

Gloucestershire Hockey Association Juniors Festivals and Clubs In2Hockey 2018 – 2019 Season report.

Festivals

The season started with Angie Atherton running the U8s and U10s and Nick Parker the U12s. Sadly due to the illness of Angie Atherton in December she was unable to continue in the second half of the season and Ian Harvey took over the U8s and U10s.

Angie Atherton with whom the Festivals have become synonymous was sorely missed and on behalf of all the Clubs I would like to thank her for the time and effort she has put into making the Festivals the success they have become. Knowing how much affection she has for the Festivals and particularly those for the younger ones, I am sure everyone is hoping her recovery will allow her to be associated with running these again in the future.

A total of 29 Festivals were held during the 2018 – 19 season; 5 each for U12 Girls and Boys, 6 each for U10 Girls and Boys and 7 for U8 Mixed. Across all of the age and gender groups a total of 13 Clubs were represented; Cheltenham, East Glos, Lansdown, Cirencester, Gloucester, Wotton-U-Edge, Blockley, Lydney, Newent and Stroud from within Gloucestershire and 3 Clubs from outside; Marlborough, Worcester and Swindon.

The maximum number of teams at one event was for U12 girls with 16, but all were well supported with at least 9 teams minimum. Some Clubs sent up to 4 teams on occasions. The sites (Dean Close, Cheltenham College and Cheltenham Ladies College) were run mostly by the Clubs themselves contributing volunteers and thanks must go to Lansdown and Cirencester for stepping up at short notice as well as Cheltenham particularly in the second half of the season.

Thanks must go to Nick Parker for taking care of the U12s and arranging all the schedules and for managing with such calm assurance the crises of last minute withdrawals of teams.

Clubs In2Hockey

Sadly this year the Clubs In2Hockey had to run without the calm, experienced and knowledgeable presence of Angie Atherton. As a result it fell to Ian Harvey to organise the competition overall and with the assistance of a number of people the events passed off reasonably smoothly, even if it felt at times like organised chaos!

The Gloucestershire County rounds of the EH Clubs In2Hockey were held in March; U12s on Sunday 3rd March and U10s on Sunday 10th March. The weather on 3rd March for U12s was terrible with rain all morning for the girls and strong winds and heavier rain at the start of the boys although this turned to blustery wind and sunshine for the later stages of the day. All teams seemed to enjoy themselves. 10th March the weather was kinder, but it was still windy although dry and the storms held off until it had finished whereupon the hail came down and the pitch turned white, a lucky escape! Again all the teams seemed to have a good time and were complimentary and appreciative about the organisation. There were medals for the three top teams in each category and a shield for each champion Club.

Thanks to Nick Parker who was there all day for assisting with U12s and then for U10s James Doughty in the morning, Darren Ashenhurst in the afternoon (both of Lansdown) and Kit Lamb of Cirencester in the afternoon also. Without this assistance it would have been impossible to keep to schedule and run a successful competition.

U12 girls had a total entry of 12 teams drawn from Cheltenham, Lansdown, Cirencester, Wotton-U-Edge, Lydney, East Glos and Stroud. The winners were Lansdown, runners-up Cheltenham and in third place Cirencester. Lansdown and Cheltenham went forwards to represent Gloucestershire in the Regional competition on 28th April. Subsequently in the Regionals Lansdown won the competition and Cheltenham came third in their pool. Subsequently Lansdown played in the National finals and came a very creditable 4th.

U12 boys had a total entry of 8 teams drawn from Cheltenham, Lansdown, Cirencester, Wotton-U-Edge, Gloucester City and Stroud. The winners were Cheltenham A, runners-up Cheltenham B and in third place Cirencester. Cheltenham and Cirencester went forwards to represent Gloucestershire in the Regional competition on 28th April. Subsequently in the Regionals Cirencester and Cheltenham came third in their pools.

U10 girls had a total entry of 12 teams drawn from Cheltenham, Lansdown, Cirencester, Wotton-U-Edge, Westbury & United Banks, Lydney and Stroud. The winners were Cirencester, runners-up Lansdown and in third place Cheltenham. Cirencester and Lansdown went forwards to represent Gloucestershire in the Regional competition on 5th May. Subsequently in the Regionals Lansdown came 5th in their pool and Cirencester lost in the semis on strokes to Bournemouth.

U10 boys had a total entry of 8 teams drawn from Cheltenham, Lansdown, Cirencester, Wotton-U-Edge, Westbury & United Banks, Lydney and Stroud. The winners were Wotton-U-Edge, runners-up Cheltenham and in third place Lansdown. Wotton-U-Edge and Cheltenham went forwards to represent Gloucestershire in the Regional competition on 5th May. Subsequently in the Regionals Cheltenham lost in the semi and Wotton Under Edge won the Competition.

Ian Harvey