

## Chairman's Report 2010 - 2011

Many years ago a friend of mine wrote an amusing song for his "popular beat combo", called "Oh no not Ian Ure again!" As youngsters we used to collect football cards which were bought with chewing gum from the local sweetshop, all in the hope of completing the full quota of Division One teams and all their players – a lot of chewing was required. His song recalled the joyous optimism of dashing to the shop to buy the gum, hoping for that elusive George Best card and the crushing depression of finding that it was "Ian Ure again" – he was a boring Arsenal defender I think, and was a regular in the gum packet, we were all certain that key players never existed in the packs just to keep us idiots wanting more – the gum was rubbish and you had more chance of blowing a bubble by chewing the Ian Ure card for a few minutes.

Well, the approaching season is nothing like that! For me it is always an exciting time of optimism which is well satisfied as the season unfolds, and I am sure that this season will be no different. Last season was an excellent one for the Club on and off the pitch. The new surface certainly improved the standard of play for all teams, providing a level of confidence in the roll and bounce of the ball that had steadily deteriorated year on year with the old surface. It was also apparent that the club is more cohesive with great support for the women's and men's teams at crucial matches and also a great buzz in the clubhouse, with a few new social events proving to be very popular. If you missed Andy's wine tasting then make sure that you are free for the next one, keep the Sunday free too for recovery.

We need to remind ourselves that we are now running 14 Saturday sides at that they are all playing at or near the highest level, this is a remarkable achievement and makes us, I think, the strongest Club in the Midlands and well up there with the best in the Country. This has not been achieved overnight, but as a result of a lot of hard work in the past where people with a strong belief in grass roots hockey and the need to invest time and money in our youngsters have ensured the future. It is only fitting that this year Bob Douglas was presented with the Rushcliffe Sports Award for Volunteer of the Year, for his incredible work since 1986 when the Youth Section was started. I would like to thank Bob and all the people involved in training and development for their hard work and dedication on your behalf, as well as encourage members to get involved, we need you.

So what of the future? We will be facing the usual problems of attracting new players to replace the younger members who are off to College and the older weekend warriors who have too many bits not working, so if you can help us promote the Club then please do so. The new pitch is nicely bedding in but we need to develop a habit of keeping it clean and using it properly. Currently we are very poor at disposing of our drinks bottles and of staying of the pitch and out of the dugouts when we are not playing, and getting off the pitch reasonably quickly when the game is over. Just little areas that I will be asking captains to think about. The pitch is great, be proud of it, look after it.

Training starts Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> July for ladies and Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> August for Men. I look forward to seeing you at one or the other (possibly both?). Availability for pre-league Men's games are on your Members page of the web site, so please let us know if you can play in September. Subs can be paid online too, so get that sorted ASAP.

Let's have another great season..... I am off to buy some gum.

Geoff Bail

Chairman

July 2010

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