



National Presidents Report  
EPA Annual General Meeting  
22<sup>nd</sup> November 2008

The EPA is now a little over 4 years old and this year we became the internationally recognised governing body for our sport in England. This has come about by the closure of the BPF which was formally completed when the final accounts were approved and adopted on the 16<sup>th</sup> August this year. The assets of the BPF after clearing any debts and reimbursing both the WPA and EPA junior contributions which were not used have been distributed between the 3 associations based on last years membership figures.

Our Associations prime duties still remain the same which are basically to look after the interests of the members, devote time to the needs of the grass roots, provide coaching and umpiring at all levels but now also includes qualification and selection of teams to represent the Association and England at European and World Championships. So it is natural for my report to include not only the business of the EPA but international issues that affect what we do.

During the past 12 months the Management Committee has worked with enthusiasm and determination, just some of the things we continue to accomplish on your behalf are:

- International Membership
- Events Calendar.
- CRB screening of our Coaches and Youth Development Officers.
- Civil Liability Insurance.
- Quarterly Newsletter
- Informative website.
- Junior and Espoir international coaching.
- International Representation for qualified and selected teams.
- EPA Congress of Regions.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> International Open Tournament.
- Umpire and Coach Training.
- European Cup for Clubs Qualifier knockout competition.
- Junior Weekend of Excellence.
- EPA National Tournaments.

Most members of the Management Committee have individual responsibilities in addition to working as a team member and it is without doubt that all the work and achievements accomplished each year would not be possible had it not been for their commitment and drive. It remains a privilege to be the chairman of this committee and I am very grateful for their support, encouragement and hard work.

This year has seen the introduction of a new range of boules “La Boule Noire” to the variety of products available from our company Pétanque Promotions Ltd. Valuable income and sponsorship to the EPA comes from PP Ltd due to the efforts of the Directors Mick Bourton, John Roberts and Richard Baker who work without reward to ensure our company is a success, I extend my thanks to them for their commitment and continued service.

I am sure you will join me in congratulating all the EPA members who have been added to our “Roll of Honour” this year, these are:

- Honorary Life Membership  
Norman Guest
- Singles Champion  
Rachid Hannache
- Doubles Champions  
Dean Little & Keith Flack
- Mixed Doubles Champions  
Royston Williams & Clare Brooks
- Triples Champions  
Matt Eversden, Robert Silvy, Ben Gallimore & Steve Zimmerman
- Women’s Triples Champions  
Sheila King, Lin Shrimpton & Fay Golder
- Junior Doubles Champions  
Samuel Blakely & Reece Gould
- Junior Triples Champions  
Robert Cooter, Alex Bruce, Jack Barrington & Andrew Willis
- Junior Shooting Champion  
Matt Silvester
- Over 50’s Doubles Champions  
Steven Rice & Susan Kirby
- Champion of Champions  
Doubles: Chiltern – Miles Gooda & Matt Eversden  
Triples: Chiltern – Myra Huntley Adrian Emson & Alan Newland  
Shooting: Eastern – Simon Bird
- European Cup for Clubs  
Colne Angels PC
- Inter-Regional Championship and Challenge Tournament -  
Division 1 – Chiltern  
Division 1, Juniors – Northern  
Division 2 – West Midlands  
Division 2, Juniors – Thames Valley  
Challenge – Chiltern

- Home Nations  
Martin Baker, Rachid Hannache, Daniel Hill & Sofiane Lachani  
Lisa Edmondson, Emma Longstaff & Kim Lachani  
Dean Ashby, Steve Brown & Matthew Whatley  
Matt Eversden, Toni Gates, Robert Fox & Sam Blakley  
John Buckingham, Alan Routledge, Alan Whitehouse & Michael Renouf  
Jack Linstead, Brian Stote, Richard Powell and Pip Hamilton  
Alan Cregeen, Alex Bruce & David Blakely  
Michael Tull, Matthew Slater and Deborah Elcome

This list of outstanding accomplishments would not be complete without adding to it our members who have represented this Association and England at International events this year:

- Invite Tournaments  
Germany – Espoirs & Juniors  
Dean Ashby, Scott Ashby, Greg Davenport & Sarah Huntley  
Jack Barrington, Andrew Willis, Robert Cooter & Alex Bruce  
  
Netherlands - Espoirs  
Tom Hutchins, James Hart & Graham Galton  
  
Luxembourg - Women's  
Sheila King, Lin Shrimpton & Fay Golder
- International North Sea Pétanque Tournament in Copenhagen, Denmark  
Seniors: Martin Baker, Herve Bavazzano, Phil Claydon & Jerome Rousseau  
Women: Myra Huntley, Sarah Huntley and Amy Huntley  
Espoirs: Kris Smith, Dean Seville & Matt Shrimpton  
Juniors: Andrew Willis, Robert Cooter, Alex Bruce & Reece Gould
- Junior European Championship, Nieuwegein, Netherlands  
Andrew Willis, Robert Cooter, Alex Bruce & Reece Gould
- Women's World Championship in Samsun, Turkey  
Sheila King, Lin Shrimpton & Fay Golder
- Senior World Championship in Dakar, Senegal  
Matt Eversden, Robert Silvy, Ben Gallimore & Steve Zimmerman

There are many members of our Association that do not aspire to such great heights but who enjoy taking part. Their participation, friendship and good natured competitiveness ensure our competitions are a success, my thanks and that of the Management Committee for their support and commitment goes equally to them.

There have been a few external changes at the international level this year which will have some impact on our future events.

Due to financial and organisational problems the International North Sea Pétanque Tournament Committee agreed that this year would be the last North Sea Tournament. The presidents of the participating nations have continued a dialogue about a possible new or replacement event but to date nothing has been agreed.

The trial period for the European Espoirs event was considered to be a success so the Confédération Européenne de Pétanque (CEP) have decided to hold a separate Womens and Mens Espoirs Championship held at the same time with a qualifying stage in March and the finals in October of each year.

Meanwhile the Fédération Internationale de Pétanque et Jeu Provençal (FIPJP) World Congress agreed to hold the "Senior" World Championship every 2 years starting in 2010.

At this present time the only World Championship to be held in 2009 will be for Juniors and this will be held in Tunisia. If a host can be found before April 2009 there will be Women's World Championship however, after this coming year the Women's and Junior World Championship will be held every other year commencing in 2011 and alternating with the European Championships.

In December, as a member of the CEP Board, I will be attending a meeting between the CEP and FIPJP executives to discuss the possibility of introducing a "Mens" or perhaps "Senior" European Championship. This will be an important development for us especially as the 2008 World Congress agreed that only 48 nations should compete at the Senior World Championships in 2010.

The current plan is for nations to qualify for the World Championship through their Confederations, in our case the CEP. I understand the suggested quotas are for 16 to 20 nations to qualify through the European Confederation, 4 through the Asian Confederation, 2 through the Oceanic and so on. These figures have not been agreed and are to be debated further during the coming months.

A number of modifications to the playing rules were agreed during the World Congress which will require the publication of a new rule book. John Thatcher and I are currently preparing a revised course for existing umpires and new candidates alike. This gives our Association the ideal opportunity to ensure that all of our umpires are fully conversant with the rules and the chance for them to improve on their current grading.

In 2008 the FIPJP appointed a medical officer to oversee drug and alcohol testing under the World Anti Drug Agency guidelines. The first step in this process has now been taken as this year the FIPJP carried out random breath testing of players at both World Championships. The limit of alcohol in the blood is set at 0.35mg much lower than it is to drive a car in the UK. A player who fails the breath test is suspended from play until such time as they can pass the test. I expect the CEP to discuss introducing similar testing at the spring meeting in April.

A few months ago our Association invested a considerable amount of money into coaching by sending David Lavelle and Richard Pratt to an International Coaching course in Paris which was run by the CIEP. I am happy to report that despite turning up at the wrong venue on the first day they managed to catch up with the others on the course and have both done extremely well as just a few weeks ago I received their International Grade 1 Trainer certificates.

It is expected of David and Richard to use their training and new qualification to improve the quality of our coaching and to bring our grading system and coaching methods further into line with our friends in mainland Europe.

We had a very successful Congress of Regions in July of this year, the regionally appointed delegates who attended this meeting represented a little less than 2000 of our members which is far more democratic and helpful than in the past when the Congress was for individual members and attended by less than 10 people representing themselves.

Based on the most recently received regional returns our current membership figures are:

	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Total</b>		
<b>Adult</b>	1663	798	2461		
<b>Espoir</b>	88	23	111		
<b>Junior</b>	110	51	161	<b>Registered Clubs</b>	200
<b>Total Individual Membership</b>	2733			<b>Affiliated Leagues</b>	3

We recently held the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Open at Godmanchester with 56 teams from England, Wales, Germany, Netherlands, France and Slovakia competing for the Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze awards. Plans are already in hand to repeat this event in 2009 but are subject to either finding more sponsorship or a less expensive venue.

Despite rumours to the contrary the Inter-Regional Championship and Challenge Tournament will be held at Pontins, Brean Sands in 2009 however, due to other events which clash with our tournament it will now be over the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend of September (19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup>). A new poster and further details will be published to our regions following my meeting with Pontins in the New Year.

To conclude, whilst our teams who qualified to represent us at the womens and senior world championships were not as successful as we had hoped we have had international success from our junior and espoir teams. The new EPA Academy for cadets and minors is designed to give a firm foundation for the development and achievement for our future members ensuring further successes at this level.

Our Association continues to attract participation from over 2700 members on a regular sporting basis both nationally and locally through our 15 regions and registered clubs. This commitment to our sport and our association makes the English Pétanque Association what it is today, a collection of people who come together to enjoy our sport, a successful organisation and governing body for pétanque in England.



Mike Pegg – National President  
English Pétanque Association