

# Chairman's Report – Ipswich Sports Club

## Sporting and Social Review of the Year

Ipswich Sports Club is proud to **provide a professional and sociable environment where like-minded people come together and feel encouraged, motivated and inspired to be physically and mentally the best they can be.** We remain proud to be Suffolk's premier independent competitive racket sports and hockey club, with a thriving community at our heart. We have developed a heritage and character we need to be proud of. We need to develop and change in the same direction.

It gives me great pleasure to reflect on another outstanding year for Ipswich Sports Club. Across our sporting sections, community programmes and facilities, we have continued to strengthen our position as one of Suffolk's premier multi-sport clubs while remaining true to our core values of participation, performance, inclusion and community.

### Sporting Excellence

Our **hockey** section enjoyed an exceptional year, particularly within the junior ranks. The U14 Girls were crowned Regional Champions following an unbeaten campaign and later achieved the remarkable feat of becoming National Champions. The U14 Boys also performed strongly, securing third place at regional level, while our indoor hockey programme continued to flourish with the U16 Boys claiming the East Regional Indoor Championship and progressing to the national finals. Across our junior hockey pathway, numerous teams achieved county and regional success, demonstrating the strength of our player development programme.

**Squash and Racketball** continued to deliver outstanding results. We were particularly proud to see Will Burton win Gold for England at the European U15 Squash Championships and Julie-Anne Pegram represent England at the Home Internationals

This season we have proudly had five England caps represented through our coaching and player team:

- Emily Ison
- Lauren Selby
- Julie Anne Pegram
- Emma Logan
- Will Burton

All five represented Team England in either coaching or playing capacities, something very few clubs can claim and a reflection of the quality of coaching we continue to provide.

ISC had 15 players selected for Aspire National Programme from a possible 32 places

The club successfully hosted the prestigious East of England Squash Gold Tournament and the Ipswich Open Satellite Racketball Tournament, an England Racketball Tour event, both of which attracted competitors from across the country and further enhanced our national reputation as a leading venue for racket sports.

Our annual Squash and Racketball Championships were once again a tremendous success, showcasing excellent participation across all age groups, strong junior involvement and the continued growth of our racketball community.

**Tennis** enjoyed another successful season. Our Ladies 1st Team were crowned Winter League Champions, our Men's 1st Team won the Floodlit League Division 1 title, and other teams did well. We also celebrated significant success from our junior players, with numerous tournament victories across regional and national competitions. The continued development of our junior academy a proud achievement.

We were also delighted to host the East Anglian Open Masters Indoor Tennis Championships for the fourth consecutive year. The event attracted 160 entries from 19 nationalities, reinforcing ISC's reputation as a destination venue for major sporting events.

## **New and Emerging Sections**

One of the year's standout success stories has been our Chess Club. Established only recently, the section continues to grow rapidly and now boasts around 40 members. Most impressively, the club won the Suffolk County Chess Association Division One title in its debut season. David Spence also secured both the ISC Club Championship and a share of first place in the prestigious Bury St Edmunds Chess Congress Open section.

Our Pétanque section provides an important social and competitive offering within the club. The section fielded multiple teams in Suffolk Coastal Pétanque Alliance league and cup competitions while maintaining its reputation as one of our most inclusive and sociable activities.

## **Inclusion and Community Impact**

A defining feature of this year has been our commitment to making sport accessible to everyone.

Our disability tennis programme has expanded significantly under the leadership of Steve Joint. Weekly sessions now support participants with learning disabilities and mixed disabilities, while trials of para-standing tennis have broadened opportunities for participation. The programme has delivered measurable improvements in confidence, social skills and wellbeing, and several participants have progressed into mainstream club activities. ISC was also proud to host a national Learning Disability Tennis Camp as part of the LTA and Dan Maskell Tennis Trust programme.

We remain committed to ensuring that sport and physical activity are available to all members of our community regardless of age, ability or background.

## **Health and Wellbeing**

Our Gym and Studio continue to play a vital role in the life of the club. With more than 40 classes per week and an extensive programme covering Les Mills, yoga, Pilates, spin, conditioning and wellbeing activities, the fitness offering now sits at the heart of ISC's commitment to supporting healthy lifestyles. Our Junior Gym programme further demonstrates our investment in lifelong participation in sport and exercise.

## **Investing in the Future**

Perhaps the most significant development during the year has been the start of construction on our permanent padel facilities. Padel is one of the fastest-growing sports globally and this investment represents an exciting step forward in the continued evolution of Ipswich Sports Club. The new facilities will provide opportunities for existing members and attract new participants to the club for years to come.

Members are supportive of this venture. It is a demonstration of a focussed delivery based on a sound business model and in a departure to our usual membership structure has a Pay-as-you-Go model. It will add to our portfolio of top-class infrastructure for sports.

## **Club Community and Social Life**

The success of any sports club is measured not only by results but by the strength of its community. Throughout the year we have hosted award ceremonies, championships finals, junior celebration events, social gatherings and charitable initiatives including the successful Phoenix Jazz event. These occasions continue to bring members together and strengthen the friendships and connections that make ISC such a special place.

## **Looking Ahead**

As we look to the future, we do so with confidence. Membership remains strong despite cost of living challenges, our sporting sections continue to thrive, our facilities are improving, and our commitment to inclusion and community has never been greater.

My sincere thanks go to our staff, coaches, volunteers, committee members, sponsors and, most importantly, our members. The achievements outlined in this report are only possible because of your dedication, passion and support.

Together, we continue to make Ipswich Sports Club a place where sporting excellence, personal development and community spirit flourish.

**Dr Jon Tuppen**  
**Acting Chair, Ipswich Sports Club**  
**Annual Report – 2025/26**