

Leinster Badminton Premier League 2023/2024 Season Report

The Badminton Premier League (BPL) returned to Terenure Badminton Centre on Friday 24th November 2023.

The BPL purpose is to:

- a) Provide a premium level highly competitive well run badminton league wrapped in a competitive night for the best players in the country to compete against each other in a unique team game format.
- b) Give younger upcoming players the opportunity to gain experience in a pressure cooker atmosphere.
- c) Provide an entertaining social night for fans of the game, in Terenure Badminton Centre.
- d) Use an alternative exciting match format of best of 5 games to 11 points, with special "Power Play" shuttles.
- e) Stream on internet via YouTube, to let badminton fans outside the Dublin area watch top-class badminton.
- f) Promote the game of badminton.

This season kicked off with 7 teams including 3 teams based outside of the Leinster Provincial Branch.

The teams this year were:

- Ailesbury Falcons (Leinster)
- Alpha Bobcats (Ulster)
- Mount Pleasant Mavericks (Leinster)
- Pembroke Panthers (Leinster)
- Smash Bandits (Munster)
- Western Warriors (Connaught)
- South Dublin Spartans (Leinster)

It saw the return of Ailesbury Falcons back to the BPL and the addition of Alpha Badminton from Ulster for the first time. This resulted in a league with all 4 provinces represented.

The league format was held over a series of Friday night fixtures in Terenure Badminton Centre culminating in the top 2 team qualifying for a grand finale.

The match nights were as follows:

- Match Night 1: Friday 24th November 2022
- Match Night 2: Friday 26th January 2023
- Match Night 3: Friday 23rd February 2023
- Match Night 4: Friday 29th March 2024
- Match Night 5: Friday 5th April 2024
- Match Night 6: Friday 19th April 2024
- Match Night 7: Friday 10th May 2024
- BPL 2023/2024 Final: Friday 17th May

This year's BPL League is not completed prior to the Leinster Branch AGM, but the BPL committee considers this year a success based on the following factors:

- The interest of top badminton players wanting to play in the BPL. A brilliant wave of exciting young players coming from the various high-performance programmes. Some of the players are also travelling large distances to play in the BPL.
- The standard of badminton on show has been phenomenal, where players are obviously giving it their all and responding to the overall occasion on show.
- A very loyal but significantly sized regular crowd come each night to support the BPL proves there is a market for such high-quality entertainment. However, we must not take them for granted and always strive to improve and keep fresh the spectacle on offer.
- A busy atmosphere in the bar upstairs
- An engaging social media environment.
- Strong viewing figures on our YouTube Channel.

Our thanks to others who help the BPL Committee with this year's league (in no particular order):

- The respective clubs, teams' managers and players who put on a great show every time.
- Our brilliant umpires of course who helps us run the matches in a most professional manner.
- Betty and the bar team in Terenure Badminton Centre.

As the BPL 2023/2024 comes to a close on Friday 19th May, the BPL Committee is delighted with the expanded competition and looking forward to planning the next season soon after. However, we must remain innovation to keep the competition fresh for clubs, players and fans.

The BPL Committee this year are:

- Thomas Bohan, Chairperson
- David Murphy
- Joe Byrne
- Philip McKeown
- Veronica Clare
- Vinod Pillai

Thomas Bohan
BPL Chairperson
17th May 2024