

# Chair Report 2023

Returning to the role in 2023 has been very different to when I first took things on in 2013..!..at that time taking over a club in debt presented a number of challenges but we made it work and really progressed things into a great success, a succession plan was built great processes and meetings with clear structure and good controls everyone knew their role and took responsibility sharing their allocated activities at each meeting and when I left in 2019 we had £10k in the bank from those efforts.

I stayed involved to be part of the team when we launched our first North East Opens in partnership with our friends at Billingham, and this is still going, despite some challenges with ice time and judges for 2024 we are still aiming to run an opens this year (probably later in the year than 2023). I came back to the role when the previous chair and secretary moved on having changes in circumstances. It has been an interesting time. We were lucky to have Giles join the team with his tech knowledge and organisation skills he is a huge asset (building on Bev's skills in the tech area which had made a big difference to make us a more up to date club), under Giles we have successfully run our first IJS, a massive achievement even though it was surprisingly expensive it was brilliant and essential for the growth of our club. To offset the costs of competition getting out of hand running 2 competition simulations per year alongside the IJS annuals means we remain sustainable.

Graeme staying on as treasurer has been a blessing, maintaining excellent control and a trusted and level head over our finances and Donna coming in as secretary to learn a brand new and demanding role has worked hard to fit in the multiple requirements alongside her full time job and other volunteer roles, with Rachel P being responsible for fundraising which has been extremely valuable and successful with lots of funds raised this year, thank you so much for that. Rachel, alongside her responsibility for safeguarding areas and both roles have defined our activities for most of the year.

Sue's test organising role has presented a lot of challenges in the second half of the year with rising costs of ice (from only patch payment with lots of regular sessions to private ice hire, increasing the costs to our skaters hugely and leading to another partnership with Billingham for which we are very grateful).

Thank you to our other committee members who have contributed to lively discussions and many changes over 2023.

It's been great to have more involvement with the coaching team with Joy joining many of our meetings with great ideas and suggestions to benefit our skaters.

To move forward into 2024, I think the current structure would be best served to change into sub committees with an overarching officials structure to ensure meetings have more effect and benefit to deliver objectives. Proposals for planned activities being

presented and agreed upon by all at a point when clear plans have been set and controls are in place to have a more productive formal meeting once a month. Sub committees for competitions, club activities, fundraising and safeguarding alongside this would allow more parents and junior members to be involved in areas that interest them and then short presentations of plans at relevant meetings would allow progress to be made. Giles presented very effective time limited formats which would then give everyone a fair chance to have their say and present a case for action which could then give each member a vote to go ahead with the action or not as appropriate with votes to be counted and majority rule on each activity and costs and process to be laid out at that time.

I do believe this would be an effective way forward to add structure and ensure we can achieve best governance and value for our members.

Rachael Richards