



MSBL
Mid-Shropshire Bowling League



Newsletter No. 5 - May / June 2025

Secretary's Report by Malcolm Fletcher



Welcome aboard everyone! The long gap between the April and July League meetings means it's Newsletter time again!

The officers always try to keep in close contact with member clubs and communications with them and their bowlers have stepped up again this season with a new WhatsApp group launched and set-up by the tireless competition and minute secretary. Thanks Rob for this and all you do for our sport!

I've seen plenty of MSBL bowls on Friday nights already in the 2025 campaign - in glorious dry and sunny weather it has to be said for a change - and it has been great to see so many bowlers enjoying the evening and the camaraderie it brings.

Fortunately, for our greenkeepers, the dry spell has ended, but it can only have helped the entry numbers for all our competitions to date, which have been marvellous. Now your officers are hoping for a good day and decent turnout at Edgmond for the Senior Merit finals this coming Saturday 31st May (2pm start).

On the personality front, the League is still without a vice-chairman and my approaches to a couple of people have so far not borne fruit. There is also chairman Sean Round's stated wish to stand down at the 2025 AGM, but I know lots of people are trying to get him to change his mind. He has grown into this role so well over the years that he is going to be a mighty hard act to follow. He leads the team with great aplomb . . .

Nominations for Life Members for 2025 will be taken up until the July executive meeting and then confirmed that night.

He may not get nominated for that honour but there is one man who has helped me tremendously since the start of the year - Phil Owen, who started bowling for Madeley Miners and is now a Sir John Bayley stalwart.

The gaps in the League's records and honours board have annoyed me intensely since being elected into this role in January 2011 and, despite planning to try and put things right every single winter since then, I've never actually got round to it.

But having finally contacted Shropshire Archives for advice and then appealing for help, Phil has been my knight in shining armour.

He helped me sort out the early paper records that had been stored in my attic and his brilliant work researching newspaper cuttings going back to the League's launch in 1932 has been nothing short of sensational. There won't be any excuses for gaps very soon. The League and I owe you big time Phil.

And with so many cuttings now to hand thanks to Phil, Sean has had a brilliant idea for the League to launch a mini museum where they and the various artefacts gathered over the year can be displayed for posterity. Clubs willing to become home to this display should contact me - and there is already one that could be interested . . .

Another person we owe a huge debt of gratitude to is Pauline Willson. She addressed delegates at the March meeting on the general subject of recruitment of new bowlers of all

ages. She accepted the invitation to speak after John Lumsden had proposed late last year that the League try to produce a more formal Youth Development programme.

Having just resumed duties as County Development Officer, Pauline is convinced that the only way forward for clubs to recruit new bowlers long term is to have a qualified coach in their ranks.

This is a view the League fully endorses so we are giving full support to the level 1 coaching course she has set up this summer, when the practical sessions are to be held at Shifnal. The full details can be seen on various posts on the MSBL website and the deadline to sign up to it is 31st May. Please clubs, don't miss this great chance on your doorstep - it can only help your long term futures.

The start of June is Shropshire inter-league time with an incredible 3 teams heading for Old Shrewsbury on Sunday the 8th with Brenda Slingo and newcomer James Blair at the helm. Then on Saturday the 14th it is veterans time at Meole Brace with captain Ian Evans busy finalising his squad. Who knows, if I can find enough over-60 bowlers willing to represent the League I may just try and run a second team myself that day . . .

Let's just hope that we have silverware to receive after those competitions that we can show off in style at the League's annual presentation dinner.

I'll end with a big plug for that evening, which will be held on Friday 14th November at a new venue of The Shropshire golf club in Muxton.

We have listened to feedback from clubs - changing the venue so as not to be reliant on outside caterers; starting at the later time of 6pm (meal at 6.30); reducing the price for juniors who attend; and opting to book a live music act in the form of the fabulous Harmony Sisters.

However, I must give clubs and bowlers early warning that we are limiting numbers to 140 that night and we expect there to be a big demand. The choice of a 2 or 3 course meal will be decided at the July meeting and then the price per person can be worked out.

But clubs and bowlers are really going to have to be on the ball come the end of the season as everything will need to be sorted a month in advance of the big night. The October meeting is going to be crucial!!!!

But for now, enjoy the season and hope to see lots of you at Edgmond.

Floreat Mid Shropshire bowls!

Malcolm

Fixture Secretary's Report by John Palmer

All the leagues have now started and what a difference we've had with the weather compared to last year.

A number of £10 fines have been imposed due to clubs playing unregistered players. A common theme is where the captain assumes that a player registered for the Mid-Shropshire Senior Citizens League is also allowed to play in the Mid-Shropshire League. This is not the case. The clubs fined are:

- Bridgnorth £10
- Horsehay £10
- Sir John Bayley £20
- Shifnal £10
- Newport £10
- St Georges £10
- Donnington Wood £10



- Wrockwardine Wood £10

There has been one transfer so far this year, Lucy Evans from Trench to Edgmond.

John

Competition Secretary's Report by Rob Burroughs



We have held four competitions so far, with one of those competitions, the Senior Merit, having its finals on Saturday 31st May at Edgmond at 2 p.m.

The Under 25 Merit was held at Maddocks a week later than planned, thank you to Martin Gaut for helping me run that. We had 6 entries with Dan Corbett coming out on top beating Logan Church 21-11.

The Dixon and Driscoll Doubles attracted one of the highest entries for a long time with 33 pairs taking part at Newport. Sonya Lucas & Pete Grimston were the winners beating the home pairing of Phil Emery & Mark Selley 21-11.

The Over 60s Merit had another good entry of 23 players at the Bowring, and it was Roy Bradburn who won it for the first time, defeating Ian Edwards 17 in a very good final on a lightning fast green.

Lastly the Merit comes to a conclusion on Saturday, and we had an even higher entry than last year with 88 entering. It promises to be a great day on Saturday.

I would like to thank Maddocks, Newport and Bowring for those three competitions, as well as Albrighton, Donnington Wood, St Georges and Wrockwardine Wood for hosting the qualifiers of the Merit. Thank you to Greg Needham, Helen Clee, Louise Cotton and Michael Cooper for running those qualifiers.

Dates coming up:

Junior Day (Under 15&18 Merit)

Saturday 21st June at 10 a.m. for Under 18 and 1 p.m. for Under 15 at Broseley

Free Entry. Enter on the Day

Ladies Merit

Saturday 28th June at 11 a.m. at Sir John Bayley bottom green.

£3 Entry Fee. Enter by end of Saturday 21st June

Mixed Doubles

Sunday 29th June at 10 a.m. at Sinclair. *£10 Entry Fee. Enter on the Day.*

Monday Merit

Qualifier Monday 30th June at 6.30 p.m.

Final 8 or 16 – Saturday 19th July at 5 or 6 p.m. *£3 Entry Fee, Enter by end of Monday 23rd June*

Entries to be made to Rob Burroughs on 07901 229623.

Rob

Treasurer's Report by Celia Miles

The league's bank balance as at 19th May was £6,383.
That figure includes £125 sponsorship of the Senior Merit gratefully received from Shropshire Verti Drain & Turf Services and £100 sponsorship for the juniors from our chairman.
So the League's thanks go to Mike Humphries, Paul Beer & Sean Round.

Celia



Dates for your Diary

Harris Cup Preliminary Round - Wednesday 28th May and 18th June

Ashton Cup Preliminary Round - Wednesday 11th June

Junior Day (Under 15&18 Merit) -

Saturday 21st June at 10 a.m. for Under 18 and 1 p.m. for Under 15 at Broseley

Ashton Cup 1st Round - Wednesday 25th June

Ladies Merit - Saturday 28th June at 11 a.m. at Sir John Bayley bottom green.

Mixed Doubles - Sunday 29th June at 10 a.m. at Sinclair.

Monday Merit - Qualifier Monday 30th June at 6.30 p.m.

July Executive Meeting - Tuesday 1st July at 7.30 p.m. at Sir John Bayley

[More details and contact information are on our website midshrop.co.uk](http://midshrop.co.uk)

The league is sponsored by:

