

MEMBERSHIP PAPER

Review

The Federation has now completed the third full year of its new Membership Scheme. At the end of August, when memberships for 2014-15 expire, there were 10,100 names on the list. The comparable figures for 2013-14 and 2012-13 were 9883 and 9835 respectively. The trend is a clear indication that the transition to the new membership scheme has been a success. For the new season at the time of writing the membership list stands at 4199 members; of these 3270 have renewed their membership for 2015-16, the balance being three year or life memberships carried forward. This figure should not be compared to that in last year's report; variations in the date on which memberships went on sale and the date on which the report was written invalidate any such comparison. I would expect to be able to verbally present to Council figures for renewals to a later date which will be more meaningful.

Renewals

The proposals adopted at the last Annual General Meeting to withdraw 2014-15 memberships from sale to new applicants from the date on which 2015-16 memberships went on sale does not appear to have caused significant problems, and certainly simplified the process of changing over to the new membership year.

From the perspective of the membership I believe the renewals process went more smoothly this season than last. The problems which did occur were of more significance to the officers and staff of the Federation than to the individual members. The delays involved may be the inevitable consequence of the Federation being run by voluntary officers, with consequent restraints on the time they are able to devote to the work.

Game Fee

The proposals put to the last Annual General Meeting regarding the replacement of residual game fee were not discussed due to lack of time, and were placed on the agenda of Finance Council. At that meeting they suffered a similar fate and I undertook to set up a working party to consider the matter. The difficulty of finding time for such matters over the summer means that at the time of writing this has not been done; I hope to be in a position to announce further progress to the meeting verbally.

The general opinion of the Board is that ultimately a pure membership is the way to go and that the present mix is only a medium term expedient. However, there are specific problems to be overcome which none of the solutions I have yet heard proposed succeed in addressing.