



HUDDERSFIELD & DISTRICT VETERANS BOWLING ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

Number 39

March 2020

www.hdvba.co.uk



ANNIVERSARY EVENT IS ROARING SUCCESS

This is the official monthly Newsletter of the HDVBA which provides friendly but competitive crown green bowling for the Over-60s in the Huddersfield area.

Thank you to PETER CLAY of MILNSBRIDGE B.C. for sponsoring this issue of the Newsletter

BUSY BUILD-UP TO NEW SEASON

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Jeff Jacklin

info@hdvba.co.uk

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE at
www.hdvba.co.uk/Newsletter.htm

Subscription is open to all and free to all for ever

FRONT COVER

The front cover photograph shows new HDVBA President, John Hoyle, thanking Peter Armitage after his talk on his bowling experiences to the Anniversary Launch Event which many in the room could associate with. A very humorous talk well received by the 140 in attendance.

MARCH ISSUE SPONSOR

I am very grateful to Milnsbridge B.C. member Peter Clay for his generous support of sponsoring this issue of your monthly newsletter. We welcome commercial and individual sponsorships. I am delighted to inform you that the next three issues are already sponsored but I am looking for new, or returning, sponsors for the July 2020 issue and onwards. So if you enjoy the newsletter and would like to mark that in some way then I would be delighted to hear from you. Sponsorship costs just £20 per issue.

There is a lot occurring as James Coburn would say in Gavin and Stacey, and we don't start bowling for another month yet. Already occurring - the Annual General Meeting saw three new appointments to top positions, four new League Bye-Laws approved, a great celebration event to launch the Anniversary Season, plans progressing well for the new Winter League, the new Fantasy League season has been opened up to entries, a new HDVBA website, refereeing training courses scheduled and the number of bowler transfers and new bowler registrations continues to grow and that doesn't include all the club activity in getting the greens ready for a new season of competitive bowling.

All these are reported within the March issue of your newsletter which continues to grow in readership with 11 new subscribers signed up this month. A new season build-up wouldn't be the same without an insight into the chances of every team in our leagues and my much-ridiculed tips for the top and bottom of each Section. Let the hilarity begin this month with the team-by-team preview of the 2020 season starting with all 32 teams in the 6-Man League this month and to be followed up with the 10-Man League Preview in the April edition of your newsletter.

Regardless of how busy and successful we like to think we are as a League, there is no room for complacency and there are things we can always do better by tweeking and tuning or doing drastic surgery to improve how we operate. One such area that may now need our attention is the matter of Starred Bowlers with under-currents at the AGM about how this rule is adversely affecting some clubs in our League. In this issue we take a look at the problem and consider the options.



MESSAGE FROM THE NEW PRESIDENT

I am very proud to be the new President of the Veterans League and delighted to undertake my first official duty when leading the celebrations at our Anniversary Launch at Meltham following the AGM. I have written directly thanking a number of people involved in making it such a successful occasion including to the speakers, our sponsors, Committee members and to Meltham as our wonderful hosts. I would now like to extend those thanks to all the clubs and individuals who joined us to celebrate this real milestone date and to those who donated raffle prizes and to every individual who bought tickets which enabled us to donate all the £350 of funds raised to Kirkwood Hospice. It was a good day that I and many others thoroughly enjoyed and I look forward to a repeat performance when we close our Anniversary season at Rastrick in November. Thank you. **John Hoyle, HDVBA President**

ONE DAY IN FEBRUARY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

It was a Monday but not just any Monday as this was the day of a HDVBA Double-Header at the same Meltham venue. Starting proceedings was the 2020 Annual General Meeting where we went through the usual proceedings in the usual manner with very little of a contentious nature.

John Hoyle moved up into the position of President and Allan Dobson of Kirkheaton C&BC succeeded him as Vice-President. Richard Armitage (Thongsbridge) has taken on the position of General Secretary following John Hoyle stepping down after four years in that role. There were no new nominations for the Management Committee which continues to run with four vacancies.

Alan Stephenson gave his end-of-year report on the Balance Sheet as Treasurer and this showed a surplus of £749 on an income of £9,056. This being mainly due to an increase in club fees and an increased number of teams in the League last season. Further additional funding coming through the success of the Inter-District team in winning the 2019 trophy and sponsorship of the newsletter also reaping new funds.

The Treasurer explained that financial reporting on the Golden Jubilee celebrations was all being kept separate so members could get a full picture of that expenditure and this will be reported in full at the end of the Golden Jubilee season.

Four revisions of the League Bye-Laws had been proposed by the Management Committee and these were quickly accepted by the member clubs and complete copies of these can be found overpage.

Two items were raised under Any Other Business with one club advocating that the League should move towards stipulating only yellow jacks can be used but this found no support amongst members. The second item being a concern that the new Starred Bowler rating of a bowler was jeopardising the future of a 6-man team as this individual runs and plays for a team but is no longer eligible to bowl for them. There was some sympathy for the bowler/team in question but until the Starred Bowler rule is changed there is little room for maneuver. The League Secretary suggested that maybe it was time to undertake a review of the Starred Bowler situation (see later in this newsletter).

With AGM business complete member's attention turned toward the second half of the occasion as we began celebrating the Association's 50th Anniversary.

ANNIVERSARY SEASON LAUNCH

With 142 attendees at this event comprised of member clubs, sponsors and special guests the room was at it's capacity and all enjoyed a buffet provided by our hosts from Meltham.

After a warm welcome and introduction from the President three speakers started proceedings. Alan Stephenson outlined the importance of sponsorship to our financial well-being and listed all those present that had contributed to our funding this year. Jeff Jacklin then spoke about the formation of the Association back in 1970 in a talk entitled 'How it all Began'. This included the enlightening insight to the early formation of two Sections each containing seven teams with the split determined not on playing strengths but on bus routes.



Top of the bill was Peter Armitage who has a reputation as a very good speaker and he didn't disappoint. Tale after tale of his time as a bowler in the Veterans League playing for Hemplow followed, some of them might have even been true but all were humorous and well received. Self-deprecating but all in a good cause and many of us could see ourselves in the

situations that Peter so aptly described. A well delivered and much appreciated climax to proceedings.

A number of presentations were made including to eleven of the original fourteen member clubs who are still playing in our Leagues today and they were Bradley & Colne, ICI, Kirkheaton Con, New Mill WMC, Ravensknowle Park, David Brown Sports, Greenhead Park, Marsh Utd, Meltham, Outlane and Paddock I&C.

Special awards were made to three clubs for their Team of the Decade status and they were Crosland Moor, Milnsbridge and Lockwood Con. Then there were individual awards to three long-serving individuals who were all aged 96 at the time but two of them will add another year on in the next month, Jack Hewitt, Jack Dyson and George Nash although only two of them were present on the day.

**HUDDERSFIELD & DISTRICT VETERANS' BOWLING ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

17 February 2020

CHANGES TO LEAGUE BYE-LAWS

All proposed by the Management Committee

1. CURRENT RULE: Knock-Out Competitions: General: Rule 1h (Page 54)

A member shall not be allowed to bowl for more than one team in any one competition during the season except that a member of a club who has played in the 'B' and 'C' team may play in the same team clubs 'A' or 'B' team in later rounds, but having played in the 'A' /'B' team, he cannot revert to the 'B' or 'C' teams

APPROVED

1. PROPOSED CHANGE

A member shall not be allowed to bowl for more than one team in any one competition during the season except that a member of a club who has played in the 'B' and 'C' team may play in the same team clubs 'A' or 'B' team in later rounds, but having played in the 'A' /'B' team, he cannot revert to the 'B' or 'C' teams. **For the purposes of this rule the Team KO and Sub-Team KO shall be regarded as one competition.**

=====

2. PROPOSED NEW RULE: Match Play Rule 3c

APPROVED

Any team playing an ineligible bowler in a League match shall lose that game 0-21.
Clubs and players transgressing this rule may be fined as determined by the Management Committee

=====

3. PROPOSED NEW RULE: Knock-Out Rules: General j)

APPROVED

Any team playing an ineligible bowler in a Knock-Out match shall be expelled from that competition for that season.
Clubs and players transgressing this rule may be fined as determined by the Management Committee

=====

4. CURRENT RULE: Match Play Rule 2 (Page 52)

The League to consist of the number of sections determined by the Management Committee, the top two teams in each section at the end of the season shall move into the next higher section and the bottom two teams shall move into the next lower section. In the event of a points tie the season's positive aggregate scores will determine the outcome.

APPROVED

4. PROPOSED CHANGE

The League to consist of the number of sections determined by the Management Committee, the top two teams in each section at the end of the season shall move into the next higher section and the bottom two teams shall move into the next lower section. In the event of a points tie the season's **'Aggregate For'** scores will determine the outcome. In the event of the teams still being level then the **'Aggregate Difference'** (i.e. 'Aggregate For' minus 'Aggregate Against' will determine the positions.

STARRED BOWLERS UNDER THREAT

Starred Bowlers have been part of our League for many seasons. They were introduced initially to preserve the intent of the new 6-Man League by giving priority playing time to the less gifted bowlers. Originally every 'A' team in the 10-Man League had five starred bowlers who were not allowed to play in the 6-Man League at all. This was further extended to stop these elite bowlers from playing in any team other than their club's top team.

Over time we have tinkered and diluted this rule so that nowadays only teams in Sections 1 and 2 have Starred Bowlers. In addition, the old rule that as well as having five Starred Bowlers that were not eligible for selection in the 6-Man League clubs could not select more than another two 10-Man League bowlers. This has also been withdrawn in the last three years

These changes coupled with a reduction in the eligible age for any bowler in our leagues has seen an upsurge in interest in the 6-Man League especially, with a record 32 teams now competing in three Sections in that competition this year compared with 24 in two Sections two years ago.

So what exactly is wrong with that and why is further change now being mooted? Well there are a number of problems.

1. Teams that get promoted to Section 2 of the 10-Man League suddenly find that their 6-Man league playing staff has suddenly dried up. This year Paddock I&C were on the brink of withdrawing their 6-man team due to team-raising difficulties after many years in that League. Their promotion to Section 2 of the 10-Man League was rewarded with a penalty immediately reducing their team by five Starred Bowlers. Some reward for success!
2. In recent seasons there has been two high-profile instances of a 6-man teams existence coming under threat due to a single new Starred Bowler who ran a 6-man team no longer being available to run and play in that 6-man team. It happened this year to Golcar C&BC, it happened previously to Crosland Moor and maybe others. The rule was not introduced to threaten the existence of 6-man teams but that is what is happening.
3. The only objective of our Leagues is to provide competitive bowling for men aged over 60 years of age. This rule is actually stopping people bowling in our League.

So why don't we just abolish the rule? There is a problem with that as the purists will remind us that it was introduced for a valid reason. That reason being to provide a competition for the less gifted bowlers and to stop the League being taken over by the cup-hunters. There doesn't appear to be any scope for further tinkering with this rule. Maybe it is time for drastic surgery.

There is an argument that says we should do away with Starred Bowlers altogether. You can see a case for that. What would be the worse that could happen? The competition would be flooded with new teams and new bowlers raising the standard of bowling immediately. Would that be a bad thing? Isn't that why we are in business in the first place?

Teams would say that the objective of providing a game for those not good enough to play in the 10-Man League has been lost. Surely that is down to the teams to sort out within their own clubs. They can still pick their less gifted bowlers for their 6-man teams and that team will eventually find its own level of competitiveness within that league. Some teams have complained for years about the League affecting their team selection with this rule and for some it has been a convenient means of shifting team selection problems away from their team captains. Maybe it is time to hand team selection back to the clubs.

I believe that there is now a very strong argument for abolishing Starred Bowlers altogether. However there is another alternative solution. Why don't we open up the 6-Man League to all bowlers but make it a Handicap League? So every team can select their teams from all their available bowlers but every bowler has a handicap rating. This would abolish Starred Bowlers altogether but introduce a new means of making the less able bowlers to remain competitive. It would address the team raising problems that the Starred Bowlers rule has inflicted on successful teams. Success of your team shouldn't come with a penalty.

My personal preference is to abolish the Starred Bowler status altogether but a compromise that would address some of the issues, but might introduce new ones, is to start up a handicapping system for bowlers in the 6-Man League. It isn't too difficult, some leagues already operate with individual bowler handicaps and Bowlsnet can accommodate such requirements but I still see it as a compromise that offers some improvements on the current arrangement without addressing all the issues.

WINTER LEAGUE UPDATE

We now have ten four-man teams offering to be involved in the Winter League two trial days to be held at Springwood. Those two days are designed to test out the format and playing order of the two-singles and one-pairs match model.

These trials will be held on consecutive Mondays in March, the 23rd and 30th starting at 1pm. The clubs involved being Springwood, Milnsbridge, Marsh Utd, Kirkheaton Con, Huddersfield Recreation Club (2 teams), Lowerhouses, Denby Dale, Almondbury Lib, and Meltham.

This looks towards testing out a League of 10 teams with five jacks on the green at the same time. With one of the biggest greens in the County it will be a good test of a model designed to provide Winter bowling for the maximum number of teams.

Once the lessons of the two trial days have been learnt then we can look forward to establishing a League ready for an October start.

REFEREEING COURSE

Have you ever fancied really knowing the rules of our sport or would that spoil the game for you? Well you can now attend a local Referee's Training Course to be held over three consecutive Tuesday evenings in March. Starting at 7.30pm on the 10th, 17th and 24th of March at Bradley & Colne. There is an optional exam at the end of the course to be held at 9.30am at the same venue on Saturday 28th March. You will become a fully qualified Referee if you pass that exam but if you are more interested in understanding the rules better to improve your own enjoyment of our sport then you are equally as welcome to take part. Just turn up on the first evening to book your place on this course.

FANTASY LEAGUE STARTS

The 2020 Fantasy league season is now open for business. Some changes to the format this year but it remains as free entry for all Veterans League bowlers. All you have to do is select a team in each of our eight Sections. The competition runs all season with the winner receiving a £50 Well Bowled Sales Voucher courtesy of a generous donation from David Union. Prizes down to fourth place as well as the winners of our two Knock-Out competitions which will also be run with increased prizes of £15 vouchers to the two winners and a total prize fund of £170 including £30 to be shared among the entrants who correctly forecast the Tie-Breaker total.

TRANSFERS & NEW BOWLERS

February has been the busiest month of the close season as far as new bowler registrations are concerned as eleven new bowlers to our League are registered in the month for the first time. That list is below and is followed by the full listing of bowler transfers that have been made since the end of the 2019 season.

NEW BOWLER REGISTRATIONS

DATE	NAME	CLUB
14-Oct-2019	Graham Berry	Lowerhouses (10man)
16-Oct-2019	Graham Berry	Honley Con (6man)
16-Oct-2019	Chris Hampshire	Honley Con
16-Oct-2019	Martin Heap	Honley Con
16-Oct-2019	Carl Brierley	Honley Con
10-Dec-2019	Stuart Stanley	Cowcliffe
17-Dec-2019	Bernard Dobson	David Brown Sports
7-Jan-2020	Philip Morgan	Farnley Tyas
7-Jan-2020	Kevin Curran	Farnley Tyas
1-Sep-2020	J D Hoyle	Farnley Tyas
22-Jan-2020	Laurence Riley	Clayton West
28-Jan-2020	Malcolm Dibb	Outlane
29-Jan-2020	Chris Beslin	Honley Con
29-Jan-2020	Steve Hamby	Honley Con
29-Jan-1930	Trevor Caddock	Honley Con
29-Jan-2020	Robert Gatenby	Honley Con
31-Jan-2020	Neil Wilson	Golcar Lib
31-Jan-2020	Antony Cross	Slaithwaite
3-Feb-2020	Ray Whitwam	Golcar Lib
12-Feb-2020	Les Mitchell	Elland C&BC
12-Feb-2020	Trevor Horner	Paddock I&C
16-Feb-2020	David Thorpe	New Mill
18-Feb-2020	Dave Clegg	Milnsbridge
18-Feb-2020	John Hall	Milnsbridge
18-Feb-2020	George Henry	Milnsbridge
18-Feb-2020	Stephen Tidswell	Milnsbridge
18-Feb-2020	Stephen Withington	Milnsbridge
18-Feb-2020	John Thwaite	Milnsbridge
21-Feb-2020	Kenneth Taylor	Clayton West

BOWLER TRANSFERS

DATE	NAME	FROM	TO
16-Oct-2019	Phil Warbrick	Farnley Tyas	Honley Con
16-Oct-2019	Brian Sheard	Farnley Tyas	Honley Con
16-Oct-2019	Graham Berry	Farnley Tyas	Honley Con
16-Oct-2019	Nicholas Hirst	Farnley Tyas	Honley Con
18-Oct-2019	David Quarmbly	Broad Oak	Meltham
19-Nov-2019	Nigel Nunn	Broad Oak	Paddock I&C
5-Dec-2019	Dennis Goude	Milnsbridge	Greenhead Park
11-Dec-2019	George Fellows	Meltham	Slaithwaite
13-Jan-2020	Paul Toon	Kirkheaton C&BC	Waterloo
14-Jan-2020	Charlie Landon	Thorpe Green	Broad Oak
21-Jan-2020	Geoff Crowther	Golcar C&BC	Golcar Lib
27-Jan-2020	Michael Lee	Lindley Lib	Almondbury Lib
5-Feb-2020	Brian Hallas	Kirkheaton C&BC	Huddersfield Rec.
19-Feb-2020	Brian Jenkins	Milnsbridge	Lockwood Con

6-MAN LEAGUE SEASON PREVIEW

Time to undertake our annual build-up to a new Bowling season by previewing the hopes and chances of all 96 teams teams in our leagues starting this month with the 6-Man League. A record number of 32 teams start the season in what I believe to be the most competitive and highest standard it has ever operated at.

Take Section A for example. Netherton Con A have won the title for the past two years albeit by just a single point from Lindley Lib A last season. The Lindley side were playing at this level for the very first time having been promoted the previous year after winning the Section B title, in a season when they also lifted the Julie Fuller Trophy.

If that isn't enough to whet the appetite then take a look at the three teams also moving up into the top Section next season. Coming up from Section B we have those two old war-horses Lockwood Con and Longwood. Two teams who dominated the 6-man trophy chase in League and Knock-Outs from 2013-2017. After both had a one-year sabbatical they both re-entered the fray last season and were placed in Section B where they walked away with the two promotion places.

Then to add to the forthcoming title equation please add Marsden Park. Entering the 6-Man League for the first time last year they went all-season undefeated as well as reaching the final of the Julie Fuller Trophy beating three Section A teams along the way without using their handicap advantage. They are rewarded with a two-Section promotion and start the season with the enviable record of never having lost a 6-Man League match.

The loss of the final four-weeks results on Bowlsnet doesn't help serious research into each team's chances but that just adds another dimension to the task which from the outset looks a very difficult exercise.

It is going to be very interesting and whoever comes out top at the end of season will certainly deserve it. So who will that be? Time for me to stick my neck out as always by nominating my selections for honours and relegation in each Section in the much revered, always ridiculed Pre-Season Team-by-Team Preview.

SECTION A

A case can be made out for any of the five teams mentioned above to end the season as Section A Champions but the art is teasing out the differences between the challengers, probing for that one factor that will make the difference by

SECTION A TABLE 2019

		Pl	W	L	For	Pts
1	Netherton Con.	18	15	3	1678	94
2	Lindley Lib. A	18	16	2	1691	93
3	Shepley A	18	13	5	1675	86
4	Paddock I & C	18	8	10	1556	60
5	Brockholes A	18	6	12	1538	56
6	Milnsbridge BC	18	8	10	1493	55
7	Crosland Moor	18	8	10	1453	53
8	Thongsbridge B	18	6	12	1486	48
9	Oakfield T&BC	18	5	13	1395	43
10	Farnley Tyas	18	5	13	1408	42

Spotting their weaknesses and judging how key they are likely to be over the course of a season.

Lets take a more in-depth look at each team starting with the reigning Champions **Netherton Con A**. They say that winning can become a habit and if that is the case then we can certainly expect to see the Con team competing at the top end once again. Having won the Section A title for the last two years and the Section B competition in the previous season they are not used to not being successful.

However a change in player availability is sure to undermine their bid this year. Paul Rangeley was their top singles bowler last year and was third in the League averages. Paul's improved playing record in the 10-Man League means that he will become a Starred Bowler and therefore unavailable for the 6-man team this coming season. That is not going to help their chances in what will undoubtedly be a much tighter chase for the title this year involving more teams with a chance of the honours.

Lindley Lib A only joined the 6-Man League two years ago and over those two seasons they have only lost four games out of the 36 played, a formidable record. Yet again things are changing. Last year their new B team joined the Section C competition but now there is real uncertainty about being able to field two teams and decisions about who their Starred Bowlers will be are central to determining how many teams they will end up running. It doesn't feel like they are in their strongest position to launch another challenge for top honours in an increasingly competitive league.

Can we expect the returning giants from Lockwood Con and Longwood to resurrect their dominance of the 6-Man League upon their return to the top flight and if so which one of them has the better chance of lifting the title. Well **Lockwood Con** beat off the challenge of their

greatest rivals last year to edge the Section B title race. With their two 10-man teams operating in the top two sections means that they have ten starred bowlers and this may become a burden too many in a tight title race.

Longwood bemoaned the state of their own green last year which they maintained, with some justification, that it was a new green to home bowlers and had no home advantage at all. They used 12 different bowlers last season, no team used more. Whereas **Marsden Park** are jumping two Sections to join the top table and only used eight bowlers which was the lowest in the League. After their achievements in the Julie Fuller Trophy last year - losing the Final to Longwood after knocking out three Section A teams en-route - they are unlikely to be fazed by the challenge of a double step-up.

There has been no mention of **Shepley** so far and that may be doing a dis-service to these perpetual bridesmaids. Third last year and never out the top three since 2016 they are the longest serving team in the top Section so they certainly know what is expected of them. They were only eight points behind the Champions and 26 points ahead of the fourth-placed outfit. They may be the dark horses of the coming campaign and I'm sure more than one Fantasy League punter will fancy their chances.

Four teams were locked in last season's mid-table separated by just seven points and with the quality of teams joining the battle it may well be that these four will be looking downwards with concern rather than in the opposite direction. Below them sat **Thongsbridge B** who were one place above the drop zone and with the quality of teams joining the Section one fears for their survival for another season. Although a Section A regular for a number of years it is five years since they finished in the top half and they have to be favourites to slip through the relegation trapdoor this year. It is finding the team to accompany them that is more difficult and inevitable that team will emerge from that mid-table foursome.

Paddock I&C finished in fourth place last year as they did in 2018 as well but things are changing. Their 10-man team has won promotion to Section 2 meaning that for the first time they have Starred Bowlers to contend with. So immediately they lose the option to include five members of their successful 10-man team and I know it was touch-and-go for a while if they could even raise a 6-man team for the coming season. I think they may have already peaked and will face a future consigned to a long relegation battle.

Brockholes A looked a condemned team at the half-way point last season but their second half form picked them up and eased them away from trouble and on the back of that I am looking to them to continue that upward trajectory to relative safety. Previous to that they have never been in danger of slipping down a Section so happy to rule them out of the relegation mix for 2020.

Milnsbridge rely on their home form to keep them out of trouble and that has worked well for them over recent seasons but any deviation from that pattern will see them in serious danger of slipping downwards. Having signed on six new bowlers for the new season they will remain an unknown factor until the first wood has been sent down. Regardless of all that they were the worst performing team in the second half of last season and a continuation of that form needs to be addressed or they will be in serious bother. So that leaves **Crosland Moor** who have been promoted to and relegated from the top Section over the past four seasons and with the Starred Bowlers ruling continuing to hit them hard they have to be serious concerns about their longevity at this level.

Make your mind up time and I am choosing Longwood as my tip for the title this coming season. Not an obvious choice considering their Section B runners-up finish from last year but there are some niggles about the other contenders that put me off. It is more about totting up all the least negatives rather than the positives about the other contenders and I wouldn't be surprised to see Lindley Lib A push Longwood all the way as they continue to improve year on year. Thongsbridge B are my banker to go down and I'm going to pick Crosland Moor to go down with them this year.

Top Choice: LONGWOOD

Runners-Up: LINDLEY LIB A

Relegation Certainties: THONGSBRIDGE B

Going Down Again: CROSLAND MOOR

SEASON START DATES

Monday 6 April

6-MAN LEAGUE: Sections A & B

Monday 7 April

10-MAN LEAGUE: All Sections

Monday 20 April

6-MAN LEAGUE: Section C

SECTION B
SECTION B TABLE 2019

		Pl	W	L	For	Pts
1	Lockwood Con	18	15	3	1703	95
2	Longwood	18	14	4	1684	91
3	Golcar C & BC	18	11	7	1599	76
4	Skel Windmill A	18	10	8	1471	66
5	Skel Windmill B	18	10	8	1589	61
6	Clayton West	18	9	9	1503	56
7	Primrose Hill Lib	18	5	13	1369	51
8	Golcar Lib.	18	6	12	1370	47
9	Holmfirth	18	5	13	1347	47
10	Almondbury Lib.	18	5	13	1429	40

Section B looks to be seriously weakened by comings, goings and by-passes for the coming season. Lockwood Con and Longwood have moved upwards and Marsden Park, runaway winners of Section C, have leap-frogged this Section altogether. The two teams coming down have new team-raising problems to add to their poor performances of last year so this all adds up to a Section that is going to be much easier to win this time around. All that should leave **Golcar C&BC** in prime position to take advantage after a season when they beat both the top two on their own lawns. Yet one thing undermines that potential.

Their leading bowler, Mick Chapman, finished the season as top of the Section B averages for a second successive season with a very impressive average of over +11. That is an average 21-10 win every week of the season and he won all his 18 League matches. However the dreaded Starred Bowler factor has interfered and an equally successful season with New Mill A in the 10-Man League has seen Mick inevitably becoming a Starred Bowler and unable to play in the 6-Man League at all in 2020. As Mick also runs the team it is a double-whammy and it will be interesting to see how they cope with that scenario. I am sure that they will maintain that they are not a one-man team but losing someone who has probably been responsible for three points per match throughout the season is going to take some replacing.

Teams dropping a level often have a strong hand in determining table outcomes but the two teams dropping down have their own problems which may exclude them from taking a full part in the top of the table tussle. **Farnley Tyas** in particular are a very changed outfit for the coming season having lost four of their regulars to new boys Honley Con. They have recruited to fill those gaps but these are bowlers of unknown pedigree so a season of mid-table security may be the best they can hope for regardless of their improved set of results in the latter stages of last season.

Oakfield T&BC were bottom two residents all last season in Section A and there were concerns about their long-term viability which has hopefully been addressed. Having been relegated twice and promoted once in the last three seasons they really are the yo-yo club of the 6-Man League which will be further emphasised should they feature again at the top end of the table.

The two **Skel Windmill** teams took fourth and fifth places last year and both lost their 'home' games against each other. Having reserved third place for each year 2016-2018 they are street-wise about life at this level and having also had a season in Section A they may be strong enough to win a much-weaker Section this time around, but which team to pick as both look similarly matched? As the B team have never out-performed the A side that is where my head takes me.

Clayton West remain a formidable opponent on their own green and that may be good enough to ensure that they don't get dragged into a relegation battle but any weakness in that form is unlikely to be rescued by a historically weak away record. With a won 9 lost 9 record last year things could go either way but then 5 of those 9 defeats were against top three opponents so things could certainly change this term.

A bizarre set of last day results last season saw **Golcar Lib** unbelievably escape relegation and condemn Holmfirth to the drop instead. They will be well advised not to repeat such a possibility again but having the worst playing record in the Section in the last half of the season they need to improve rapidly to ensure that such a repeat situation doesn't materialise once again.

In each of the last three seasons **Primrose Hill Lib** have finished lower placed than they did the season before including a relegation from Section A in 2017. Should they continue that trend and finish lower once again then they will be in a relegation place and the formbook points strongly towards that outcome.

The two promoted teams are **Marsh Utd** and **Greenhead Park**, the latter finishing third last year but benefitting from some reorganisation following Marsden Park's double promotion. They will welcome the challenge of playing better teams but whether they are up to the task remains to be seen. I hope they are and take my tip for survival which is probably the last thing they want to hear based on my track record. Never has that track record been more tested than by **Marsh Utd** teams. My annual forecasts of doom for their chances are met with derision and thanks as they ignore the obvious to continually out-perform the logic of their form. I'm not tipping them for anything at all this year so it is

entirely up to them where they end up, I am having nothing to do with it.

New boys **Honley Con** look to have a promising set of bowlers with four from Farnley Tyas's Section A team of last year and a squad of 12 registered bowlers which looks towards some sort of stability although the quality remains to be tested. Possibly worth a punt in the Fantasy League in a Section that doesn't scream out with an outstanding team. However I am going to take a punt on Skel Windmill A as speculation about the future of their green subsidies and with some assurances about the coming season sufficient to allow them to return their focus to actually playing the game. Pip Hill and Golcar Lib are my relegation bankers.

Going Up: SKEL WINDMILL A

Also Going Up: HONLEY CON

Going Down: PRIMROSE HILL LIB

Also Going Down: GOLCAR LIB

SECTION C TABLE 2019

		Pl	W	L	For	Pts
1	Marsden Park	18	18	0	1753	106
2	Marsh United	18	15	3	1625	88
3	Greenhead Park	18	11	7	1586	76
4	Meltham	18	11	7	1563	70
5	Hemplow	18	8	10	1556	65
6	Marsh Lib	18	9	9	1466	56
7	Lindley Lib. B	18	8	10	1436	55
8	Thongsbridge A	18	6	12	1362	49
9	Shepley B	18	3	15	1178	35
10	Brockholes B	18	1	17	1272	30

It is all change in Section C with the top three getting promotion and one new team joining in so a bit of a leap of faith in tipping winners at this stage of the season. However after due consideration I look no further than the two teams relegated from Section B to be amongst the front-runners to make a swift return upstairs. **Holmfirth** in particular were very unfortunate to get relegated on the final day of the season when a set of freak results sent them down. I happen to think that they are better than Section C fodder and tip them to take the title and an immediate return. Their form improved as the season went on last year and if they can continue that improvement then the title is a formality (in my opinion). **Almondbury Lib** came down with them to make it successive relegations, Section A to Section C in two years takes some doing but these boys were up to the task! I happen to think that they are better than that and they have a 10-Man League record of having yo-yo seasons which I hope will filter into the 6-Man League this year.

Meltham are the only team left in Section C that won more games than they lost last year and so have to be considered as the leading survivor from the 2019 season. That is a big turnaround on the previous year when they took their worst ever finishing position and may well have turned the corner which will lead them back to Section A status where they were appearing just four years ago. I just don't think that revival will start this year though, however I have been known to be wrong on occasions.

Hemplow and **Marsh Lib** both ended last season in mid-table which was an improvement for both on the previous year. There seems to be no reason to expect anything other than further improvement for both but I fear both will fall short of moving into contention for the two promotion places. Marsh Lib have most scope for improvement as last year was only their second season in the competition with a host of brand new bowlers who are obviously now more familiar with the demands of competitive bowling.

Shepley B and **Lindley Lib B** were 2 of the 7 new teams attracted to the 6-Man League last year and both improved as the season progressed as both had better second halves to the season. A continuation of that improvement will move them higher up the table and that must be their objective this year. **Thongsbridge A** have not been out of the bottom half of the bottom Section table in the last six years and nothing about their form or recruitment suggests that anything is about to change. **Brockholes B** have finished at the foot of the bottom Section for the last three seasons, someone has to. Their solitary win last season was a real reason to celebrate as not only was it a win but also by the 7-0 scoreline. A good day for a team who obviously put enjoyment before success and why not?

An interesting addition to the 6-Man League are new boys **Slaitwaite**. This team being formed to provide a game for their bowlers who cannot get a regular starting place in their successful 10-man team. However all their 10-man team players have signed on for the 6-man team as well so if they do bring their Section 3 team and form to Section C then they will be very serious contenders for the title.

Title Tip: HOLMFIRTH

Promoted: SLAITHWAITE

Bottom Again: BROCKHOLES B

Now make your own predictions for the top team in all eight Sections by placing your entry in our fabulous FANTASY LEAGUE

ANNIVERSARY PATRONS

POT REACHES £650

Geoff Sykes' (Farnley Tyas) contribution took the Patron Pot to £610 which prompted Frank Greenwood to offer to fund any shortfall up to £650 prior to the last day of the scheme being open. With no further donations coming forward that left Frank sticking by his offer to fund the £40 shortfall and take the total fund up to £650. Thank you Frank, and Geoff and all our very generous Patrons. Your actions will be mentioned in the 2020 Yearbook. The scheme is now closed and all contributions are going directly towards celebrating and commemorating our 50th Anniversary.

2020 Anniversary Patrons

Peter (Life Member) & Judith Muff
David Sykes (Brockholes)
Jeff Jacklin (Kirkheaton Con)
Philip Walker (Lindley BC)
Allan Dobson Kirkheaton C&BC)
Bob Swan (Cowcliffe)
David Union (Outlane)
Jeff & Ann Smith (Meltham)
Paul Rushworth (Broad Oak)
Ian Crawford (Longwood)
David Blackburn (Thorpe Green)
Brian Faichney (Canalside)
Bill Blackburn (Lindley BC)
Dougie Mellor (Lockwood Con)
Tony Lockwood (Golcar C&BC)
Derek Sykes (Marsden Park)
Ray Tunnacliffe (Netherton Con)
Graham Hall (Rastrick)
John Townend (Paddock I&C)
Colin Wood (Bradley & Colne)
Tony Clegg (Crosland Moor)
Malcolm Wragg (Outlane)
Anon (Life Member)
Anon (Milnsbridge Veteran)
Graham Howe (Netherton Con)
Anon (Young Veteran)
Alan Sharpe (Life Member)
Alan Starkey (Meltham)
Anon (Slawiter)
Competition Secretary
John Hoyle (Brockholes)
Alan Stephenson (Waterloo)
Peter Clay (Milnsbridge)
Mike Pointon (Canalside)
John Gatenby (Springwood)
Geoff Sykes (Farnley Tyas)
Frank Greenwood (Golcar Lib)

.... AND FINALLY

- The Raffle and Mini-Auction held at the Anniversary Launch Event at Meltham realised a total of £350 all of which is to be donated to Kirkwood Hospice.
- The all new HDVBA website is now fully functional and provides a totally new way to interact with the Veterans League. More mobile-friendly and more interactive with opportunities to comment directly about all news items added to the site.
- The BCGBA World Club Championship is being held at Spen Victoria on five consecutive Sundays in March and April. Eight teams start out on the first Sunday with the four winning teams each week progressing through to Finals Day on Sunday 19 April. There are two clubs from West Yorkshire through to the last 32, Lower Hopton and Pudsey. They both play their opening matches on the first matchday which is Sunday 22 March starting 11am
- Don't forget to get your teams entered into our Fantasy League competition. It is free entry for all HDVBA bowlers with £170 in Well Bowled Sales Vouchers to be won. We can even make a Lucky Dip entry on your behalf if you wish.
- The Yorkshire Veterans Inter-District League fixtures have been published. We open our programme against Bradford on Friday 1 May. All the season's fixtures are on our brand new website.
- Clubs can collect their 2020 Yearbooks on Monday 9 March from 12noon to 1pm at Paddock I&C. Any unexpected changes to those arrangements will be notified on our website.
- At the same time (12noon to 1pm on 9 March) those 14 clubs that didn't claim their Anniversary Mugs at Meltham can pick them up along with the special Golden Jubilee scorecards. Some clubs may also have failed to collect their full entitlement of 500 scorecards so should claim the balance at the same time.



APRIL ISSUE

The April issue will include a team-by-team preview of the 10-Man League assessing the chances of each of the 64 teams for the coming season and making predictions for the winners and losers in each of the five Sections. Much anticipated, much ridiculed, not to be missed.

