



**Hamilton Sports Council
Secretary's Report 2009 – 2010**

This has been another busy year for Hamilton Sports Council (HSC) with successful team working on several projects.

- The **Affiliation and Finance Sub-committee** met infrequently due to a low number of applications, but has begun to have virtual meetings using email. The number of applications increased over the previous year and this is described in more detail in the Treasurer's report. Several applications from international level players were referred to Hamilton International Sports Trust.

South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) and South Lanarkshire Leisure's (SLL) policy of allowing free lets of indoor and outdoor facilities for under 16 year olds introduced in 2008 has maintained the great increase in the number of clubs affiliating to Hamilton Sports Council. See the table below. The full list of clubs is attached to this report.

Sports Council year	Number of affiliated clubs
2009-2010	116
2008-2009	95
2007-2008	63
2006-2007	27
2005-2006	23

The Executive Committee agreed not to affiliate youth projects and children's clubs that do not have sport at their core. It was also agreed that clubs could affiliate to only one sports council to save confusion and double funding.

- The **Athletics Sub-committee** comprising Chairman Graeme Horne, Treasurer John Christie, Secretary Clare Wunsch, Stuart Sutherland, Gary Burns and athletics development officer Jim Goldie organised the **5K and 1K Races** which for the first time was held on 1 November 2009.

The Chairman made a great effort to find a course wholly within South Lanarkshire. However Hamilton Palace Grounds has the best available mix of facilities, site support and safe surfaces in the Hamilton area, but a stretch of Strathclyde Park in North Lanarkshire is required to make a 5K course. In the end, the previous year's course was used.

Posters and entry forms were printed by Gt4 and the underlying administration was expertly performed by Marion Wotherspoon in South Lanarkshire Leisure. The Hamilton Company of St Andrew's Ambulance provided first aid.

Despite a great publicity effort, participation was similar to the previous year, with about 200 adults and about 15 children taking part. Most of the adult runners were SAAA members. However the atmosphere on the day was good, with Provost Russell Clearie MBE firing the starting gun and welcoming the athletes back. All the junior runners received glass cube prizes with laser-formed runners inside and the adults were given medals.

The weather was dreadful with heavy rain which flooded the course, particularly the tunnel, creating a new water feature for the athletes. Fallen leaves also created a potential hazard which in the event did not prove to be a problem. Fortunately Gary Burns, Manager of Blantyre Leisure Centre, had organized a Portacabin as the race office, which became very

useful as a storm shelter, changing-room and bicycle store for the athlete who had cycled over from Bellshill to take part.

There was good coverage of the event in the Hamilton Advertiser although all the banners and flags advertising the sports council and South Lanarkshire Leisure had been cut from the photographs!.The event ran at a loss for the first time and consequently the sports council was unable to make a donation to charity.

Reviewing the event, there was discussion with St Andrew's Hospice about developing the race in partnership with them, but the Executive Committee decided against this because the scale of event envisaged by the Hospice would have been too burdensome on the committee and South Lanarkshire Leisure's administration; the sponsorship requirement would have been too challenging and there was concern that the race would lose its identity with Hamilton Sports Council.

The committee agreed that the event should continue to be a serious race rather than a fun run, but for 2010 the 1K has been transferred to the Family Fun Day organized by Active Schools at Hamilton Race Course in June 2010, with the sports council funding the prizes.

The annual **Primary Schools Cross-country Races** were held on Friday 5 March 2010 at the Hamilton Palace Grounds. Event preparation was undertaken on the sports council's behalf by Jim Goldie of SLL and administered by Shona Girdwood who took over after Jim's departure for Scottish Athletics. About 600 children took part this year compared with 520 in 2009 and 400 in 2008.

Jim Goldie also organised the **Hamilton Track Championships** at the John Wright Sports Centre in East Kilbride on 20 May 2009. This comprised 600m, 400m and 4 x 100m races for P6 and P7s. It is the successor to the former Hamilton Sports Festival and was a great success.

- The **Hamilton Badminton Round Robin Tournament** was held at Larkhall Leisure Centre on Sunday 7 February 2010.

Following the previous year's successful format, the event was organised in four age groups: a Primary U12 event and U14, U16 and U18 categories. The entry was disappointingly small with only 40 children taking part, although this was an increase on the previous year's 36 children. Again, there were no girls above primary level but unlike the previous year, there were players in the U18 category. There was very good coverage in the Hamilton Advertiser.

The event was organised by Clare Winsch and Marion Wotherspoon, with expert help on the day by Millar Stoddart and Johnnie Barrie, World Masters Badminton Champion. Chairman Graeme Horne and Vice-chair Cathie Bennett organised the prize-giving.

- The **Bowling Sub-committee** consists of Cathie Bennett supported by SLL, chiefly Marion Wotherspoon, Millar Stoddart and club members. Cathie organised the **Hamilton Bowling Championships**, plagued by poor weather for most of the summer, but the finals took place at Raploch Bowling Club. Some of the **South Lanarkshire Inter-area Championships** did not take place as greens were water-logged or unavailable.

Cathie organised Hamilton's teams for the **Scottish Association of Local Sports Councils (SALSC) Ladies' Tournament** in which Hamilton was represented by Uddingston Bowling Club. The tournament was held indoors at due to poor weather. The sports council was represented at the **SALSC Gents' Tournament** by Dalsersf Bowling Club.

- **Curling** is represented in the sports council by Cathie Bennett. The sports council continues to support the annual Junior Sports Match Curling Challenge organized by Hamilton Young Curlers and Lanarkshire Ice Rink in Hamilton. This great annual event attracts curlers from all over Scotland. The annual **SALSC Junior Curling Tournament**, in which we normally participate, did not take place during 2009-2010.
- **Football** does not have specific representation on the committee since the resignation of George Mackenzie, however George continues to organise the soccer sevens with support from the Executive Committee and Marion Wotherspoon in South Lanarkshire Leisure. The **Davie Cooper Primary Schools Soccer Sevens Tournament** is our outstanding main event held in May each year.

The 2009 tournament took place on the 17th May with 20 boys' and 10 girls' teams, which was quite a bit fewer than the previous year's 30 boys' and 12 girls' teams. However as usual, it was a very successful event, held at Hamilton Palace Grounds. Provost Russell Clearie presented engraved glass cubes to the boys' winners and Christina McKelvie MSP presented the same to the girls' winning teams.

The event was slightly marred by a dispute about the number of players in a team. In future, team managers will have to ensure that they field only nine players in all.

First aid was provided by St Andrew's Ambulance. South Lanarkshire Leisure provided administrative support, footballs and the pitch fee.

Ian Stark, technician at Uddingston Grammar School, made lovely display cases for the Soccer Sevens trophies, which were becoming damaged by mishandling. Ian refused all payment for this, making a splendid gift to the sports council.

- **Golf:** Millar Stoddart and John Christie organized teams for the annual **SALSC Ladies' Golf Tournament**, and **SALSC Boys' Golf Competition** but both events were cancelled due to wet weather.

Hamilton entered teams into the South Lanarkshire Inter-area Seniors event and the **Hamilton International Sports Trust (HIST) Annual Show-am Tournament**.

Colin Girvan, the golf development officer for South Lanarkshire, gave a presentation to the committee about golf development in the area.

- **'International Opportunities'** was added to the agenda as a regular item. In December 2009, Monsieur Jean-Claude Besnard from the French sport-for-all organisation UFOLEP, gave a presentation to the sports council. UFOLEP was founded in 1866 with the aim of citizen education as a necessary element of democracy. UFOLEP encountered SALSC in 1995 when UFOLEP joined the International Sport and Cultural Association (ISCA).

Monsieur Besnard's local group of UFOLEP has hosted two visits from the South Lanarkshire Senior Walkers group (SLOW) in Hamilton and in 2010, SLOW will host a group from France. Hamilton Sports Council is supporting this visit with funding and via Brian Miller's branch of the Ramblers' Association.

In October 2009, Birte Ahle and Karen Damborg from the Danish Gymnastics Association (DGI) visited Hamilton. Unfortunately only the HSC secretary was available to enjoy a good day with them, showing them Chatelherault and escorting them to the heady delights of shopping in Glasgow.

There is huge potential for life-enriching experience through international exchange and Hamilton Sports Council has only scratched the surface of these opportunities.

- **Marketing, PR and the website** were organized by Gary Burns, Manager of Blantyre Leisure Centre, Brian Miller and Stuart Sutherland.

Brian Miller took over management of the sports council website in November 2009 and has transformed it into an up-to-date and lively site with useful information and links to other sports sites including South Lanarkshire Leisure and SALSC. Brian has added a Stop Press panel, updated the sports calendar and added many more photographs. Brian is also closely monitoring the email enquiries. Up to November 2009, the site had had about 6000 visitors with peaks when the 5k is being held. The site at www.hamiltonsportsCouncil.com consistently receives 4-5 hits a day.

Gary Burns investigated supply of 'team jackets' for the Executive Committee and for the first time, the committee has a strong visible identity at our events.

Stuart Sutherland continues to be the main provider of copy to the local press and the sports council has had good publicity in the Hamilton Advertiser and the Motherwell free newspaper during the year.

- **Martial Arts** are represented on the sports council by Hayley Duncan for Tae Kwon Do and Derek Pollock for Karate. Hayley's Tae Kwon Do club has three members in the British Olympic Team for 1012. Derek Pollock is an International referee and his club regularly participates in British, European and World Championships.

- In collaboration with Hamilton Rugby Club and the Scottish Rugby Union, the **Rugby Sub-committee** of Stuart Sutherland and John Christie organised the third **Hamilton and Area Under 20s Rugby Tournament** held at Laigh Bent on 26 April 2009. The competition involved 8 teams, compared with 12 in the previous year.

JT, the rugby development officer at Hamilton Rugby Club has worked hard to increase participation at all levels in the sport including engaging Active Schools in several projects to introduce children to the sport.

- The annual **Sports Performers' Awards** took place on Monday 22 March 2010 in South Lanarkshire Council's Banqueting Suite in Almada Street, Hamilton. This major project involved the Executive's volunteers, staff from SLL, and the banqueting team of South Lanarkshire Council's Community Resources.

This year's Awards had a similar shortened format as the successful events in 2008 and 2009. The ceremony started earlier in the evening (at 7.00pm), only the short list of nominees was referred to in detail in the DVD show and only the winners were called to the podium.

Filming the nominees was time-consuming because relatively few nominees played sports that could be filmed indoors at Blantyre Leisure Centre (BLC). In the end it was simpler and better to film nominees at their specialist training facilities for athletics, football, golf, rowing, wind-surfing, kart racing, and bowling.

Securing sufficient **nominations** in all categories was led by Millar Stoddart and written up by Marion Wotherspoon in South Lanarkshire Leisure. The **selection panel** was Cathie Bennett, John Christie, Councillor Graeme Horne, Ronnie Smith, Millar Stoddart, Hugh Waters and Clare Winsch.

There were 33 nominees including 24 individuals and 9 teams or clubs. Nominees were of very high standard and ranking them was extremely difficult.

The **filming** was managed by Clare Wunsch and Marion Wotherspoon with support from Blantyre Leisure Centre staff and the nominees' families. Ian Bremner undertook filming, editing and DVD production. The voice-over was dispensed with and super-titles were run across the top of the screen instead. Providing nominees with memory sticks instead of DVDs was considered but ruled out due to cost. Chairman Graeme Horne arranged DVD duplication through an internet service.

The evening included a **raffle** which included more sporty prizes than the previous year, as well as some alcohol and chocolate. Stuart Sutherland organised certificate tubes instead of the usual frames, Clare Wunsch ordered the glassware and Millar Stoddart arranged engraving of annual trophies. On the night, the **stage team** comprised Chairman Graeme Horne, the MC Stuart Sutherland and Gary Burns, who together gave a polished presentation.

Several politicians attended the awards ceremony and accepted invitations to take part in the evening, including Provost Russell Clearie, Tom McCabe MSP and Christina McKelvie MSP. Presentations were also made by Gerry Campbell, General Manager of South Lanarkshire Leisure, Hugh Waters Secretary of HIST, Supercounty Chief Executive John Scott and Ian Dunn Chairman of South Lanarkshire Disability Sport.

In addition to recognizing the outstanding achievements of Hamilton's sports men and women in 2009, the Awards evening was the occasion for recognizing the achievements of volunteers and supporters in sport. Frank Jones, swimming coach, received the **sportscotland and SALSC Services to Sport Award** which was presented by Millar Stoddart of SALSC. Millar Stoddart received the Hamilton Sports Council **Rosebowl** for services to the sports council. The **grand finale** celebrated all the nominees as everyone received a certificate and featured in the big photograph at the end of the evening.

- After several years of discussion about organizing a **tennis** project, Ian Cannon, a tennis coach, joined the Executive Committee in August 2009 and has worked with Active Schools to develop tennis, particularly to schools and clubs in Uddingston. These successful projects will be extended to the Hamilton area from summer 2010.

Ian advised the committee that the tennis calendar is full and it would be difficult to add an event to it. However there is already a major and well-established event in the area: the Lanarkshire Open, which is a level 4 tournament registered with Tennis Scotland and in its 37th year in 2009. The Open took place at Uddingston Tennis Club from the 14-22 August 2009 and attracted 120 players from all over Scotland.

- The Executive Committee has been kept up to date with sports development in the Hamilton area schools thanks to regular bulletins from **Active Schools** staff Alison Corrigan, Paul Graham, Wendy Lucas, Bridget Mathieson-McLaughlin, Clare Murphy, Kevin Murphy and Leigh-Ann Scott. The coordinators ran projects in athletics, basketball, dance, football, gymnastics, handball, new-age curling, rugby, skipping, swimming, tennis, supported in two cases by sports council grants.

The Primary Schools Aquathon at Blantyre Leisure Centre took place on 3 June 2009 with 150 children taking part organised by SLL and supported by the sports council.

- The sports council has been advised of **South Lanarkshire Leisure's** policies and programmes thanks to Gary Burns, Marie McLaughlin and Millar Stoddart.

The sports council funded an innovative project led by Mairi McLaughlin called 'Get up and Go' which aims to bridge the gap between coaching children and their regular participation and membership of established local sports clubs. Sports council funding was used to support governing body training to volunteers from existing clubs, raising their skill levels and improving their qualifications.

The project started in September 2009 and children attended coaching sessions in three sports; basketball attracted 24 players, tennis attracted 10, but badminton appealed to only 8. It has been agreed to continue this project into 2010-2011, concentrating on ICG sports of athletics, tennis and volleyball.

In October 2009, General Manager Gerry Campbell gave a presentation to the sports council about the International Children's Games (ICG) which will be held in Lanarkshire in 2011. The ICG have been held for 45 years. South Lanarkshire became involved in 2000 when the games were held in Hamilton Ontario and a team from Hamilton Lanarkshire was invited to participate. However from the start, the 'Hamilton' team has been drawn from the whole of Lanarkshire.

- Hamilton Sports Council entered four activities organised by the **Scottish Association of Local Sports Councils (SALSC)**: the Ladies' and Gents' Bowling and Boys' and Ladies' Golf inter-area competitions, although the golf events were called off due to excessive rainfall. For the first time in several years, no one on the committee attended the SALSC annual seminar, which this year was in Aviemore.

- HSC participated in the **South Lanarkshire Sports Forum** along with sports councils for Clydesdale, Cambuslang and Rutherglen and East Kilbride and South Lanarkshire Disability Sport. The Forum met in April, August and November 2009: reports included the ICG 2009 held in Athens; Special Olympics 2009; international opportunities and exchanges; South Lanarkshire Leisure's courses and classes (led by Ian Steele); and the International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA) conference at which Gerry Campbell spoke about SLL's Active Communities project.

The Forum members attended a meeting in November 2009 with Audit Scotland staff who were researching the involvement of SLL with voluntary sports organisations.

- **Hamilton International Sports Trust**, of which HSC is a member, continued to support three young sports people with a view to successful competition at the Commonwealth Games in 2014. These are James McCallum (cyclist) Lewis Gibb (athlete) and Kirsty Gilmour (badminton).

- Hamilton Sports Council has had a busy and successful year thanks to the work of many active members on the Executive Committee and external supporters. Chief among **our supporters** are South Lanarkshire Council and South Lanarkshire Leisure. We are particularly grateful for help received from the Provost and Councillors and from SLL staff at the Academicals North Stand, Hamilton Palace Grounds and Blantyre Leisure Centre. Many HSC activities would not easily take place but for Marion Wotherspoon, Millar Stoddart, Gary Burns and Mairi McLaughlin. In addition, the hall keeper at Ferniegair, Michael Carey is an excellent host.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone on the Executive Committee for their enthusiasm, cheerful company and excellent ideas throughout the year.

Clare Wunsch
Secretary
19 April 2010