

Dear fellow Sonning HC members (a.k.a. Mighty 'Ningers!),

It is with great pleasure and excitement that I step into the sizable boots of Mr Anthony Oke (who has done a fantastic job as Chairman of the club for the past 4 seasons) as I welcome you all to the dawn of the new season on behalf of your new [committee team](#), and what better way than with this very concise, 18 page dossier on my thoughts about hockey... Not really (for those who are still reading at this point!), but I would like to share a few thoughts and comments with you, both in regard to the season, and the England Hockey Club Survey which many of us completed during the summer.

We have several new faces on the club committee this season (too many to name) as well as new team captains and a new umpire co-ordinator, so I encourage you all to have a look on the website (if you missed the pre-season bulletin) or ask around to find out who's who, and please, feel free to come and talk to any of us. As a team, we will be working hard to maintain the financial stability of our club, whilst continuing to grow in membership and investing in our junior development. All the while, keeping the Sonning Spirit and not forgetting to have just a little bit of **fun!** ☺

- Thanks for all your efforts signing up to the new [website](#) and to those who have already paid their membership (for those who haven't... <http://www.sonninghockeyclub.co.uk/payments>). It's working well so thanks especially to Coops and JT for getting it set-up. Please can we ask for your continued support with **ensuring your details on the website are up to date**, it makes a big difference.
- The adult league season is well under way and all teams have been out in force. We have successfully fielded a record 13 adult sides this season, with the introduction of a Ladies 5th XI. Well done to all Captains! It's great to see some new [and some returning] faces this season, welcome [back] to Sonning! It's going to be a great challenge with 3 teams winning promotion last season, so let's all support and encourage each other.
- Our ladies unfortunately bowed out of the cup after a tough first round draw away to holders Henley, but the men 'stormed' through [thanks to a retaken penalty flick!] to the 2nd round and earned themselves a dream trip away to Guernsey! Let's see if they can match the 6s & 7s trip to Calais last season for spreading the Sonning Spirit... That's not to mention the Mixed and Ladies over 35's cups still to come.
- Our Colts have already had their first outing, which has been great, and we are looking forward to hosting the Wokingham Schools Tournament again this season, at the earlier stage of November. Well done to Chris Manning and the team (especially Lisa, Annie, and Woffers), but **more volunteers are always welcome** (especially on Tuesday nights). No qualifications needed, just enthusiasm. :-)
- I have seen plenty of you modelling our [new training kit](#), which is looking very smart.
- PLEASE step up and UMPIRE. Chad and the team (special mention to Andy Camfield!) have done a great job so far, but **they need our help**. Anyone who is interested in umpiring with or without getting qualified please speak to Chad ([mofunk169@googlemail.com](mailto:mofunk169@googlemail.com)).

Now, I would like to share with you some very positive thoughts and comments (just one page) in relation to the England Hockey Player Survey which many of us completed over the summer.

Firstly, thank you very much to everyone who responded. Not only is your feedback vital in helping us to keep this as a club we all enjoy being a part of, but we also had such a good response rate that England Hockey were grateful enough to give us free entry for 4(!) of our league teams for the coming

season. So the time you all kindly gave in responding has already provided a tangible benefit for our club.

As always, though, there can be room for further improvement (even the best can get better), and the key points you raised during the survey where:

1. Training – You asked for more space, so this season we are delighted to have access to two full pitches on training nights for both the ladies section and the men's sections. ☺
2. Facilities & Catering – We work closely with the main club to make sure members' views are communicated and I know the main club have already invested in the ladies showers and men's toilets (we are just waiting for installation to take place). Also, I certainly feel (and I hope you would agree) that there has been a good improvement in the quality of match teas so far this season. ☺
3. Socials – Something we pride ourselves on. You suggested that we could have some more diversity in socials (e.g. non-alcohol-based activities). Social Secretary, Mr Steve Ridley, is working on it as I type... ☺

Finally, I have deliberately avoided bombarding you with all the statistics (despite my inner most desires), but I would just like to leave you with these three highlights from the data:

1. You rated Sonning 'Excellent' in all categories referring to social aspects.
2. You rated Sonning 'Excellent' or 'Good' in all categories referring to playing and coaching aspects.
3. You rated Sonning 'Excellent' or 'Good' in communications to its members both on our website and on social media (search for "Sonning Hockey Club" on Facebook, or tweet us @SonningHC or @SonningLadiesHC).

Finally I would simply like to share this quote: "*Sonning HC rated comfortably above the national average in nearly all aspects of player satisfaction*". That is absolutely fantastic, and is testament to everyone involved with the club. You clearly appreciate that by all putting in a little, we all get a lot back. True 'Ning Spirit!

In anticipation of all the enjoyment to come this season, yours faithfully,

Oliver 'Wadders' Waddington

Find me in the bar, or email me at; [Chairman@sonninghockeyclub.co.uk](mailto:Chairman@sonninghockeyclub.co.uk)

#comeonthening