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**THE BADMINTON
LINE JUDGES**



ASSOCIATION OF ENGLAND

**NEWSLETTER NO. 54
SPRING 2021**



Letter from the Editor



Dear Members,

How sad it was to hear about the death of John Alexander, the man responsible for the founding of our Association. He fought hard for the line judges and, without him, the first line judges' organisation in the world might never have come into being.

On a brighter note, the All England went ahead under severe restrictions and it is to the immense credit of Kate and Suzanne that it seems to have been a great success, despite having much fewer people than usual. Kate has written a great account of what they had to go through, and it is particularly pleasing that Kate was asked to present the Men's Doubles runners-up medals. It shows the esteem in which Kate is held and is also an appreciation of the role the Association plays in the successful running of not only the All England but also other important events in England. I am also delighted to be able to include an article by one of our newer line judges, Karen Macrae; on this evidence, I am likely to be asking her for more reports in the future for events she attends. If you haven't also looked at the website recently, Himanshu has written a very detailed account of the organisation everyone had to go through during the event.

As we have now awarded Margaret Redfern life membership, I have included an item about her life in sport. **Please Note: Margaret has requested that if anyone has changes to their personal details such as addresses, email addresses, phone numbers etc can they please let her have the details as soon as possible.**

Thank you to the other contributors to this newsletter. At the request of Anne Spencer, "Where are they now?" is about Susie Susanto who we oldie goldies will remember fondly for her graceful play and unbelievable stamina.

You may recall from my item about Judy Hashman last year that she was married to Dick Hashman for many years. While I don't have details, sadly, Dick passed away last week after a long illness.

As things continue to look up, have a great summer and hopefully we will be back to normal by the time of the next newsletter.

Please send articles for future editions to me at:

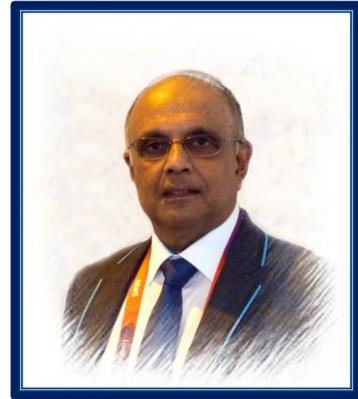
Email: amorden49@btinternet.com

PLEASE NOTE: This is an independent newsletter which does not necessarily reflect the views of the BLJAofE Committee or BADMINTON England.

A Message from the President

Dear Colleagues,

It has been a long, hard year for all of us and while the future looks a little brighter, there is still a degree of uncertainty as to how things will unfold. I am really pleased to say that, despite all the difficulties imposed by Covid regulations, the All England Championships was successfully completed in March. There will be reports of the event in other pages of this Newsletter. We now look forward to the restart of national competition at some stage in the future.



The Badminton England Roadmap states that junior badminton will be able to restart after 12th April, with junior group sessions, and coaching groups of up to 15 allowed. After 17th May, junior circuit tournaments will be allowed, but these will be very restricted in the numbers of players and officials allowed. Line judges will not be required for these events.

I have heard from Mark Downie, Badminton England's Head of Competition, that senior competition will restart after 21st June. Senior Gold events are being planned for the weekends of 10th July and 31st July. Line judges will be required for these events and we will be contacting the membership with information as soon as these events, and the venues, are confirmed.

The English Nationals have been confirmed for 20/21/22 August at the National Badminton Centre, Milton Keynes. Again, we will be contacting the membership nearer the time. The Junior Nationals will be held later in the year; the Under 17 Nationals on the weekend of 27/28 November and the Under 19 Nationals on the weekend of 11/12 December. No senior events have yet been organised from September onwards, but BE are working hard to get the events calendar populated.

On another front, we have at last heard from the Commonwealth Games Organisers, B2022, giving us information on National Technical Official requirements for the Games. This is quite a detailed document, and Vicky Ryan, the Coordinator of Line Judges, is working on compiling an information fact sheet for circulation to the membership.

It looks like we will be able at last to get back on court in the near future. I sincerely hope that the national progress in containing and reducing the spread of Covid will eventually result in all of us getting back to a normal life, with our families, with work and with sport.

Abby Kumar
May 2021

BADMINTON NEWS IN BRIEF

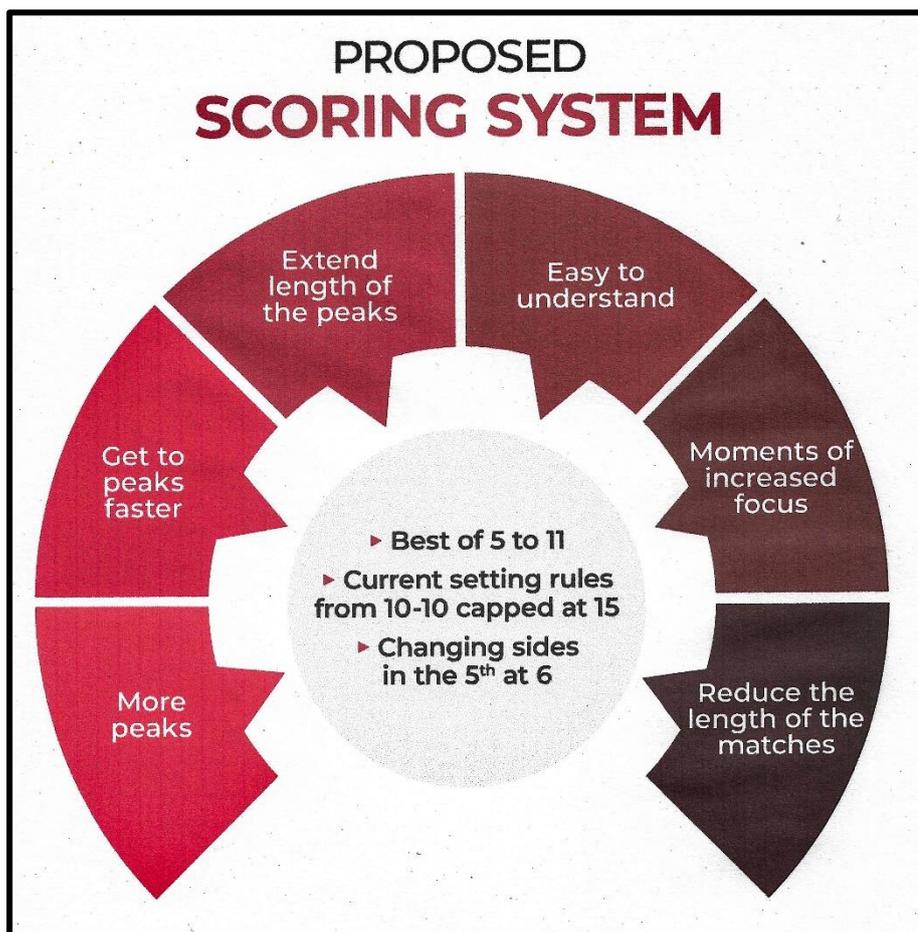
BWF TO VOTE ON POST-OLYMPICS SCORING SYSTEM CHANGE

BWF has announced it will vote in May on a proposal to change the sport's scoring system after this year's Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics. BWF said it had taken forward a proposal from Badminton Indonesia and Badminton Maldives to amend the rulebook although Poul-Erik Høyer Larsen, the BWF President, has pushed for the change for some time.

The change proposes a best of five games of 11 points format in a bid to increase excitement and make the sport more television friendly. "The proposed scoring system change is part of my vision to make badminton more exciting and to increase the entertainment value for stakeholders and fans," said Poul-Erik. "This is only proposed to be introduced after the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games. So, I'm confident this is a more favourable time to affect this change."

BWF is holding its annual general meeting virtually on May 22 with votes also to decide positions on the executive board. Poul-Erik has already been confirmed as President for a third term in office as he is unopposed. A two thirds majority will be required for the scoring change to be approved.

Editor's Note: Acceptance of the change is by no means certain. An attempt to change the scoring failed to obtain the necessary support last time it was voted on in 2018. A proposal was also defeated in 2014. Judging by comments from some of the badminton nations, not everyone is happy this time either.



NEW ROLE FOR CHLOE BIRCH

Chloe Birch, one of our top doubles' players, has taken on the role as an athlete ambassador for mental health charity, Sport in Mind. She will be supporting the charity's objective of improving the lives of people experiencing mental health problems through sport and physical activity.

Chloe says they are an amazing charity that do some great things in the community. She said "It's a charity that I am super passionate about and after just celebrating their ten-year anniversary last weekend, I can't wait to see how this charity grows and helps so many people in the years to come. It's really an honour to have their logo on my shirt and I'm so glad it could be done in time for the European Championships next week!"

Badminton England said: "We know that badminton is great for both your mental and physical health. In fact, a recent study showed that those who played badminton more often, lived longer happier lives! It's more important than ever that we look after our mental health during these challenging times, and we can't wait to see the badminton community back on court to once again feel the benefits that badminton brings as soon as possible." You can follow Chloe, and the work she's doing to support Sport in Mind, on her social media channels @ChloeBirch95.

BWF INTEGRITY CASES

BWF have announced the outcomes of two integrity cases. The hearings for both cases concluded in late 2020, and the reasoned decisions of the BWF Independent Hearing Panel were communicated to the parties who had 21 days to appeal. Both cases involved whistle-blowers who reported information to the BWF about corrupt behaviour including approaches to fix a match or to manipulate part of their match for money.

Case 1

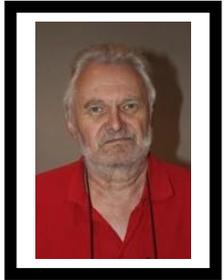
Eight Indonesian players who knew each other and competed in lower-level international competitions mostly in Asia up until 2019, breached BWF Integrity Regulations related to match fixing, match manipulation and/or betting on badminton. A report by a whistle-blower allowed the BWF Integrity Unit to start an investigation and to interview a number of players regarding the matter. All eight players were provisionally suspended in January 2020 until a determination could be made through a hearing process. Three of them were found to have coordinated and organised others into being complicit in the behaviour and have been suspended from all badminton related activities for life. Five others were suspended for between six to 12 years and fined between US\$3,000 and US\$12,000 each.

Case 2

A Malaysian citizen who is a representative of an equipment brand that sponsors international badminton players has also been suspended from all badminton-related activity for life.

The BWF Integrity Unit had been investigating the individual for a number of years and found that the individual had approached international badminton athletes and offered money to manipulate matches, bet on multiple badminton matches including matches involving players that were sponsored by the individuals' employer and had "abused his position of influence as an executive in a sporting brand in an attempt to corrupt international badminton and enrich himself". Due to the nature of the breaches and this person's access to and influence over players his company sponsored, the IHP suspended the individual from badminton-related activities for life.

RIP JOHN ALEXANDER



It is quite possible that the BLJAofE would not exist without John Alexander. As an article in a previous newsletter showed, John was instrumental in founding the Association and he fought tirelessly to promote our interests. We must, therefore, add our voice in tribute to John here, despite all the others made in his name. Abby has written a tribute on our website which sets out further details of his badminton career. Please read it if you haven't already done so.

John was born on 9th April 1936. He was the eldest of three brothers, the other two being Roger and Christopher. He was a very clever and learned man who worked as a microbiologist. He obtained his first degree at Exeter University, but also got a Master of Science degree in Zoology at University of London in 1969 and a Doctor of Philosophy at Salford University in 1977. His specialism was marine biology, with a particular interest in salmon and he had papers published on the subject. He was a researcher and lecturer all his life.

John devoted over 30 years of his life to badminton in England, first becoming a Vice President of Badminton England in 1981, where he also held various positions of responsibility, such as Chairman of the Development and Planning Committee and Chairman of the Working Party that rewrote Badminton England's Articles of Association and Standing Orders in 1998. He was subsequently a member of the Working Party that in 2012 rewrote the Articles and standing orders of badminton England to conform with the 2006 Companies Act.

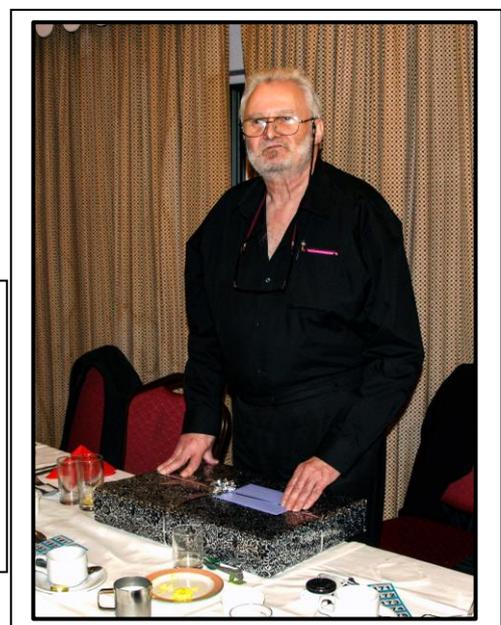
He was on the Inter County Championship Committee for many years and was manager of Line judges at the All England from 1982 to 2012. He was also Manager of Line Judges at the 2011 World Championships at Wembley, the 2002 Commonwealth games in Manchester and the European Championships in Liverpool and Manchester.

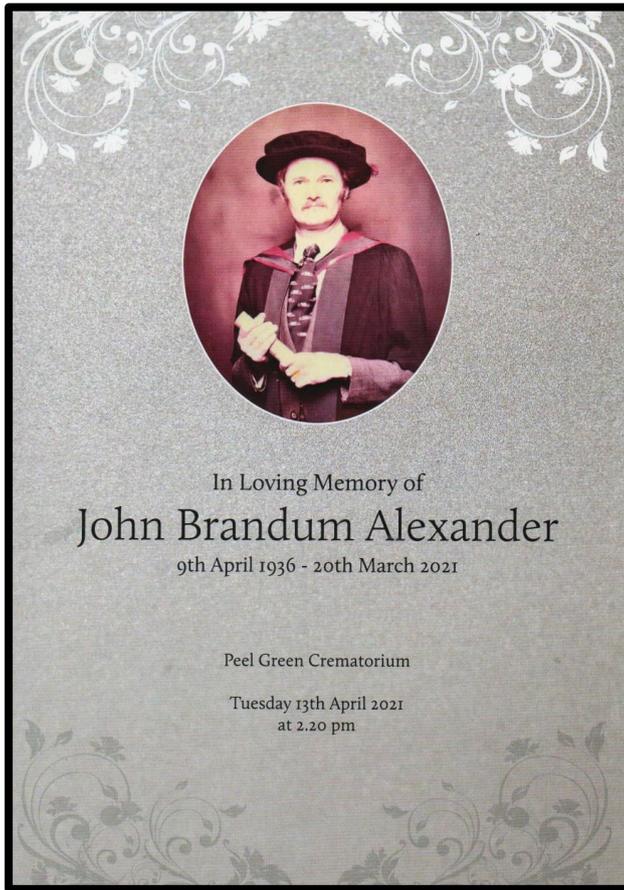
He was our President from 1998 to 2015 and a Life Member from 2013. He was also Vice president of Lancashire County Badminton Association for many years.

John had been unwell when he died in a care home on 20th March 2021. His funeral was on 13th April. It is very sad that such a dedicated servant of badminton has passed away as there are few people who have shown such incredible service to the sport over so many years.



Picture on Right: Our presentation to John on his retirement as President





<p>SERVICE CONDUCTED BY REVEREND JENNY LEWIS</p> <p>Opening Music Abide With Me</p> <p>Welcome and Introduction by Reverend Jenny Lewis</p> <p>Opening Prayer</p> <p>Tribute</p> <p>Music The Lord Is My Shepherd <i>Tune: Crimond</i></p> <p>Prayers</p> <p>Bible Reading and Short Reflection by Reverend Jenny Lewis</p> <p>Prayers</p>	<p>The Lord's Prayer Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom, The power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.</p> <p>Commendation and Farewell</p> <p>Committal</p> <p>Dismissal Prayers <i>including the following for everyone to say:</i> God be in my head, and in my understanding; God be in my eyes, and in my looking; God be in my mouth, and in my speaking; God be in my heart, and in my thinking; God be at my end, and at my departing.</p> <p>The Blessing</p> <p>Closing Music The Lark Ascending by Ralph Vaughan Williams</p>
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OUR TREASURER MARGARET REDFERN – A LIFE IN SPORT



While you should all have seen the great news that Margaret Redfern was awarded life membership of the Association at the AGM, and I have reproduced her thank you below. What you may not know is what an incredibly sporting life Margaret has led.

Margaret started playing a variety of sports in her secondary school. These included cross-country running, netball and rounders, and she also threw the javelin for the school. Margaret also started playing badminton socially at the age of 13. One wonders how she had time to do anything else like schoolwork.

She carried on playing badminton until she got married in Wolverhampton in 1960 and moved the very next day to Pwllheli. For the next ten years she played badminton for a local club while producing four daughters over a period of ten years up to 1972. She moved from Pwllheli to Mynydd near Mold in North Wales in 1970 and played first division badminton in the Chester League for Northop while also playing for British Aerospace in the Wrexham League first division until 1984.

Unfortunately, as happens to so many of us, all this activity took its toll and Margaret had both hips replaced in 1984. Following the enforced cessation of her playing days, Margaret turned to umpiring and line judging, initially in Wales. She applied to join the English umpires list and was accepted in 1996 for County level. She officially line judged for the first time at the 1993 World Championships at the NIA in Birmingham.

Margaret also became involved with parabadminton by umpiring for the Dwarf Association as a Welsh umpire, before the English umpires also became involved. She organised the umpires and line judges for the dwarf exhibition matches at the All England championships and was the natural and obvious person to take on the job of Manager of Line Judges at the first parabadminton World Championships at Stoke Mandeville in 2015.

Margaret also organised the line judges and umpires for the Welsh Open for 15 years. As you know, Margaret volunteered to be the Association's Treasurer at the first AGM in 1996 and subsequently has taken on responsibility for booking the hotel for the line judges at the All England Championships. As well as having to collect the room payments, she has had to share out the Badminton England subsidies and is also responsible for advertising overseas events and helping to select who goes along. Margaret has also organised the provision and managing of line judges for the Irish International every year.

Margaret's dedication to sport generally, and badminton, in particular, has been quite remarkable. We all have a lot to thank her for and I hope you enjoy the photos from various events, both old and more recent, that she has provided for this newsletter.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP MEMORY LANE – MARGARET’S THANK YOU

I have been overwhelmed by all your lovely comments thank you very much, it has been a job I have enjoyed all these years, seeing what we have achieved from start 1994 to present day.

Badminton has been very kind to me and lots of my colleagues, when Europe was opened up and asking for line judges. We have had some very magical times, in the early days of the association we always seemed to be the same group who went abroad. Wherever we went we always had an excursion around the country, exceptional great dinner to end the tournament.

We built up a great rapport with many Countries in Europe we never got invited to Asia as they have more than enough line judges of their own. Quite a few tournaments hold special with me, but Iceland stands out as the top one. The hospitality from the Icelandic Association was special they treated us so well I am sure we spent more time out and about around Iceland than on the court. Their generosity was overwhelming. There was a midnight trip out to see the Northern Lights but, sadly, we did not see them. Blue Lagoon for a morning dip exceptional experience, Rotating restaurant to finish off the event with a fabulous meal. I think a few of my colleagues will remember this.

My home events include, World Championships, Commonwealth Games, Olympic Games, World Paralympics at Stoke Mandeville which Badminton England took on at the last minute, this was the biggest challenge yet as we only had 29 line judges and 10 courts. Abby and I trained up students from two schools 2 days before the event and it was a great success. I had the privilege to manage them all.

Looking back over my badminton career I have been especially fortunate to be selected for the most prestigious events, managing and line judging. We had great opportunities to meet players; the list is too long to name them all, but I am adding a few photos for a blast from the past. Just a few names Susi Susanti, Morten Frost, Rudy Hartono, Paul Eric Hoyer Larsen, Tony Gunawan, Gao Ling, Rexy Mainakay & Ricky Subagia. Eddy Hartono, Denny Kantono, Bambang and Hariyanto Arbi

We also had international line judges as members for many years until each country started their own associations. Most of these are still friends today even stayed with some while visiting their country.

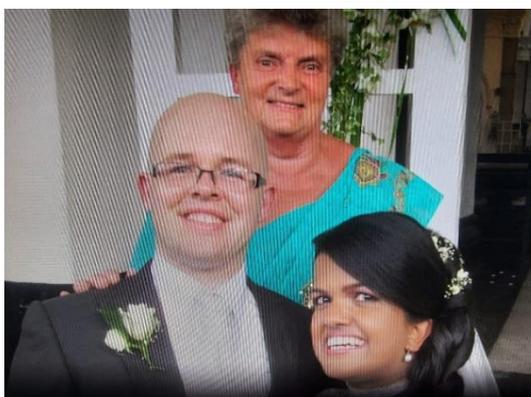
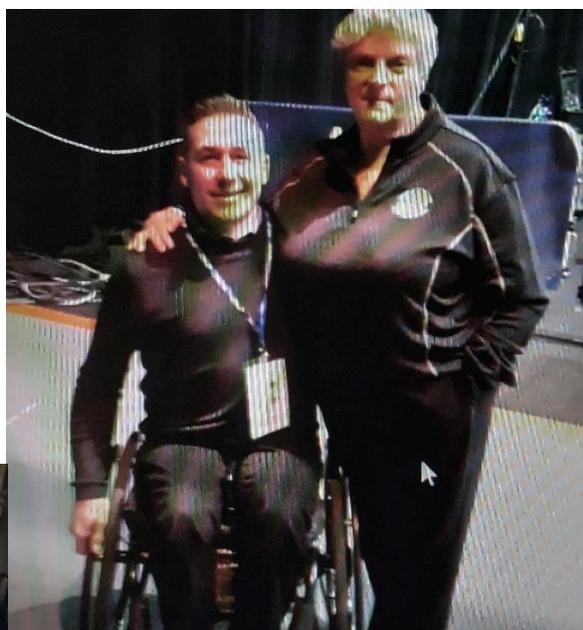
As you are aware now we get invites from all over Europe, and we reciprocate at the All England.

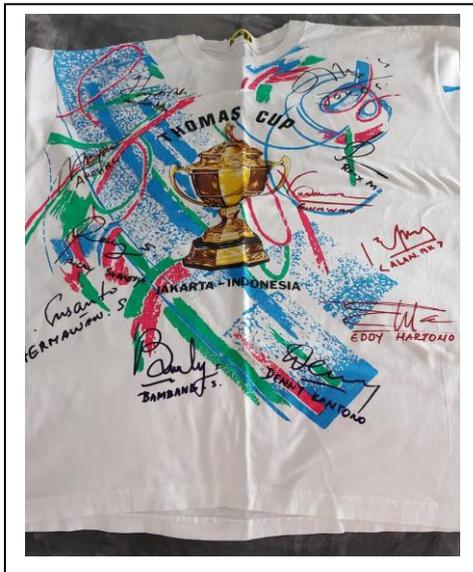
That is just a taster of what I did perhaps a book would tell it all?

I hope we can get back to Badminton soon so you also can experience what I have been so lucky to do.

Margaret

A PHOTO RECORD OF MARGARET'S LIFE IN BADMINTON





Above: Margaret's special signed shirt



**BEHIND THE SCENES - REPORT ON
THE ALL ENGLAND BADMINTON
CHAMPIONSHIPS 2021**
by
KATE ROWLATT



Part 1

When you agree to take on the task of managing the All England you know it is going to take up a lot of your time and is usually spread out between September when the initial expression of interest goes out to the actual staging of the event in March. There is usually a team leader meeting in Birmingham in February, but other than that you are usually left to manage the team yourself. However, this was not the case for the 2021 staging of the All England.

With a new deputy manager in Suzanne, we got together virtually in August to discuss the All England, but at this time it was still unclear as whether the All England would be staged, after all we were in the middle of a global pandemic. An email was sent out in September explaining what we knew at this time, but we were not taking expressions of interest.

At the beginning of October, Chris Miller sent out the Covid-19 protocols which had been used in the Denmark open. This was the start of the gearing up to staging the All England. At the end of October, nearly 2 months behind our usual schedule the expression of interest email was sent out. This was sent out with the understanding that there was no guarantee that the championships would take place.

At the beginning of November there was a Team Leaders meeting, via teams, where Badminton England gave us an initial feeling as to how the All England would be staged. From this it became very clear that only essential personnel would be allowed in, and numbers had to be restricted to the bare minimum. For us that meant the Friday and Saturday had to be whole days instead of the usual 2 shifts, and therefore less line judges would be needed. We were also told that we would be going to 3 courts on the Thursday, so even less line judges would be required. We were also told that there would be some sort of hotel quarantine required before the championships started. Planning was going to be very different in 2021.

By mid-November Suzanne and I were ready to make selections. Unlike previous years, selections were given as 1 day, 3 days, or 5 days, and everyone had to quarantine for 2 days beforehand. However, we still didn't know where we were going to stay. At this stage, talks were being held between BE and us as to whether our usual accommodation could provide the secure covid measures required for the tournament. It would also be easier if all volunteers were in the same place, as transport was going to have to be provided to get us to the arena every day. This was the start of us being in the green bubble. In further discussions with Badminton England, it was decided that all of the line judges should come from the home nations, therefore taking out the risk of flights being cancelled and issues with crossing international borders.

In December it became clear that we were not going to get enough line judges to man the event, and discussions with Chris and Mark were held at the European Mixed Team Qualifier. To throw in the mix we had the additional costs of staying at a different hotel and that everyone had to stay at the hotel, there was to be no daily commute for those that lived nearby. Therefore,

we had to come up with an action plan and deliver this to Badminton England. It was also the start of negotiations for the hotel subsidy.

In January we went into another national lockdown with England, Scotland and Wales all having different regulations and time scales. The crossing of internal borders was now a problem with each government staying stay local. Travelling to Birmingham could now be an issue. We also had to inform Badminton England of the number of line judges we had for each day. This resulted in an email to BWF requiring permission to use four line judges per court on Wednesday's play. We could, just about get the 6 per court for Thursday. There was also another team leader meeting in the evening and a couple of days later I had to take a working lunch to have a line judge meeting with Chris. It was at this meeting we were given the all-clear to use four line judges per court and the accommodation subsidy and hotel was agreed.

In February there were yet more meetings, another working lunch, and a full team leader update. Every day, it seemed, was throwing us new challenges. The master copy spreadsheet was changing constantly as people pulled out, frantically going back to Scotland asking if they had anyone else willing to cross the board to officiate. Thank you to Marisa for all your help in getting as many Scottish officials as you could to head south and officiate. We couldn't have done this without you. In February, we ran out of options. We were going to have to work with the team we had and hoped no-one tested positive for Covid in the pre-event test or pulled out. We also had to provide a line judge management plan on how we were going to manage the team in a covid safe way. This meant there was no court rotation, you were fixed to a court for the day, you had to sit within your teams so a track and trace system could be operated, you had to have your own seat in the line judge waiting area, no individual team sheets were handed out, there was no magnetic board, no handing around boxes of sweets, masks to be worn at all times expect when eating or drinking, 2m distance had to be observed, including waiting in line to go on court and whilst walking on court and the list went on. We also contacted people if they would be reserves for certain days should the situation change when we were in Birmingham, and we also had to think about management back up. A pre-event covid test could have indicated either Suzanne or I had covid, and then we would need back up plans. We had Mike, Stuart and John Walsh on standby just in case.

In March everything was picking up pace fast. More meetings with Badminton England, another working lunch meeting this time with Mark to discuss the covid tests. It was decided that there would be 3 tests, one before travel to Birmingham, one on arrival and one mid-week. There was the final team leader meeting and there was also the sports presentation/referee/officials meeting. There were hotel accommodation spreadsheets to check, hotel food allocations to check. Emails to Margaret about those that could get a refund as they were now arriving on Tuesday instead of Monday. Refunds for those that had pulled out and Ian Johnstone was becoming well known, as he was on two accommodation lists for umpires and line judges and causing confusion for several people. We also had to call upon 2 other umpires (but also line judges) to help us out – Ted and Vicky, who switched teams once their umpiring duties had finished. We also had a meeting with Mike, Stuart, and John via zoom to let them know everything we knew just in case they were required to help either Suzanne or I once we were in Birmingham.

You knew everything was starting to happen when the pre-event covid test arrived. This was to be carried out 72 hrs before travel to Birmingham. However, we had some over keen and excited line judges who took the test straight away! Not to worry, at least it had been done. Over the next week results started to come in and people were emailing to say they were covid free. However, we had 2 people whose results hadn't come back. They had to have the full PCR test before they could travel to Birmingham, so they had to visit a local test centre to get

a result. We also received the letter which allowed us to travel and cross internal borders during a national lockdown. We were all set for Birmingham

Part 2

Usually, by the time you reach Birmingham, you are feeling reasonably relaxed. Teams have been sorted, and you just have the referee meeting to attend on the Tuesday afternoon. There is usually a lunchtime drink in the Malthouse, a walk around the arena, collected accreditation and jumper, go to the hotel have a meal, few more drinks and get ready for Wednesday. None of that in 2021. Instead, it was drive to the arena on Monday, get there before lunchtime, park up and walk on the designated route to the hotel. Check in and isolate in your room. At check in you were given 2 covid test kits, one to do immediately, and the other to be done on Thursday. Up to the room I went, carried out the test dropped it in the box in the corridor and then it was isolation time. Fortunately, in the afternoon there was another referee meeting which filled in a bit of time. Meeting up this year was done on our Facebook page and soon banter started as boredom started to kick in.

On Tuesday morning I received my results so went down to reception to collect my accreditation, jumper, facemask etc and could chat briefly to a few people, then it was back up to the room. I had arranged with Suzanne to go over to the arena on Tuesday afternoon, just to see the changes that were in place. However, Suzanne's results hadn't come back so I had to wander over to the arena on my own. Once there I could see the differences which had been made. Our action plan had been put in place. I was able to do a video call with Suzanne so she could see what everything looked like backstage. It was here that it started to become clear that there was a problem with the test results and the rest of the day was going to be very stressful.

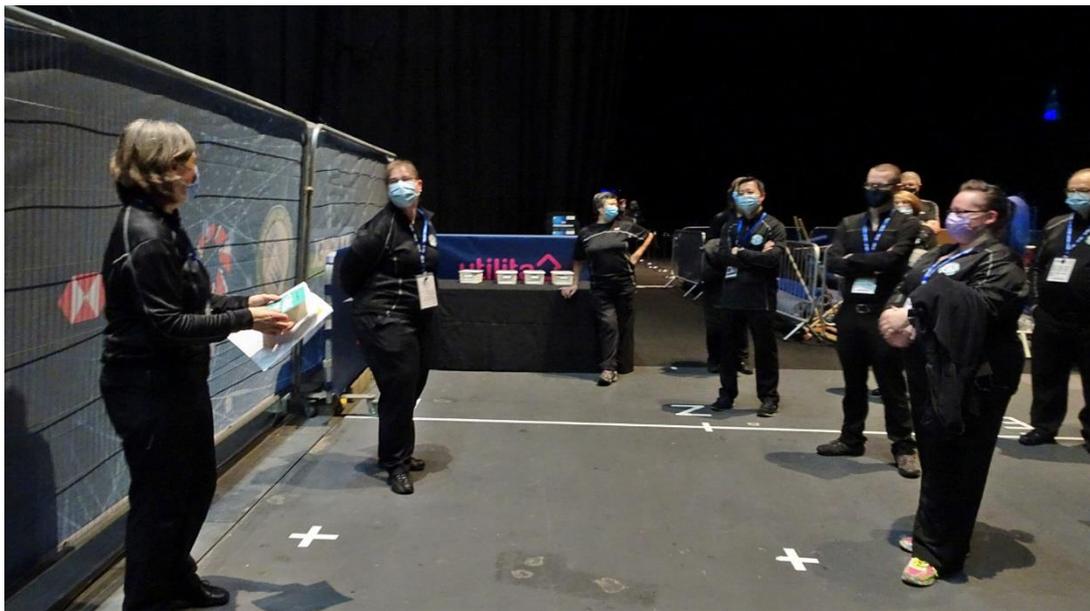
Back at the hotel I had the umpires briefing to attend which was again via zoom. It was during this meeting that 2 things happened. I had a referee contact me trying to get hold of Malcolm as there was an important announcement going to be made and also Badminton England wanted all the covid test barcode references to try and locate the tests results. The line judge team is by far the biggest volunteer team at the All England and we had 47 test codes to track down and input into a spreadsheet and send back to BE. We used Facebook, email, messenger, phone and hotel room extensions to get hold of everyone. It was a good job I ordered pizza for dinner which could be eaten cold as it was consumed several hours after delivery. At 4pm on Tuesday afternoon, we had 4 line judges with accreditation, we should have had at least 31 from all those that arrived on Monday. Gradually, during that evening from about 9pm onwards results started to arrive and teams could be put together. I was still working on this into the early hours of the morning. However, we had been told that due to the test results delay, play would not start at 10am the following day it had been put back until after lunch.

On Wednesday morning, I woke up to more messages of negative results. Finally, all the teams could be put together and we were good to go. A special mention must go to Tom Cante and Jen Murray who had to retake their tests on Wednesday morning and arrived at the hall late afternoon. Martin Godfrey who arrived early evening after his results came in and to David Choi and Sue Mobsby who had to spend an additional day in isolation due to a delay in their results. I was in contacted with all of them throughout the day just to check they were ok, and they hadn't been forgotten about. Prior to arriving in Birmingham, we had sent the team 2 documents detailing all the procedures and the walk on walk off process. We could not give a daily briefing due to everyone having to be 2m apart from everyone else. Once everyone was seated in their allocated seat the day could begin. Everything was going smoothly, even lunch and dinner breaks were going well. It was almost too good.

Every evening at the All England there is a meeting with all team leaders to highlight any problems and to get them resolved. On Wednesday evening it was announced that we would be using all 5 courts at the start of play on Thursday. I started to panic as we didn't have enough line judges to cover this as we should have only been using 3 courts. It is at moments like this when your laptop decides to do a windows update – not what was needed when I had to work out if what was being asked could be done. Thankfully, with the help of Ruben and Charles who agreed to come back for 1 match we could manage the change as it was only for 4 matches. This was the last panic stations for the tournament.

Suzanne and I were presented with a card on Friday, and on our arrival back home some flowers and gifts were delivered. I was really touched by this. Getting 47-line judges to the All England had been a challenge (usually we have 60). There was lots of stress, sleepless nights, and many, many chats with Suzanne to get to the point of the team arriving in Birmingham and to know that this meant a lot to the team was really appreciated. It was a week of doing something different, talking to different people, seeing a different place escaping a Lockdown. Yes, we still had to abide by covid restrictions, but it was a chance to get halfway back to normal. I hope that by the All England 2022 we don't have to run a tournament with these restrictions, but we proved it could be done and what can be achieved when everyone works together as a team. Thank you everyone for your patience and understanding for a very unique All England 2021.

Editor's Note: Suzanne Benton has written a report on the website about the event from her point of view as Deputy Manager of Line Judges



Photos by Andrew Elias



**MY FIRST ALL ENGLAND -
BY ONE OF OUR NEWER
MEMBERS: KAREN MACRAE**



Well, my first experience of line judging at the All England started, in earnest, on the Monday, checking into the hotel and dropping my Covid test into the box at the end of the corridor. Then I began my isolation ahead of making my debut at Wednesday's first day of play. At this point my immediate fear was not of having Covid itself but of testing positive and having to withdraw from the competition. I was so excited to be in Birmingham and didn't want anything to stop me.

It was an incredibly organised affair, responding to the initial delay in play due to the volume of Covid tests not being returned in a timely manner was one of many hurdles overcome by those team members making sure everything went ahead as smoothly and safely as possible.

As this was my first time at the event, I had no frame of reference... is it normal to receive this much instruction? It was quite overwhelming thinking I needed to absorb all the information provided. Also, a little unnerving not being able to easily ask all the little questions as they arise because there's no opportunity to meet face to face until you're in the Arena.

I have no doubt it'll feel different returning to the All England when there are more relaxed protocols in place, but it still managed to be an amazing experience. I was really proud and excited to be there. How thrilling to walk out for the first (and every) match knowing I was playing my small part in world class badminton. Admittedly, it wasn't easy being so hot underneath the face mask, under bright lights, but you very soon adjust and concentrate on what you need to do.

By the end of Wednesday, I was exhausted! I'd gone through the adrenaline rush of anticipation waiting to make my first calls during each match. I was physically spent and kept thinking for several days afterwards how do the others do it, how do they manage to do this for five days on the trot and still perform at the highest level, what does it take to build up that endurance...?

I got to enjoy some fantastic play, speak to some great, passionate people I'd never met before and see behind the scenes at a world class badminton tournament that I'd had a season ticket for at the previous two events. I cannot wait for next year when hopefully I'll get to do it all over again and experience what it's like with a noisy, excited crowd.

Note from Editor: Himanshu has also written a very detailed article about his experience on the BLJAofE website, which is well worth a read.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Susi Susanti – Grace and Elegance Personnified



Susi Susanti was born on 11 February 1971 at Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia. Susi had to struggle a lot to make it big. After secondary school, she had to leave her family, and live in a dormitory at a school that was only for athletes. This was quite a sacrifice for her. Relatively small of stature, she combined quick and graceful movement with an elegant shot-making technique and is regarded by many as one of the greatest women's singles players of all time. She was incredibly durable with fantastic stamina and her matches against top-tier opponents were characteristically slow-paced and long, especially in the era of 15 points system when a player could only earn a point when she or he held the serve.

I always thought of her as a female equivalent of Morten Frost as she just seemed to keep going until her opponents were ground into the court. Susi relied on deep clears to the back line, mixed with tight drop shots, forcing her opponent to cover the entire court. She also relied a lot on her quickness and back-arching suppleness. Because she was quite short, she trained to be able to stretch her legs very wide to take low shots at the corners or away from her position. In the later years of her career, Susi incorporated more smashing into her repertoire, which would sometimes confuse opponents who were just expecting a game of attrition.

Susi won the women's singles gold medal at the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona and the bronze medal at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta. She was the most dominant women's singles player in the first half of the 1990s, winning the All-England in 1990, 1991, 1993 and 1994, the World Badminton Grand Prix finale five times consecutively from 1990 to 1994 as well as in 1996, and the IBF World Championships in 1993. She is the only female player to hold the Olympic, World Championship, and All-England singles titles simultaneously. She won the Japan Open three times and the Indonesian Open five times. She also won numerous Badminton Grand Prix Series events and five Badminton World Cups. She led the Indonesian team to victory over perennial champion China in the 1994 and 1996 Uber Cup (women's world team) competitions. All of this came during a relatively strong period in women's international badminton. She is the first Indonesian Olympic gold medallist and the only Indonesian woman to win and Olympic gold medal until Lilyana Natsir accomplished the feat in 2016.

Susi retired from the world badminton circuit not long after her marriage in February 1997 to Alan Budikusuma (who had also won a badminton singles gold medal at the 1992 Summer Olympics). They have three children, Laurencia Averina, born 1999, Albertus Edward, born 2000, and Sebastianus Fredrick, born

2003. So admired was Susi in Indonesia, she apparently hoped that the birth of her first child in 1999 would bring peace to her country, which had been rocked by a series of civil outbreaks and violence. She offered her first child born in 1999 as the “Child of Peace” for the nation, and so named her Laurencia Averina Wiratama, which means “peace”. To support their family, Susi and Alan pooled their resources to establish a sports equipment corporation in 2004 called as ASTEC (Alan and Susi Technology). They also own a badminton club in Jakarta Udara, and she became the high-performance director for the Badminton Association of Indonesia (PBSI)

Susi was inducted into the International Badminton Federation Hall of Fame in May 2004 (presently BWF). Another high point was the Herbert Scheele Trophy award that she received from the IBF Council in 2002, for her outstanding and exceptional services to badminton.

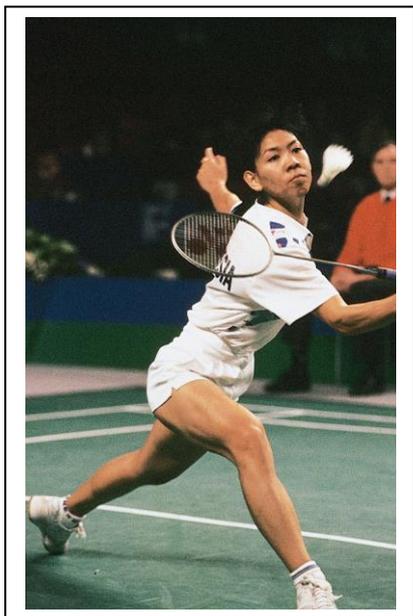
Anne Morden



Susi and Alan Budikusuma



Above: Susi with her bronze medal Atlanta Olympic Games 1996



BLJAE WEB SITE UPDATES

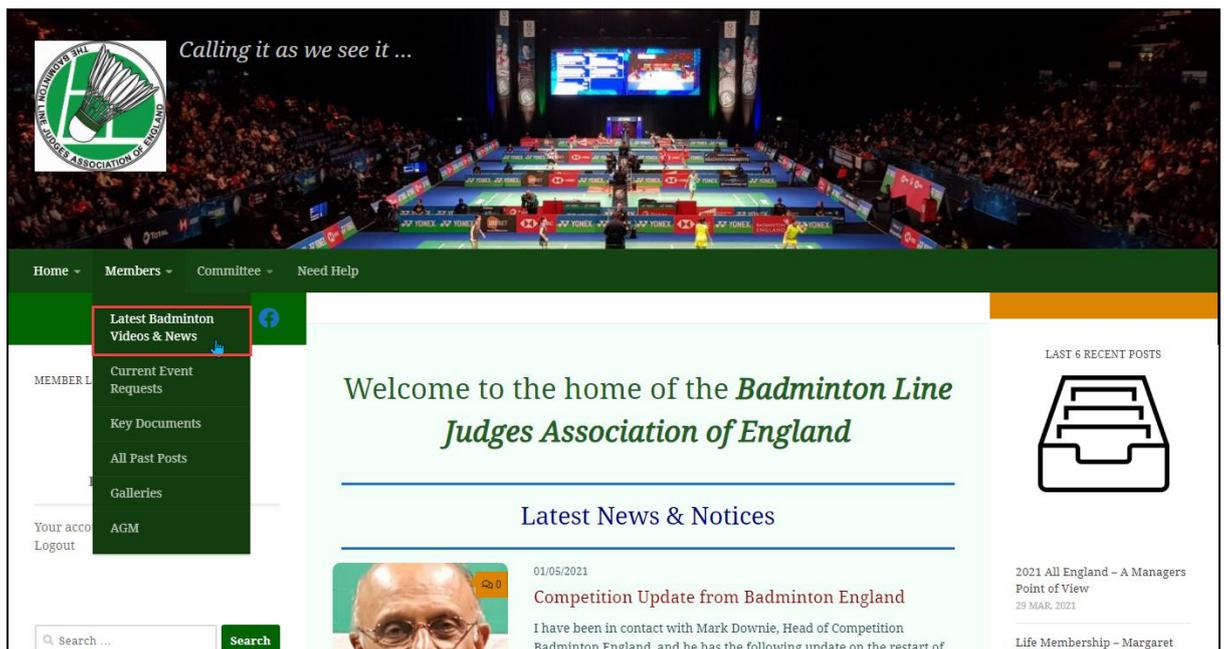
by Himanshu Anil Shah, Web Site Administrator

I have continued to make updates and changes to our webs site, here are the latest updates, and I would appreciate your feedback on the changes and the web site, as a whole.

1. Social Media Wall:

We have a page on the website that shows the latest BWF videos and BE Facebook posts.

You need to login to have access to it, but you will find it under “Members” menu, called “Latest Badminton Videos & News” are using this web site address -> <https://bljae.org/social-media>



2. Members View and Interaction with Articles Posted on the Website.

When you look at a Post, you can now make comments about it or reply to the author.

If you wish to do this, simply log in, click on the post, scroll to the bottom and enter your comments in the “Leave A Reply” box, and when done, click “Post Comment”. When you are on the Home page, you will see a small orange box in the top right hand corner on the image, this tells you how many comments have been made about a Post, and when you go into the Post, scroll to the bottom to see the comments and who made them. You can also reply to people comments, by clicking the grey “Reply” button below the comment:



2 RESPONSES

🗨️ Comments 2 ➡️ Pingbacks 0



Himanshu Anil Shah · 29/03/2021 at 9:34 am (Edit)

Congratulations to Kate and Suzanne, on an outstanding achievement in getting all things Line Judge related so correct, precise and successful.

As members we are lucky to have such great leaders in our team, who are willing to put so much of their time into getting things right and accurate, and making the line judges lives easier, so they can focus on going out their and doing the business on court.

Reply



Andy Baxter · 01/05/2021 at 8:10 pm (Edit)

A big thank you and congratulations are in order for a great team.

Kate and Suzanne, You genuinely did a truly spectacular Job.

Between you, in the middle of a pandemic you managed to pull off the most unusual AE competition our organisation has ever had to contend with.

In your own inimitable way, you managed to fend off and deal with what ever was required for a seamless tournament.

Covid protocols, and delayed test results, last minute change requests on procedures were still briefed efficiently and the teams of line judges, even though in isolation, were under no illusion what, when and where their responsibilities lay.

Malcolm Banham summed it up in his thanks and emotional final brief on Finals day, When he brought the Umpires to us to applaud our effort and show that we are One Team.

From a personal point of view. I am very proud to be a member of our team.

Once again thank you for the tremendous amount of work that you put in over the whole of last year to make the AE happen.

Reply

LEAVE A REPLY

3. All Posts

We only leave Posts on the Home page for a month, then we move the posts to our archive.

You can see all archive posts using the link “All Past Post” under the “Members” menu, or going to this web site address -> <https://bljae.org/category/posts>

4. Web Site Update Notifications

Whenever a new Post is added to the web site, you will get an email from the web site, telling you a new post has been added. (You should have already seen these emails started)

HAVING COVID

A PERSONAL STORY

by

HIMANSHU ANIL SHAH



On 16th January Himanshu posted on Facebook a graphic account of how it felt to contract covid himself and how it also spread to members of his family. I thought it would be interesting for anyone who didn't see it, and doesn't know anyone who has had it, to get the first-hand experience of someone they know. Subsequently, Himanshu was able to post on 28th February an update of how he and the others were recovering. It didn't stop Himanshu from having the vaccination also in February, so hopefully he won't suffer any problems in future.

16th January 2021:

I can now say I have had COVID, and it is not very nice at all. I am currently on Day 19 since my test came back Positive, and it has disrupted my Christmas holiday and first two weeks of work in the New Year.

It is clear that symptoms vary a great deal, so for example I never had a temperature or breathing issues, my symptoms were mainly a really bad headache, coughing bouts 3 or 4 times a day, and overall weakness/fatigue. I invested in a digital thermometer and oximeter; both are very important, and they will give you an early sign if your condition is getting worse. Being Asian, overweight and nearly 60, I was a prime target for this virus, but thankfully I am one of the lucky ones, in that I did not have to go into hospital or ICU or be placed on a ventilator and was nowhere near being in the rising number of deaths each day, over the past few weeks.

Unfortunately, I had to isolate by myself at my flat, and I think being alone definitely increased the amount of time it has taken to recover, so if you do get this nasty virus, please make sure you are not alone. Over this long period there were days where you wish you could just crawl into a dark corner and never come out or find a way to just hibernate for a week, as you start having dark thoughts of hopelessness. I have lost 10Kg in weight during this short period, not quite the way I wanted to lose weight; I suspect a lot of this is muscle, as all I was able to do was sleep, go to the bathroom and sit on the sofa all day. I now need to start exercising, but gradually, as I do still get out of breath very easily if I exert myself too much.

Fortunately, I have managed to keep in touch with family and friends using social media and video calls on my phone, a real lifesaver. I can see how being alone could very easily impact your mental health, so I am grateful I have got through it and I will be able to see my wonderful wife & father soon.

I would like to also extend my sincere thanks to all the family & friends who kept in touch, helped by always being ready to bring things over; I think you should all be proud of yourselves, your love and care made a real difference, both mentally and physically; I can genuinely say you saved me.

How did I get the virus I hear you asking; well, my stepmother (aged 66) works in a care home, and she was positive in mid-December, so she isolated with my father (aged 82) at home, and on Boxing Day my father was Positive. While they were isolating, I had to look after their needs, and this is how I caught it. I then gave it to my lovely wife, who was positive on Monday 4th January 2021, and is recovering at home, fortunately being looked after by her amazing daughter, so not alone, but I do wish I could have been there with her, I have missed her so much. My father and stepmother are both nearly fully recovered, but my lovely Tania is still suffering and taking longer to get through it, I hope to see her soon.

I am sorry this is such a long saga (and I thank those of you who have read up to here), but I wanted to ensure you all have all the details, in case you have to face this terrible virus. Take care & stay safe.

28th Feb 2021:

Dear Family & Friends

Firstly, I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart, for all your caring & loving comments, Facebook maybe be big-tech, but it certainly allows you to see and feel the support of people who genuinely care about you.

I am happy to report my father is doing well, he is still feeling weak, and I think at his amazing age of 83, it will take a little time; if everything goes to plan, he should get the vaccine next week.

My stepmother is also a lot better and as a care worker, has already had the vaccine. My love Tania is also recovering well, but it is taking her time to lose a bad cough and fatigue, but definitely on the mend, and back to work.

I personally am a lot better, nearly back to normal, except for a rare cough, and occasionally feeling fatigued; I am also back to work, working from home for the past 1.5 weeks. I also released myself from isolation on 16th January, and now spend my evenings with my lovely wife; you do not realise how much you can miss people, until you have to survive without anybody for 3 weeks.

Once again, many thanks for the love the support, I am a very, very lucky person.

Take care and stay safe. God bless 🙏

Himanshu

APPLYING FOR EGGHEADS

– a report by Andrew Elias



A few weeks ago, in March, a sizeable number of BLJAofE Line-Judges were enjoying a brief glimpse of 'getting back to normal' by officiating at this year's All-England Championships in Birmingham. The week went well, and everyone left with a good feeling of a job well done!

A few days later I happened to see a random Facebook Advertisement from the "Eggheads" TV Production Company, inviting people to make up a Team and apply to be on the show.

With the excellent Teamwork on display at the All-England still in my mind I immediately thought that a Team made up of BLJAofE Line-Judges would be a great idea and so made a tentative initial request for 'expressions of interest' on our Facebook Group.

Initial interest was slow but positive ... but within a few days enough people had put their names forward to make the idea a viable proposition. Later that week the BLJAofE AGM was held via Zoom and during this Anne Morden gave things a 'helpful push' by asking if anyone else was interested. After confirming that we had the blessing from the Committee to take things forward, I was confirmed as Captain of the Team with responsibility for team selection and starting work on getting an online Application Form filled in and sent off.

The deadline for people to express an interest was set for March 31st. Out of 10 people saying they would do it, I selected five people to go forward: ANDREW ELIAS {myself}, ANNE MORDEN, TIM LEAKEY, SIMON EWINS and SUZANNE BENTON. I told everyone involved the good news and set up a small FB Messenger Group for just the five of us so we could coordinate our entry.

First step for me was to fill out and send in the first of quite a few forms to the TV Production Company ... and an immediate important issue to decide upon ... the Team Name?! After seeking suggestions, I eventually went with an idea of my own - the "Shuttle Watchers".

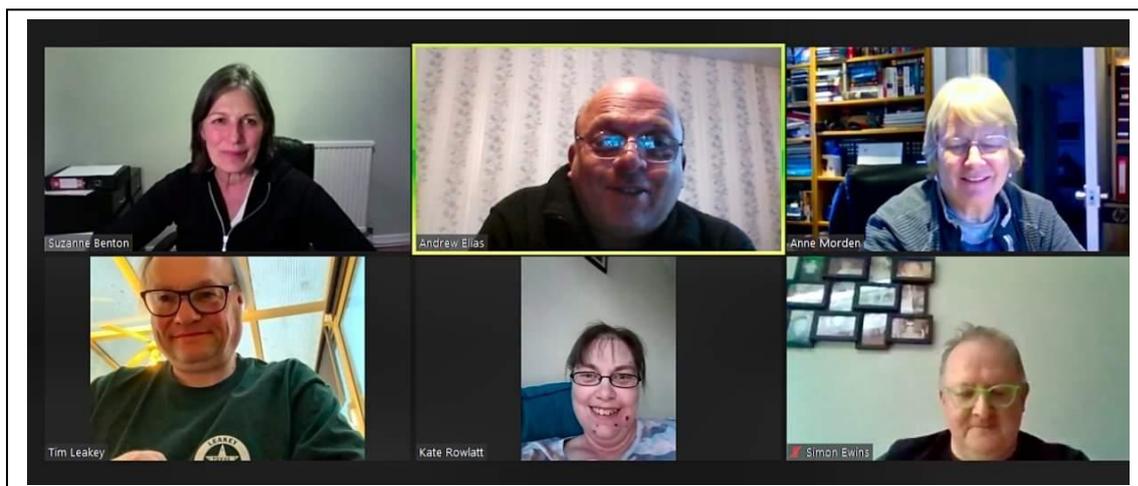
As for the rest of the selection process ... suffice to say it was quite involved and complicated!! Over the course of a busy two weeks, we ALL had to fill out several forms, make ourselves available for a ten minute telephone interview and - if all that wasn't enough - we each had to individually make and submit a three minute video audition clip. Posts/Messages on our FB Group were sometimes topping out around the 15-20 a day level as we all looked to share our experiences and speculate on just what 'hoops they wanted us to jump through' next, lol?!

While getting through all the forms and interviews, all the time there was a feeling we were actually making progress and quite simply - they liked us!! So, it wasn't really a surprise when on April 14th I got an email to say we had advanced to the final stages of selection and were on the shortlist to appear on the show, with filming dates between May 1st and 9th.

Two other things we learned around this time: First the "Eggheads" Program was transferring from the BBC to Channel 5 ... although Jeremy Vine was still the main presenter and most of the familiar Eggheads Quizzers were still on the show. Also, we found out that due to Covid {what else??} the numbers in a Team for the actual show had been reduced from five to four. This meant having to canvas our team members for someone to step back and be a 'reserve'. Luckily, Suzanne seemed positively thrilled at this prospect and happily volunteered for it.

At this point, a slight lull in proceedings for a about week followed by a flurry of more forms and phone calls asking about availability dates, transport requirements, health needs, etc.

We also had a zoom call with Kate to discuss what was happening and Suzanne gave us an impromptu quiz. So were we, or are we, going to be, chosen to appear on the show? As there were certain clauses in our 'digitally signed' contracts we are prevented from posting anything on Social Media, etc at this stage. No matter though: luckily on our Team is Anne Morden who edits the BLJAofE Newsletter ... so you can read a fuller account of our experiences in a future edition.



Screenshot of our Zoom chat to discuss the show

FROM THE ARCHIVES: Newsletter 34 was our Olympic Special and one of the items was a potted history of the site of the Olympic Stadium which is now the home of West Ham United. This was followed by a description by Dev Morris of the opening ceremony

In the beginning:

In order to ensure the heritage of the Olympic site was not lost the London Delivery Authority, as one part of the of the ten themes of the Olympic Learning Legacy, were required to fund archaeological investigations prior to the construction phase of the Olympic Park. This involved an area of approximately 250 ha, roughly the size of the City of London, and known as the Lea Valley: a massive project.

The subsequent archaeological activities, from 2005-2009, revealed a story of human activity on this site dating back for around 10,000 years. From the scatters of Mesolithic flints indicating the presence of wandering hunter-gather tribes, mainly along the banks of the River Lea, traces of human activities have been identified throughout the Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Ages. The Romans and the Saxons left little physical evidence of their presence. Medieval mills, a 17th century foundry, railways [initially constructed from about 1836], Victorian sewer outfalls, a Clarnico jam factory [built 1904] and a Yardley's soap and perfume factory are just a few examples of more recent activity.

Anti-aircraft defences were placed there in WW2. After the war the area became a dumping ground for the building debris from the devastation of the Blitz; in places this was up to 9 metres deep and required some very deep trenches to be excavated in order to provide glimpses of earlier times. Now the area, once known as Stinky Stratford, has been given a new lease of life, the River Lea has been cleaned up and now meanders through the completed Olympic Park which will add to the history of this landscape; a legacy for the early 21st century. By 2012 the construction of the Olympic Park was completed

What a fantastic spectacle the Opening Ceremony was! Featuring British celebrities and sports people, including David Beckham and Bradley Wiggins; screen characters Mr Bean and James Bond - and even a surprise acting debut from the Queen herself – what more could one ask for! I was so glad to be there because I don't think watching it on tv would have captured the true beauty of everything that was going on. The highlight for me was the spectacular meeting of rings in the shape of the Olympic symbol. A truly once in a lifetime experience that I will be telling the grandchildren about!

Dev Morris