**Men’s Senior County Championship 2022**

Finally, after a couple of COVID competitions were cancelled, we finally got to take the pitch in A Division. Held semi-locally by Yorkshire, at Abbeydale in Sheffied.

We started v Lincolnshire – who had comprehensively beaten us, like they usually do! A couple of weeks earlier. At that time coach Matt said he though he could get something from our game against them in the competition proper, and we did! A comfortable 2-1 win left them a bt shocked and us top of the table overnight!

Sunday also posed two difficult games v hosts Yorkshire and Derbyshire. Two close games both ended in draws and we completed the preliminary tournament top of the table.

Finals day was rearranged due to the Kings coronation and I coldn’t attend, but a close semi final win on penalties v Warwickshire put us up against the strongest side of recent years in the final, Kent.

Unfortunately, although we held our own it was a siler medal!

**2023**

I will just touch on 2023, if only to say that the competition has a new format for all divisions, semifinals and relegation playoffs, over one weekend and is looking likely to be held here at the Hockey Centre every year. I’ll just say we’ll be in A division again next year – but that report is for the next AGM!

Being local has its pros and cons.

Pros – we don’t have to travel and get great support.

The biggest con is that we don’t have to travel. It has been noted that, in previous years, when we have travelled and stayed away overnight it really does help with squad bonding. Remember, we build the squad from scratch every year, unlike a lot of other counties. But when we host, or as this year it’s held here, players go back to their homes after day 1 and maybe don’t seem to bond quite as well. We do arrange a squad meal on the Saturday (paid for by the player contributions for the weekend) but they put enough time aside already to represent with trials, training and warm up matches that it’s difficult to insist they attend something when they could be spending time with family.

And of course, not forgetting to mention Matt Orridge who has used his county coach role as a springboard to coach the England Masters O40s B team to a bronze medal. This development of all involved is exactly what we agreed to use the county squad for, keeping Nottinghamshire well represented at all levels nationally.

Gareth

County Squad Manager

July 2023