

## To Lincolnshire Squash

I first started playing squash in about 1993, like many juniors, my Dad played squash, for Eastgate and I'd watch him play friendlies and the occasional team match, visiting clubs in and around Lincoln. Under the watchful eye of Harry Kipling at Eastgate, I persisted, and by the time I reached 16 years old, I ventured into team squash representing Eastgate G, a team I still represent today.

It would be a fair assessment that team squash ignited my passion for the game and over the years I've met so many good people through being involved in team squash. I've played squash at current (and a few now closed) Squash Clubs, making connections with people in and around the Squash community. I realised quite early (because the message was rammed home by my dad) that it's team 1<sup>st</sup>, 'you' come 2<sup>nd</sup>! Regardless, the 'collective' of 'a team' has always been a greater part of the enjoyment / passion than the individual elements.

For the last 6 years, I've had the additional privilege of being the chairman of Lincolnshire Squash. It's something that provided an extension to representing squash teams, and by joining a bigger team it's something that extended my passion for the game, not just through representing Eastgate, but on a wider county level.

Over the last 6 years, the mantra has been pretty simple, to try and improve playing opportunities around the county for everyone. On reflection, there's been plenty of ups, mixed in with a few downs, but I'd like to think we've had a 'good go' at engaging the wider community and progressing things along

That said, over the last couple of years, it's become harder for me to find the time to commit. Being chairman actually isn't a huge time commitment, but between having a young family and changes in my job, Lincolnshire Squash is something that has dropped down my list of priorities.

Last year, my intention was to step down as chairman, but as the COVID restrictions were getting lifted I wanted to ensure we could get competitions & events going again after the suspension of squash throughout lockdowns, I felt that stepping away had the potential to hinder that. Of all our efforts in the last 6 years, restarting squash and racketball events after COVID is something the committee as a collective should be really proud of

It's important to look to the future and after all the ramblings above, I recognise I am not in a position to move things forward as Chairman, so at the forthcoming AGM I will be stepping down. It's very much a head over heart decision but it's definitely one that is in the best interests of Lincolnshire Squash.

That brings it around to **you**, the member clubs around the county. You all play an integral role in representing the squash community / team. You are the life blood of the county squash scene and without the support of the members then squash does not move forward.

Over the last 6 years we've seen generally good engagement from within clubs on efforts & initiatives we have tried to progress. That said, **I think more could be done** to feed into the setup. Whilst I appreciate a focus is prioritised on internal club activities, things like the squash leagues, cups, Grand Prix series also provide a valuable outlet for your players, and in some cases will support with revenue into your club. The short statement would be that both sides (Member Clubs, players & County Committee) need each other to thrive.

With the upcoming AGM due at the end of August, I'd urge you to share, push and promote attendance by club reps or nominate others to represent your club at the AGM. And if you have some capacity or time and a willingness to step forward and volunteer to join the committee, then I'd urge you to consider it. Why? Because as I mentioned earlier it's a team effort, and the team comes 1<sup>st</sup>

I look forward seeing you around the county at some stage soon

Cheers  
Chris Martin