

Indoor Volleyball Report 2018-2019

The 2018-2019 season was the third year that we have run a Grand Prix format for the men's and ladies' Hampshire league, so we're still a relatively young league. The main aims were to continue to build and grow on previous years work, and to try to raise the level of competition and officiating within the league.

We saw a moderate increase in the number of teams entering the competition: the ladies' league held steady at 10 teams, and the men's league increased from 8 to 10. In both leagues there were some teams from previous years that did not return and new teams that took their place, so there is a relatively low level of churn in team entry, but overall the leagues are continuing to grow.

In both leagues there were a number of teams that entered the league but then pulled out before the league started. We were greatly helped out by Southampton University in taking up some of the team slots on the day before the first men's event. As we mature, this is something that we need to protect ourselves against; the aim of the county leagues is to act as a stepping stone towards NVL so the level of commitment needs to be understood by the clubs entering.

In terms of raising the level of competition and officiating, we strongly encouraged every team to have a qualified referee, which most of the teams fulfilled. We also purchased referee stands and our own nets and match balls.

This year, our rules for SEVA qualification changed such that only Hampshire-based teams were eligible. In the ladies' finals Southampton University and Portsmouth Ladies qualified, with the University finishing joint 3rd. In the men's finals South Hants Men and Southampton University qualified, with South Hants finishing joint 5th.

We also ran 2 mixed tournaments, which were very successful and popular, with a number of players asking about them across the season. The level of volleyball tended to be lower than the men's/ladies' leagues, so the mixed leagues seem to fill a gap not covered by any local leagues.

As the leagues continue to age they will gain stability; I would like to continue to make the men's and ladies' leagues feel more professional, and to use the mixed tournaments as a way to grow participation.

Andy Edwards