Masters Report

Current Season

Highlight in performance terms was Cheshire winning the Mens' EH O-60 Cup – congratulations to them all!

Otherwise Masters has been particularly disrupted by Covid, as it generally involves substantial travel to be able to get together.

In terms of participation the highlight has been among the Mens' O60's, where to minimise travel we have held gatherings in 3 sub-regions rather than for the whole North region. The response has been excellent and over 20 new players (not including North players coming up from O-55's) have been inducted.

The Women have not had a chance to meet up due to Covid restrictions. However, the O65s will participate in the Regionals on 11th July and the O45s have been invited to take place in the EH Tournament that is taking place on the weekend of 14th Aug at Nottingham. They will play against the Wales, Scotland and England O50s teams.

Season 2021/22

After much concern about whether we would be strong enough to be able to compete separately as NW and NE, it looks as though all the mens' teams up to and including O60's should have sufficient good quality players to compete separately from the outset of the new 8-Area structure.

The picture is very different on the women's side where participation has historically been limited at younger as well as older age groups because of family and club commitments etc. Current thinking is that we will continue to compete as "North" across all ladies' age groups and at Mens O70. Mens' O65 is borderline but the situation will be kept under review.

A potential game changer for Master – particularly in regions such as the North where we don't have established Masters leagues – will be the advent of the EH universal player registration system next season. We are currently working on how we can use this to get the message to individual players (at least to those registered for clubs) about Masters activity, which past experience suggests has potential greatly to increase participants. Fingers crossed!

Tony Taig
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