

Report on Badminton Premier League – 2016/17 Season

The Badminton Premier League continued into its 2nd season with the principal aims remaining as before.

- To provide a more structured league for our top Premier Players to compete in.
- To create an Event within our Centre to showcase our (and other Provinces) top players.
- To use these events to promote and generate more interest in badminton
- To use these events to increase footfall and revenue to both Leinster Badminton Centres.

Following our inaugural Season, with “lessons learnt” and “comments from the participating clubs” taken on board, it was decided and agreed to drop the Premier Mens and Ladies Premier Leagues and concentrate only on a Mixed Premier format.

Our intention was always to expand and increase the number of competing teams, this could not be done across 3 separate Premier Leagues, not only from a logistically viewpoint but also given the feedback from the 1st year showed that the Mixed format was the preferred by players and spectators alike.

To expand the BPL in the 2nd season, “Expressions of Interest” to enter the BPL was issued to a number of Clubs/ Regions setting out the criteria, size and minimum standard of players within the squads. While all those asked did like and welcomed the opportunity, only one club was in a position to meet and strive for these standards. Following a meeting with the other 4 clubs and after examination of player standard, this club was accepted to enter. this was South Dublin Spartans.

Another aspect that greatly assisted the growth of the BPL to a 5th team was the permitted inclusion of Badminton Ireland Academy Players across and within the now 5 BPL Clubs.

This we saw as a very important step with the inclusion of the current crop of talented young BI Academy players into the BPL and we are very grateful to Badminton Ireland for releasing these players for that purpose.

It was agreed among the 5 participating clubs that the fairest method for introducing these Academy players was via allocation by the BPL committee to fill “gaps” in Team squads and to endeavour to provide “balance” across the 5 clubs.

The now 5 Premier Clubs embraced the new Mixed Format of 9 matches and the 2nd seasons kicked off on 28th October 2016.

The format of Matches in the BPL remained as per Season One - all aimed to generate excitement and interest, which included

- Clubs able to bring in "Invitation" Players.
- Use of a hybrid scoring system of 5 games to 11 points
- Use of a "Power-Play Shuttles"

A new feature to the BPL this season was also the inclusion of a new scoring "technology" aimed to provide a better spectator experience. Special thanks to Philip McKeown of the BPL committee for writing a specific BPL scoring program and applying this to the newly acquired TV's now permanently mounted behind courts 1 to 4 in Terenure

The TV's initially used were borrowed from BI and later the BPL acquired new TV's via our Sponsorship deals. This new scoring system / TV's in Terenure in time can now be configured for other badminton events being held in the Centre and the intention is to expand this system further.

This season we had 5 BPL Friday Match Nights – more evenly spread out across the calendar - the level of support from spectators has risen this year and we are greatly appreciative of all those that come along and show support the Badminton Premier League – all would agree it is a great nights entertainment of badminton

This season we have also decided to hold a stand alone BPL Finals Night – Friday May 5th in Terenure Badminton Centre – Besides the BPL Final match , to this we hope to also have an "exhibition showcase of badminton" and make small presentations to our recent Celtic Challenger Teams, plus an End of Season Bumper Raffle – all aimed to create spectacular event around badminton.

I would really like to thank all the members of the BPL committee who worked extremely hard before, during and after each BPL event night to help deliver a great spectacle. – Dave Murphy, Seamus Halpin, Vinod Pillai, Thomas Bohan Philip McKeown and Veronica Farrelly. I would also like to thanks others that have assisted when required, and to thanks Austin Crowe , photographer, for excellent action photos.

We were also extremely delighted to have maintained the Sponsorship from Turkish Airlines for the 2nd season as our Main Sponsor and to our new sponsors 747 Travel. Our sponsors have allowed us put raise the bar on technology and secured a number of commercial sponsors from the start, and s

Season Two of The BPL is almost over, but plans are already being formulating for next season wit the aim to attract One more club of a Premier standard to participate.

Remember the BPL Final Night 5th May –

Everyone is Invited, and a Splendid Time is Guaranteed for All ☺

Joe Byrne,

Leinster Badminton