



HUDDERSFIELD & DISTRICT VETERANS BOWLING ASSOCIATION

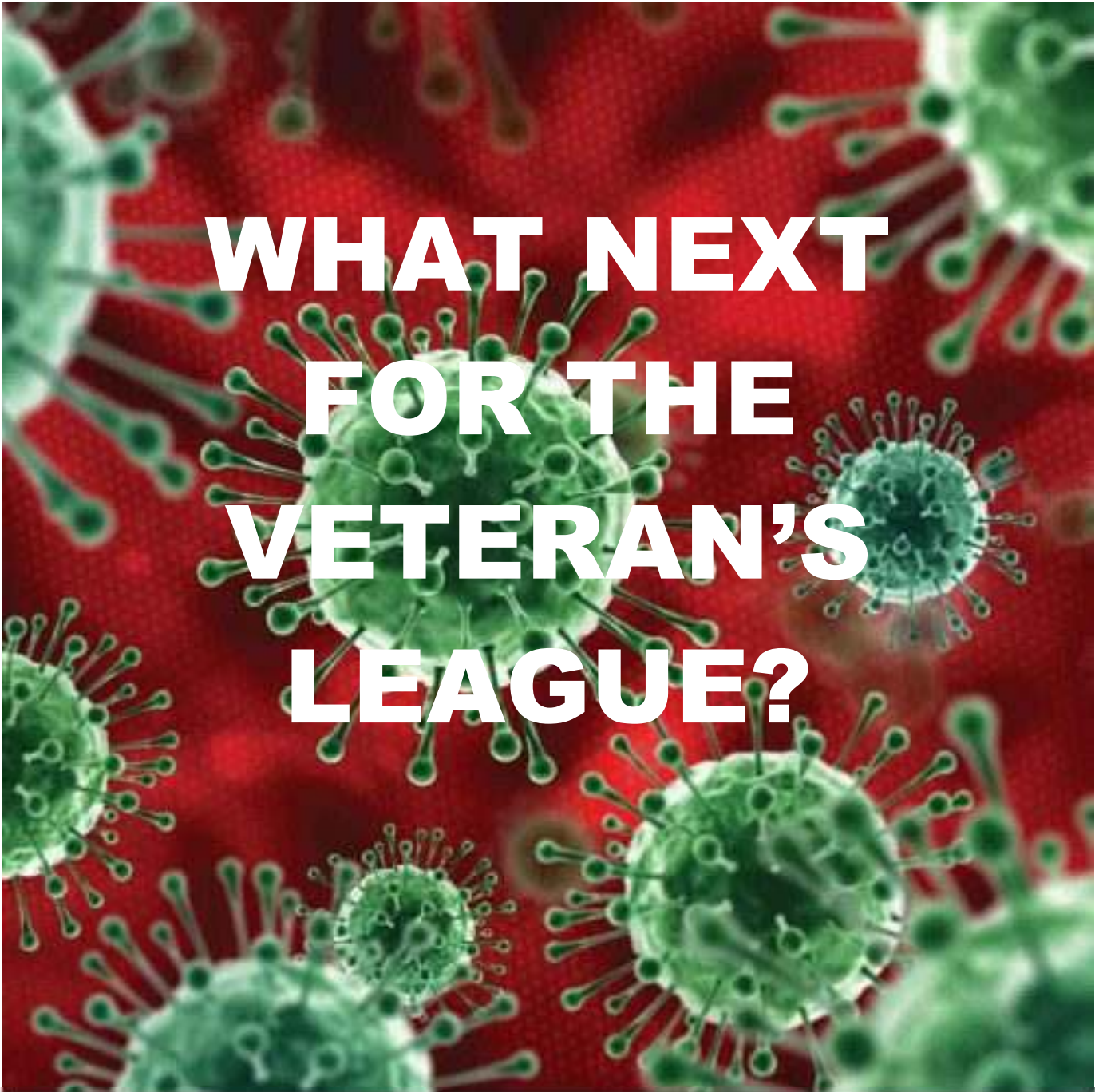
NEWSLETTER

Number 40

April 2020

www.hdvba.co.uk

FREE

A microscopic image showing several green, spherical coronavirus particles with numerous spike-like protrusions, set against a dark red background.

WHAT NEXT FOR THE VETERAN'S LEAGUE?

HAS CORONAVIRUS KILLED OUR SEASON?

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 PHILIP WALKER of LINDLEY B.C. for sponsoring this issue of the Newsletter

WE'D RATHER BE BOWLING

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Jeff Jacklin

in fo@hdvba.co.uk

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

Subscription is open to all and free to all for ever

IN THIS ISSUE

- ❖ Coronavirus - will it be the death of crown green bowling?
- ❖ Winter League update
- ❖ Obituaries - too many this month
- ❖ Transfers & New Bowlers - life goes on
- ❖ Annual Club Raffle Draw Result
- ❖ Bowling Laws Quiz
- ❖ Nostalgia - 5 Years ago this month

APRIL ISSUE SPONSOR



I am very grateful to **PHILIP WALKER** of **Lindley Bowling Club** for his sponsorship of this issue of your newsletter. In fact Philip has also sponsored the next two monthly issues as well so I am increasingly indebted to his generous support. We welcome commercial and individual sponsorships. 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.

Following up on the March issue of the newsletter, which included a full preview of the coming 6-Man League season with a team-by-team assessment of their chances, I was expecting to include the 10-man equivalent this month. For obvious reasons that isn't going to happen now and we have a very different scenario facing us. Hopefully I am just freezing that half-written article for a future issue but maybe the threat to our sport is even greater than any of us have really realised.

It is best not to be too down about the present situation we are all in but in this issue we do take the time to look at the options open to us as a League and what the rest of this season could look like. We do have options and we can do some early naval gazing to help sow the seeds for what may be possible once this ban is behind us.

The issue of what happens about the annual league fees that clubs have already paid for the 2020 season has been raised. Some clubs are starting to feel the pinch of no income, no member fees, no match fees, no bar takings and questioning the lack of action from the bodies that are protected from financial problems having already secured their financial well-being by collecting these fees with little expectation that much, if any, will find its way back to the clubs.

Your Management Committee is holding a Conference Call virtual meeting on Monday 13 April to discuss this, along with other business. If you have a view on whether your club's annual fees should be refunded, donated or suspended until next season then you may care to air those views on the Members' Forum on our website before that date.

The new HDVBA website (www.hdvba.co.uk) continues to provide daily updates on anything but actual bowling activity - because there isn't any of course. But we do try and post something every day and the new interactive site invites you to comment on any posting or add to, or start, a discussion in the Member's Forum. Join in.

IS THE SEASON REALLY OVER?

Reading all the things that continue to be written about the COVID-19 pandemic it is clear that we are unlikely to be able to run any kind of normal League programme in 2020. As much as many would like to cling to a shred of hope that the situation is recoverable the evidence points to there being no chance whatsoever of a full, or even part normal season unless we forgo the usual Championship, promotion and relegation issues.

We mustn't write off this season just yet as there are some options open to us but they are all very different to a normal season and anyone who thinks differently needs to have a reality check. Before we take a look at the options for some sort of competitive bowling later in the year let's put down in writing why I am writing this season off as having no chance of any normal League programme.

We are in the middle of a three-week lock-down where us old 'uns cannot leave our homes other than for emergencies or an hour long walk. All bowling clubs have been closed down by the Government directive.

We all know that this initial three-week lock-down is going to be extended for at least another three-weeks and there is even talk of social distancing being in place for six-months. Right from the early days of this pandemic the Government had indicated that they expected to enforce a 10-14 week lock-down for the elderly and vulnerable. They have never retracted that statement.

Taking an optimistic stance let's say that we are allowed to resume bowling from 1 June. Assuming we can be up and running immediately then there are 18 weeks until the end of September. I am assuming that no-one is advocating bowling into October (certainly no greenkeeper will). Will all clubs be aware of how many of their bowlers will make themselves available to allow them to field full teams every week? Will every green be fit enough to support a shortened fixture programme?

Only Section C of the 6-Man League with 10 teams could fit a full home and away fixture programme into that 18-week window. As for the other 7 Sections some would say that teams could play more than one match a week to catch up. Traditionally we have a number of teams that withdraw instantly from any team knock-out competition that isn't played on the usual Monday or Tuesday match-days. Their greens and bowlers are committed to other leagues on those days. Is it right that they are penalised for those reasons?

There is the option to play a full half-season of fixtures starting from 6 July. This would provide 10, 11 or 13 matches depending how many teams are in your Section. Inevitably this means that half of the teams would have played more home games than their opponents. I would suggest that this would mean that no promotion or relegation of prize money could be awarded to any team based on that imbalanced fixture programme. The option is there to still play the set fixtures but have no promotion or relegation this year. This is definitely a viable option.

So what are the other options?

I've considered a reorganisation of the 10-Man League Sections into smaller ones with less teams to allow a full home and away fixture programme to take place. Assuming all 64 current teams want to participate we could have eight Sections with eight teams in each. That provides for a 14-week season with all teams playing every Tuesday. Any left-over Tuesdays could be used for the early rounds of the Bistro, Team KO or Sub-Team KO competitions.

This option would prevent any promotion or relegation as we would revert to the current 14 or 12 team Sections for 2021 - or would we? This smaller Section option for the 6-Man League would result in four eight-team Sections so is a possibility as well covering all 32 current teams.

There is also the option to forgo any fixtures at all and run our team knock-out competitions on the usual Monday or Tuesday match-days. Even a July start 13-week season could accommodate the bulk of the Bistro, Team KO and Sub-Team KO competitions. However teams knocked out at the first hurdle would end up having only two matches all season. There could be a supplementary KO competition for first round casualties but again this is messy and would only result in one extra match for half of the teams.

We could also use any empty Mondays and Tuesdays to run our Individual and Pairs KO competitions. Personally I would very much hope that we could at least run our Rose Bowl this year as it is its 50th year of being contested having started life in 1971.

So still many unanswered questions and nothing can be firmed up until we have the all-clear from the Government to resume normal activity. However it is clear that we do have some options to have some form of competitive bowling this year but we have to rule out a normal full League season, that boat has already sailed.

WINTER LEAGUE UPDATE

I awoke on the morning of Monday 23rd March to a wonderful blue sky with a hint of warmth that was to flourish and peak at 17C later in the day. This was the first day of two that we had organised to test out the playing format for a new Winter League competition. It would have been a wonderful opportunity to ease bowlers into a competition although they are all of an age not to be deceived about the reality of a full season of sunshine days of bowling.

The second Monday of the two-day trial was overcast and cooler but dry and unlikely to deter any avid bowler from testing their long mark capabilities. I am sure that the two-days would have provided a good test of the '5-jacks on the green at once' proposed format to guide us to finalising a proper and realistic format for a full Winter season of bowling at Springwood BC.

However that is not to be and we move on and once we get the go-ahead to resume a normal life we will be looking to rearrange at least one of those test days before finalising the preferred format for a new Winter League to start in October 2020. I am sure by then we will have a lot of deprived bowlers straining at the leash to have some sort of 'bowling fix' to overcome their withdrawal symptoms and satisfy their cravings.

We currently have 10 teams signed up to testing out the proposed format and those 10 teams will get first refusal to form the membership of the first Winter league season. Those teams being Springwood, Milnsbridge, Marsh Utd, Kirkheaton Con, Huddersfield Recreation Club (2 teams), Lowerhouses, Denby Dale, Almondbury Lib and Meltham.

Still to be decided...

- Number of bowlers per team - 3, 4, 6?
- Playing format - number of singles/pairs?
- 5 Jacks on the green at once?
- 8 or 10 teams in one League?
More than 10 teams in two leagues?
- Match days - Tuesdays or Wednesdays?
- Scoring system - aggregate or games?
- Who will run the League?
The HDVBA, the host club, the member teams, the sponsor or one individual?
- Sponsorship arrangements/obligations?
- League name?

I would hope that we are able to answer all these questions for the opening season by the beginning of September at the latest and then look forward to a mild Winter which has been the norm for the last few years to enjoy a full uninterrupted Winter League season (we can dream!).

OBITUARIES



TOMMY DUNFORD (photo by Chris Squires)

It is with great sadness that we have to report the passing of Tommy Dunford of Brockholes B.C. Tommy was a great servant to the HDVBA over many years. He held a combination of the positions of General Secretary, League Secretary and Competitions Secretary for a total of ten years between 1996 and 2008. That makes him the longest serving official of the Veteran's League ever. On top of that he had several years as a member of the Management Committee.

We are also aware of four other club members who have passed on in March.

CLIFFORD WHEELWRIGHT: A regular member of the Slaithwaite Veteran's League team over recent years and also a long-standing member of Outlane BC. Clifford suffered a stroke a few years ago which left him without the use of his left arm, his bowling arm. Undeterred Clifford taught himself to bowl with his right arm so that he could continue to enjoy his sport.

PETER PRESTON: Peter was a Veteran's bowler for Milnsbridge for many years. A left-hander renowned for slow play with his singles matches often extending beyond the time of a football match. Regardless of that he was a real gentleman and character and the club will miss him greatly.

COLIN PERRY: Colin has been a popular member of the Marsden Park veterans team for many years and played a full part in their 6-Man League Section C title win of last season. When Marsden Park dropped their 10-man team last year Colin registered with Hemplow and played a full season in their B team's league programme last year.

DONALD PILLING: Well known and highly regarded within local bowling circles and particularly at his home club of Outlane BC. Another sad loss to local bowling circles.

TRANSFERS & NEW BOWLERS

This may seem like a pretty meaningless listing of new bowler registrations and transfers but the fact remains that these changes will all be effective from whenever we resume bowling. Also of course we know how much people like to keep abreast of who has changed clubs and who they may be facing next season whenever that is.

There is no reason why transfers shouldn't continue as they would in a normal close-season with the minimum of administrative effort. Any club asking for a bowler transfer should contact the League Secretary who will liaise between the clubs to ensure the change happens with the minimum of disruption and effort to all parties.

NEW REGISTRATIONS FOR 2020 SEASON

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
22 Feb 2020	Shaun Metcalf	Kirkheaton Con
3 Mar 2020	Philip Hoyle	Huddersfield Rec
3 Mar 2020	George Austen	Huddersfield Rec
3 Mar 2020	Peter Taylor	Denby Dale
4 Mar 2020	David Laidlaw	Marsh Lib
6 Mar 2020	Adrian Dyson	Slaithwaite
16 Mar 2020	Derek Hanner	Rastrick
16 Mar 2020	Richard Crossland	Rastrick
16 Mar 2020	Robert Laycock	Rastrick
16 Mar 2020	Roy Chapman	Rastrick
17 Mar 2020	Simon Cave	New Mill

TRANSFERS FOR 2020 SEASON

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 Quarmby	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
1 Mar 2020	John Clarkson	Waterloo	Almondbury BC
3 Mar 2020	Gilbert Thomas	Lowerhouses	Greenhead Park
6 Mar 2020	Brian Burhouse	Longwood	Slaithwaite
31 Mar 2020	Roy Hallam	Skel Windmill	Denby Dale

ANNUAL CLUB RAFFLE

Drawn on 31 March 2020

1st £100 84 FARNLEY TYAS
 2nd £50 54 CROSLAND MOOR
 3rd £25 200 LOWERHOUSES

??? BOWLING LAWS ???

????? QUIZ TIME ?????

Dave likes a smoke. He recently bought an electric cigarette from Ye Olde Vape Shoppe.

He's trying it out whilst scoring at a Vets match at Brockholes. His team-mate is playing and he asks Dave 'Who's on?'

Dave walks on to the green, still enjoying his new type of cigarette and gives his opinion to his team mate.

Q1. Is Dave allowed to smoke an electronic cigarette whilst on the green?

Q2. Is Dave allowed onto the green?

Q3. What guidance do the laws give to scorers?

If you feel confident enough you can post your guesses on the HDVBA Member's Forum website. Answers will appear on that site in due course.

Quiz set by Allan Dobson

Nostalgia

5 YEARS AGO APRIL 2015

The new 2015 season was underway five years ago this week and Lockwood Cons began the successful defence of their Section 1 title with an emphatic 9-0 home win to go straight to the top of the first league table of the year. Clayton West also opened with a 9-0 win and promoted Lindley Lib had an 8-1 victory to open their account.

Canalside and Newsome both still had their own greens and both used that to their advantage to record big opening day Section 2 wins. Cowcliffe began with a first day defeat at Meltham B but they go on to lift the end of season title

In Section 3 Linthwaite Hall were still featuring in our 10-Man league as were Marsden Park and the B teams from Waterloo and Skel Windmill, all now gone.

Lindley Lib B and Brockholes B both had good opening day Section 4 wins to set them on their way to eventual promotion. And we still operated an eight-team Section 5 where teams played each other four times for the last time as an end of season reorganisation put an end to that unpopular set-up.

A 24-team 6-Man League with Longwood and Lockwood continuing to dominate the top Section whilst in Section B Meltham beat Newsome on the opening day by 5-2. Both teams were to gain an end of season promotion with Newsome taking the title.

Clubs were using Bowlsnet to input their match results for the very first time this month in 2015 and a new HDVBA Facebook page saw the light of day for the first time.



The next meeting of the HDVBA Management Committee is a Conference Call Virtual Meeting at 10am on Monday 13th April 2020

10-MAN LEAGUE 2015					
		Tue 7th Apr		Section 1	
147	Clayton West	9 v. 0	Marsh United A	64	
123	Crosland Moor	7 v. 2	Golcar Lib. A	114	
139	Lindley Lib. A	8 v. 1	Elland C & BC A	101	
147	Lockwood Con.	9 v. 0	Thongsbridge A	88	
132	Milnsbridge A	7 v. 2	Meltham A	109	
141	Netherton Con. A	7 v. 2	Almondbury Lib.	84	
138	Waterloo A	7 v. 2	Kirkheaton Con.	81	
		Tue 7th Apr		Section 2	
127	Almondbury B.C. A	6 v. 3	Brockholes A	119	
147	Canalside A	9 v. 0	Springwood	98	
113	Lindley B.C. A	3 v. 6	Broad Oak A	120	
121	Meltham B	5 v. 4	Cowcliffe	119	
140	Newsome	8 v. 1	Milnsbridge B	108	
131	Rastrick	7 v. 2	Hemplot	104	
143	Shepley	8 v. 1	Skel Windmill A	109	
		Tue 7th Apr		Section 3	
120	Kirkheaton C & BC A	6 v. 3	Paddock I & C	105	
117	Linthwaite Hall	5 v. 4	Holmfirth A	114	
100	Marsden Park	2 v. 7	Almondbury B.C. B	141	
132	New Mill A	7 v. 2	Waterloo B	91	
121	Ravensknowle Park A	6 v. 3	Bradley & Colne	112	
107	Skel Windmill B	2 v. 7	Thorpe Green	129	
140	Slaithwaite	7 v. 2	Netherton Con. B	118	
		Tue 7th Apr		Section 4	
126	Brockholes B	7 v. 2	David Brown Sports	112	
109	Dalton	3 v. 6	Lowerhouses	128	
135	Denby Dale	7 v. 2	Canalside B	112	
88	Elland C & BC B	2 v. 7	Lindley Lib. B	124	
136	Holmfirth B	6 v. 3	Huddersfield RUFC	107	
83	Primrose Hill Lib.	2 v. 7	Meltham C	134	
128	Thongsbridge B	6 v. 3	Outlane	122	
		Tue 7th Apr		Section 5	
114	Greenhead Park	6 v. 3	New Mill B	97	
139	Broad Oak B	7 v. 2	Lindley B.C. B	96	
139	Golcar Lib. B	7 v. 2	Kirkheaton C & BC B	99	
139	Marsh United B	7 v. 2	Ravensknowle Park B	94	
6-MAN LEAGUE 2015					
		Mon 13th Apr		Section A	
105	Almondbury Lib.	7 v. 0	Lindley Lib.	38	
101	Brockholes A	6 v. 1	Thongsbridge B	66	
90	Canalside	5 v. 2	Crosland Moor	87	
105	Clayton West	7 v. 0	Golcar Lib.	45	
105	Lockwood Con.	7 v. 0	Paddock I & C	33	
90	Longwood	5 v. 2	Shepley A	78	
		Mon 13th Apr		Section B	
91	Greenhead Park	3 v. 4	Farnley Tyas	90	
90	Meltham	5 v. 2	Newsome WM	80	
84	Oakfield T & BC	5 v. 2	Netherton Con.	57	
71	Shepley B	2 v. 5	Holmfirth	100	
82	Skel Windmill	2 v. 5	Hemplot	94	
99	Thongsbridge A	5 v. 2	Brockholes B	88	

10-MAN LEAGUE SEASON PREVIEW

Here we go then the big build-up to the 2020 Anniversary season continues and concludes here with a team-by-team appraisal of the 64 sides playing in the 10-Man League this year. They are exactly the same 64 teams that started and finished last season with just the relegation and promotion changes to factor into our thinking.

With no new teams to take into consideration surely it should be just a formality to pick out the top and bottom teams in each of the five Sections based on a continuation of their 2019 form. If only it was that simple.

Some teams are on a downward spiral, some are on an upward trajectory, some have lost bowlers whilst others have new bowlers joining them. So whilst there are some constants to take into account there are also a lot of variables that need further consideration.

I know that many of you await this analysis masterpiece (not) before finalising your selections for your Fantasy League entry and I am sure that I will confuse and clarify in equal measures your thinking on this. So let the confusion begin by starting in the top Section and working our way through a minefield of choices with the temerity to pick my top and bottom tips in each Section.

2019 FINAL LEAGUE TABLE

	Section 1	Pl	W	L	Pts
1	Lockwood Con. A	26	20	6	156
2	Elland C & BC A	26	20	6	154
3	Clayton West	26	15	11	131
4	Cowcliffe	26	16	10	128
5	Meltham A	26	14	12	124
6	Rastrick	26	15	11	122
7	Marsh United A	26	14	12	122
8	Lindley Lib. A	26	12	14	114
9	Longwood	26	13	13	111
10	Golcar Lib A	26	11	15	108
11	Netherton Con. A	26	9	17	103
12	Waterloo	26	10	16	103
13	Almondbury B.C. A	26	6	20	84
14	Milnsbridge A	26	7	19	78

Having now won the Section 1 title for the last six years selecting **Lockwood Con** for your Fantasy league has become a standing order for most punters. To do anything else would immediately put you at odds with your rivals and out of the race for the prizes. However things are changing. The closest title race over the last six years saw the Cons clinch the title on the very last day of the season and a two-

point gap can hardly be called comfortable. Is that dominance coming to an end? We asked ourselves the same question last year but as that was on the back of a 34-point lead over the same runners-up it wasn't regarded as a serious question. The latest 32-point turnaround in a season amounts to a big question to be asked of our perennial Champions and they seem to have reacted strongly to the threat that Elland have mounted.

The acquisition of a proven Section 1 bowler announcing their intention of not sitting on their laurels but reacting positively to the challenge that Elland will undoubtedly throw down to them again this coming season.

No doubt that **Elland** will look back on their shock September defeat by 2-7 at Lindley Lib as a key moment when their challenge faltered but might want to go back to consecutive away defeats in July at lowly teams Netherton Con and relegated Almondbury BC as the real slip-up in their otherwise unblemished push to the top. The top two both beat each other by the same 5-4 scoreline on their own lawns so signaling that there is hardly anything between them.

Both had 20-6 win records over the season with Elland retaining the Section's only unbeaten home record. Elland also had a better 'Aggregate For' total so if it had gone down to the wire then Elland's better record would have given them the title. I am sure that they will be well motivated to launch an even stronger challenge the coming season and it is going to be really interesting to see how it pans out. Elland are definitely ready to rest the title from these serial winners but will realise that they will have to lift their game above the dizzy height of a second consecutive second place achieved last season if they are to assume the title of Anniversary Year Champions.

So what of the rest? The half-season table points towards a couple of possible contenders we need to look at next.

	(as at 1 July 2019)	Pl	W	L	Pts
1	Elland C & BC A	13	10	3	77
2	Meltham A	13	9	4	74
3	Lockwood Con. A	13	9	4	70
4	Clayton West	13	8	5	69

Meltham were having an excellent season last year up to half-way sitting four points above the reigning Champions which would normally result in you being in topspot. But with only five

wins from their 13 second half matches including just one away win (at bottom team Milnsbridge) they plummeted to fifth position. This in itself was a big improvement on their 10th place finish of 2018 but only returned them to their expected level of top five perpetual performers. That glimmer of success within their grasp at last season's half-way point showed their potential but that fall from grace also highlighted their limitations so it is difficult to work up a case for further improvement.

Clayton West enjoyed more away wins (5) last season than they had collected over the previous two seasons in total but their away form remains their weak spot. Five away wins will never lift any title and despite their continued good home form they need to up their game to launch the challenge that their proven band of bowlers could expect to mount. With four third-place finishes in the last five seasons they will undoubtedly remain strong challengers but can they go that extra bit to really push the top two. Doubtful in my eyes. They've flattered to deceive before to such an extent that they have attracted my vote for the title before, but not this season I'm afraid.

Cowcliffe and **Marsh United** have the look of teams that have already peaked as far as League achievements are concerned. With fourth-placed finishes for the last two years Cowcliffe have steadily built on their promotion of 2016 to establish themselves as comfortable at this level without ever threatening to rattle the big boys. With no new signings of note it is difficult to build a case for further improvement and a good KO run may be their best bet for honours although their recent track record in this form of competition is not impressive as they went out in the opening round of both the Bistro and Team KO last year.

Marsh Utd have a more impressive KO record with a Bistro title and two other semi-final appearances in the last two years which indicates that their game can be raised for one-off clashes but the marathon of a league season remains beyond them. From a recent best third-place finish in 2018 they slipped to seventh last year but the points difference was only four points less between the two years. Maybe they have one last hurrah within them but with no movement in the close-season transfer market they will have to do it with the same set of players. I hope the claim that they are past their best will instigate an upturn in form and fortunes for this club which continues to do more to discredit my forecasts than any other club in the League.

Over the past four seasons **Rastrick** have either been promoted to, or relegated from, Section 1 but now that sequence has been broken. An impressive sixth place finish last year heralds a sea-change in form and possibly a building point on which to move forward. Having identified at least two teams on the downward path there is room for a new upstart and **Rastrick** fit the bill. I think that they will improve on last year's final position but without making the top two uncomfortable at all. **Lindley Lib A** have established themselves in the top Section over the past five years and always finished mid-table. I thought that they would struggle last season but eventually accumulated their second-best points total from this five-year stint in Section 1. With a better away record they would have been a top half team but a similar run in mid-table is the best I can forecast for the Lib.

It was a difficult year for **Longwood** last year their first in the top flight following promotion from Section 2, losing their talisman member and ongoing problems with their green which meant their bowlers felt that they were bowling on a new green every week and none of them felt like their home lawn at all. From adversity comes strength they say but it remains to be seen if they can regroup and mount a challenge to the leading teams which was everyone's expectation this time last year. A final day white-wash at lowly **Waterloo** being the low point of a final run in of three wins in their last ten games which is relegation form if carried forward to the new campaign. I think they are better than that but how much better remains to be seen.

The cluster of three teams above last season's relegation trapdoor will be wary of the fearsome drop and all with good reason. **Golcar Lib A** have dallied around the bottom half of the table for the last five seasons but I expect them to survive to fight again another day whilst I always expect **Waterloo** to do enough to stay out of trouble which may be a false assumption but one I am sticking with. They've had worse teams than this and performed better so I expect them to improve this year. **Waterloo** and **Netherton Con A** have both finished in the bottom four for the last two seasons and you can't keep looking over the edge without fear of over-balancing (or being pushed) at some point and maybe it is the Cons turn to dwell a little too near and too long to the edge to eventually feel the draught of the drop.

Looking at the two teams joining the top table and I have confidence that **Crosland Moor** will

more than hold their own at this level. After being season-long leaders in Section 2 and a 16-point lead over the pack. They were the class team in that Section, with some good bowlers and I fully expect them to more than hold their own at this new level. Whereas I am not so convinced about **Thongsbridge A**. Last year was the fourth successive season that they have either been promoted to, or relegated from, Section 1 and I see no reason why that sequence should end now. I wish them well but I fear for their future at this level once again.

Top Tip: ELLAND C&BC A

Second Best: LOCKWOOD CON A

Relegation Ready: THONGSBRIDGE A

Going Down As Well: NETHERTON CON A

	Section 2	PI	W	L	Pts
1	Crosland Moor	26	20	6	152
2	Thongsbridge A	26	15	11	136
3	Thorpe Green	26	13	13	131
4	New Mill A	26	15	11	129
5	Broad Oak A	26	15	11	127
6	Hemplow A	26	14	12	124
7	Kirkheaton Con. A	26	13	13	121
8	Brockholes A	26	13	13	117
9	Lindley B.C. A	26	14	12	116
10	Shepley	26	11	15	108
11	Kirkheaton C & BC A	26	11	15	105
12	Lockwood Con. B	26	13	13	104
13	Meltham B	26	9	17	97
14	Skel Windmill	26	6	20	71

If you take out the promoted two-some from Section 2 then you are left with a group of 5 teams with just 10 points separating them so suggesting things could be pretty tight this coming season. Then add in two teams coming down who would expect to be very competitive at least at this level and then add the pair coming up and the momentum behind them and you have the potential for a very keenly contested Section 2 this coming season. So how do we separate them, it is not easy but lets have a look at each in turn.

Thorpe Green finished third last year despite having a win record of 13-13 which was exactly the same as the 12th placed team. With six 8-1 wins amongst that 13 accounts for some of the difference with only one 1-8 reversal to factor in. That was also on the back of winning the Section 3 title the previous year so obviously a team on the up and that must be noted. With numbers 1 and 2 in the Section 2 Singles Averages last year they hold a strong hand to play against the best teams in the Section.

New Mill A had a great first half of the season which they completed in third place but then went off the boil to eventually hold on to fourth spot. **Hemplow** were the biggest movers in the table after settling for 9th place at the half-way point but were the second best performers in the second half and moved up three places to sixth. Just above them were **Broad Oak A** who would have been higher except for losing two games 0-9 at Brockholes and Thongsbridge.

Lindley BC A were strolling towards a season-long unbeaten home record when entertaining Broad Oak A in their final game of the season but went down 2-7 to blow the formbook apart. which left them outside the top half of Section 2 for the first time in five years.

Brockholes A came down from Section 1 the previous year along with, but above, Thongsbridge A. They will be disappointed to finish in the lower half of the table whilst their relegated partners are making an instant return to the top level. Quite the opposite for Lockwood Con B who

(o

2019 TIPS AND OUTCOME		
	UP/DOWN	TIPS (OUTCOME)
1	Champions	Lockwood Con A (1/14)
1	Runners-Up	Elland C&BC A (2/14)
1	Bottom	Netherton Con A (11/14)
1	Relegated	Lindley Lib A (8/14)
2	Champions	Crosland Moor (1/14)
2	Runners-Up	Thorpe Green (3/14)
2	Bottom	Skel Windmill (14/14)
2	Relegated	Meltham B (13/14)
3	Champions	Bradley & Colne (2/12)
3	Runners-Up	Paddock I&C (1/12)
3	Bottom	Outlane (9/12)
3	Relegated	Lindley Lib B (5/12)
4	Champions	Elland C&BC B (9/12)
4	Runners-Up	Lowerhouses (1/12)
4	Bottom	RUBC (11/12)
4	Relegated	Milnsbridge B (8/12)
5	Champions	David Brown Sports (6/12)
5	Runners-Up	Dalton (12/12)
5	Bottom	Ravensknowle Park B (9/12)
5	Relegated	Greenhead Park (10/12)
A	Champions	Milnsbridge (6/10)
A	Runners-Up	Netherton Con A (1/10)
A	Bottom	Oakfield (9/10)
A	Relegated	Thongsbridge B (8/10)
B	Champions	Longwood (2/10)
B	Runners-Up	Clayton West (6/10)
B	Bottom	Primrose Hill Lib (7/10)
B	Relegated	Holmfirth (9/10)
C	Champions	Marsden Park (1/10)
C	Runners-Up	Shepley B (9/10)
C	Bottom	Brockholes B (10/10)
C	Relegated	Thongsbridge A (8/10)

two

can look back

.... AND FINALLY

**ANNIVERSARY PATRONS
POT REACHES £650**

Geoff Sykes' (

- 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.



MAY 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
misse