counties), **Sam Rattue** (Southern Counties), **Will Reed** (Southern Counties) **Ella Slade** (Sussex), **Luke Thornton** (Kent) and **Archie Zimmerman** (Chiltern).

In anticipation of the move towards single sex teams in junior international championships NYS created a Female Development Team comprising **Leah Hutchinson** (Anglia), **Jane Geddes** (Heart of England), **Sophie Rowley** (Kent) and **Jessica Hickman** (Kent). Due to other commitments Jessica was forced to withdraw from the squad and was replaced by **Shanna Edgar**.

On 28<sup>th</sup> April NYS held the first of its 3 full squad days at the Plough Longford for members of all three of its squads. In the morning, the A & B squads were given some guidance on the importance of communications, reliability and adaptability during play while coaches Steve Slade and Keith Flack supervised the youngsters in the C squad in a mini coaching competition. The day included some tuition from Scott Ashby on various pointing skills before the players separated into smaller groups to work on various skills.

In addition, the NYS put in place a development programme for the A squad to give them experience of play at the elite level. For the England 1 team this included participation in the London Open & The Maaseiker competition in Belgium while England 2 were required to take part in the annual youth competition in Valence and La British Open at Heckmondwke.

To supplement the full squad days NYS also organises localised coaching sessions. These are designed to assist squad members to continue their training but they are also open to non-squad youth players of any age. During 2019 localised coaching sessions were conducted in Southern Counties (Kath Knight), Kent (Scott Ashby), Sussex (Steve Slade), Chiltern (Toni Gates) East Midlands (Joe Sheffield), Eastern (Keith Flack), West Midlands/Northern (Brian Stote/ Lee Edgar).

## **NATIONAL PERFORMANCE**

Responsibility for the development of our elite players and the selection and management of our international players rests with the National Performance Panel whose members were:-

**Martin Hughes** – Chair

**Martin Eggleton** – ex officio

**Colin Roper** – Coaching Commission

**Toni Gates** – Lead member for Juniors

**Nic Baxter** – Lead member for Women

**Simon Bird** – Lead member for Espoirs men

**Paul Lancaster** – Lead member for Espoirs women

**Clive De Silva** – Lead member for Veterans

## **Adult Singles and Doubles World Championships**

The World Singles, Doubles and Mixed Doubles Championship took place in early May in El Ejido, Spain. The players representing England were **Monty Quaia, Sofiane Lachani, Sammy Thatcher and Emma Longstaff**. Our coaches were **Rowland Jones** and **Nic Baxter**.

In the men's singles qualifying rounds **Monty Quaia** won two of the 4 games but lost to the former world champion Abdesammed El Mankari from Morocco and the Swiss player Maiky Molinas, who went on to win the championship. **Monty Quaia** finished in 18<sup>th</sup> place having narrowly failed to qualify for a tie break to go through to the top 16.

In the women's singles **Sammy Thatcher** came up against strong opposition in the qualifying rounds including five times champion Yolanda Mattaranz of Spain. She won only 1 of the 4 qualifying games and ended in 34<sup>th</sup> place.

**Sofiane Lachani** and **Monty Quaia** won against Ukraine & Turkey in the qualifying stage of the men's doubles and came tantalisingly close to winning against the legendary pairing of Joel Marchandise and Claudy Weibel from Belgium. In the decisive final qualifying round the English pair faced Ivory Coast in a keenly contested match which was won by Ivory Coast with their last throw. The English team finished in 31<sup>st</sup> position.

The English squad's best performance came in the Women's Doubles with **Emma Longstaff** and **Sammy Thatcher** winning three out of their four qualifying games, to make it into the top 16. The top 16 match against China was played superbly to win 13-0. This set up a quarter final match against Canada and although the team could not progress any further it was the best performance in the women's game for many years.

## **CEP Eurocup**

In the last weekend of July, a team from Baldock Town travelled to Pachy, Belgium to compete in the International Qualifying Round of the Eurocup. The team comprising **Jack Blows, Emma Coggins, Matthew Eversden, Reece Gould, Sarah Huntley, Ross Jones, Jamie Lewis, Sean Prendergast, Jonathan Sewell, Rachel Shaw & Phil Winston** hit new heights for the country by winning 5 out of 6 matches losing only to the Belgian hosts. This put them in 2<sup>nd</sup> position and a place in the final stage of the competition which was held towards the end of November in Saint Yrieix-sur-Charente on the outskirts of Angouleme, France. In the initial barrage stage **Baldock Town** won an impressive victory against **Brno** from the **Czech Republic** but then lost 6-25 to the Italian Club **ASD Bocciofila Valle Maira**

who qualified for the quarter finals as the poule winners. **Baldock Town** then had to play **Brno** from the **Czech Republic** for a second time in order to decide which team took the remaining quarter final place. Baldock Town again won a sweeping victory against the Czech Republic and earned a place in the quarter finals against **Riganelli** from **Luxembourg**. This match was closely contested, and all hinged on winning both final two triples games. This was not to be and although Baldock Town failed to make the semi-finals their quarter final placing was the best achievement for any English club in this competition. .

### **Home Nations Championship**

In August England retained the Home Nations Championship in Cardiff for the 20<sup>th</sup> successive year with a 10-win margin over runners up Jersey. The best performing team in the tournament with 11 wins out of 12 matches was England 4, comprising the father and son combination of **Matt** and **Jamie Blyton** along with teammate **Lee Edgar**.

### **Squad Development**

In August our top-ranking players travelled to Maaseik, Belgium to hone their skills against stiff international competition in a tournament which offers gender separate competitions in Singles, Doubles and Triples. Notable achievements included a win by **Becky Edwins** in the women's singles over Belgium's Nancy Barzin (2019 world mixed doubles bronze medallist).and a win by **Ella Slade** over one of Luxembourg's top players.

In September, the veterans lead **Clive De Silva** organised a group of 18 PE veterans to take part in the Guernsey Open. The triples competition was won by PE veterans **Stone Williams, Frank Britt** and **Nigel Ashby**.

### **European Veterans Championship**

The European Veterans Championship took place in Albena, Bulgaria over the same weekend as the Inter Regional Championships. Our team for this event comprised the three number one ranking players **Ian Barnes, Simon Bird** and **Cliff Campbell** together with **Hassi Leverett** who was selected to join them from the fourth to sixth ranked players. The Coach was **Clive De Silva**. In the qualification stage although our veterans lost against Finland and Germany, they chalked up wins against Estonia, Ukraine and Denmark leaving them in a very creditable 8<sup>th</sup> place in the ranking table. In the ensuing barrage stage, our team lost to the reigning champions Holland and needed to win against Wales to stay in the competition. Alas this match resulted in a 9-13 defeat thereby bringing our involvement to an end.

## **Men's European Championship.**

The men's European Championships immediately followed the European Veterans championships and also took place in Albena, Bulgaria. Our two top ranking players, **Rowland Jones** and **Sam Blakey** were automatically selected for the team and were joined by **Jason White** (ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>) and **Reece Gould** (ranked 5<sup>th</sup>). The team coach was **Joe Sheffield**.

The tournament began as usual with the qualification round of the Precision Shooting in which **Jason** scored 21 points placing him in joint 18<sup>th</sup> position. This earned him a place in the repêchage in which he improved his score sufficiently to put him in a creditable 16<sup>th</sup> position overall.

In the five round qualification stage, the England team won 3 out of 5 games but failed to qualify for the knockout stage in a tie-break by just two Bucholz points, the only team on three wins that did not qualify. In the Nations Cup England chalked up comfortable wins in the barrage poule and won convincingly against Turkey in the ensuing quarter final. In the semi-final England lost to Portugal and had to settle for a bronze medal in the Nations Cup. This performance was however good enough to secure an invitation to the 2020 world triples championships.

## **Espoirs European Championships**

The men and women espoirs championships were held in October at Saint-Pierre-les-Elbeuf in Normandy. The male team, coached by **Simon Bird** comprised **Luke Ashford, Aston Monk, Jason White** and **Ollie Zimmerman**. The English team put in a steady performance in the qualification stage winning two and losing two with the result that they were ranked 7<sup>th</sup> out of the 16 teams taking part. In the barrage poule the team disappointingly lost against two lower ranking teams and found themselves in the Nations Cup. As luck would have it they were drawn against Spain who had surprisingly dropped into the Nations Cup and although the English team put up a stout resistance they lost 11-13 to the team which went on to win the Nations Cup.

The ladies team comprising **Rachel Kelly, Grace Moss, Alex Spillett** and **Megan Winter** with coach **Paul Lancaster** had to face a gruelling qualification round in which they had to play a round robin with all 9 of the other competing teams. The team was able to win only 2 games and were eliminated from the competition in 9<sup>th</sup> position.

England fared better in the precision shooting events with **Jason White** putting in a stunning performance to win a bronze medal, the first time England or Great Britain has achieved this at any level of the men's game. After a shaky start in the ladies precision shooting **Alex Spillett** bounced back brilliantly to qualify for the quarter finals but was defeated by Laura Steel of Belgium.

## Youth World Championships

Mid-November saw the England Youth team make the exciting trip to play in the World Championships in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The England team included **David Blyton, Jamie Brooks, Liam Floyd** and **Kai Sheffield** with **Scott Ashby** acting as the coach. **Kai Sheffield** represented England in the Precision Shooting competition but the standard in the tournament proved to be extremely high and he ended up in 26<sup>th</sup> place. The Youth team's first match was against hosts Cambodia who had the backing of some very vocal local support and although England took an early lead, they ended up losing the match 9-13. England won only one of their three matches on the opening day which meant that they needed to win the 2 remaining matches on day 2 to qualify for the main competition. Sadly, despite taking an early lead against Turkey in their first match on day 2 they lost the game and were eliminated from the main competition. They were also eliminated from the Nations Cup following a defeat by the USA in the qualifying 'cadrage' competition.

## Women's World Championships

Taking place contemporaneously with the youth world championships in Phnom Penh were the women's world championships. **Emma Longstaff** and **Claire White** our top two ranking players were automatically selected for the team and were joined by **Sarah Huntley** and **Sammy Thatcher** our third and fourth ranked players respectively. **Rowland Jones** acted as the team Coach. **Sammy Thatcher** represented England in the Precision Shooting competition and ended up in 22<sup>nd</sup> place out of 43 competitors. On the first day of play the English team lost two of the three games including a crucial timed game against Australia which was lost by just one point. A decisive defeat against Chinese Taipei on the second day effectively eliminated England from the main competition and a defeat against Denmark in the cadrage eliminated their chance of competing in the Nations Cup. The eventual winners of the tournament were Thailand.