

Returning Improvement

Gareth chats with head coach Ian A'Kempis about JM Grizzlies



Words by Gareth Harrison | g.harrison@ybl.org.uk |

For you, how has the YBL performed this season and how has it compared to your expectations?

This is our second season in the YBL and it's been fine. We had a bit of confusion at the start of the season over teams saying that they wanted to enter the league but then did not. As a small club with courts to book for games then having to cancel them caused a bit of a problem administration wise. The YBL provide structured leagues which work well for my team who play U15s.

Is there anything that the YBL could do to improve?

The YBL are really good about getting information out to the club administrators. They also do a lot on the website and newsletters but I don't think that a lot of the parents are aware of all this. I think it needs to get out to the parents as well, so we need to work at sharing the contact details of parents between the clubs and YBL so that it reaches them and in doing that would reduce some of my own workload.

In what appears to be a tough league what are you doing to stay motivated and work on improving your game?

We are in a strong league of 9 teams, but I have to say that every game I have played has been a good game where everyone has played well.

Over this season my team have continued to develop. This weekend we played Hawks and I anticipated a strong game. When we first played them we lost 76-27, this weekend they scored exactly the same points, 76, but my team scored 34. I was so happy that this time they scored more points I was even happier when the referees and table official at the end of the game commented on how my team had improved through the season and are playing much better. I feed this back to my players and explain that they are improving and that people outside the club are commenting on their performance at games. We need to work on our fundamental skills so that they come naturally in a game and work on strengthening out passing.

In the future are you looking to expand to have more teams entered in different leagues?

I am currently working with new players that have recently joined the team and prior to the start of the season had little or no basketball knowledge. They are regularly turning up to training and have played in some of the games. I am slowly starting to expand and I am currently working to expand my members so that I could look at possibly an U15 and U17 team. One of the important things for their development is to put some internal competitiveness into training, so where at the moment some

players think that due to numbers they will be automatically playing I would like to have enough players that they actually had to prove they wanted to play in games by working hard during the training sessions to improve not just their own performance but that of the team as a whole. If I continue to attract new players I would like to be in a position to be registering two teams into the YBL.

How have you found the level of officiating and the ability to get hold of officials this season?

The level of officiating (table and referee) is good. I don't struggle with availability as at the start of the season I block book my officials. Doing this ensures that all of my games are covered. I might have to offer the officials other dates when arrangements are requested but on the whole I have managed to do that using the ones I have pre-booked. (I am short of a table official on Saturday 8th February 2020 if anyone reading this is able to help?) I feel that the standard of officiating is high but that does not mean I agree with every call they make. One of the things that I like is that they take the time to engage with the players and explain why a foul or violation have been called if the player concerned does not understand. This not only helps the players understand but also helps them to develop as a better player from that level of understanding. Communication on court between officials and the table is good and the communication with me as a coach is also good.

Is there anyone within your club that is looking to do either a table official course or a refing course?

The YBL ran a L1 table course last season for my team. It is my intention to have them complete a L2 table official course and also a L1 referees course this season. It is important to develop a player and their understanding of the rules of basketball. The courses give them a qualification that also expands their knowledge of the rules of basketball which in turn helps them to develop when playing on court as they have a better understanding. By having players trained it also helps when I need to get referees and table officials to cover games plus if a player is injured they can help out on the table and still be present at the games.

Ian is there was anything else he wanted to add?

I am so happy that my team are improving, but it is an important factor that the kids feel part of the club. My main objective is to continue to expand the club so that in future seasons I can look at entering more teams into the YBL.



YBL U15 East	League Standing	Played	Won	Points For	Points Against	Point Difference	Points
	7 of 8	7 of 14	1 & 6 Lost	146	271	267	7

Game Stats			
76-27	A	-49	Warwickshire Hawks
82-40	A	-42	Coventry Elite
51-72	H	-21	Tamworth Tigers
37-74	H	-37	Leicester Riders
42-80	A	+38	Yardley Defenders
29-79	H	-50	Nuneaton Predators
34-76	H	-49 -42 -91	Warwickshire Hawks

Forthcoming Fixtures			
Sat 1 Feb	H	13:15	Walsall 99ers
Sat 8 Feb	H	13:15	Coventry Elite
Sun 16 Feb	A	13:15	Tamworth Tigers
Sun 29 Feb	A	10:30	Leicester Riders
Fri 20 March	A	20:00	Walsall 99ers
Sat 21 March	H	13:15	Yardley Defenders
Sun 29 March	A	10:20	Nuneaton Predators

Team Leaders			
Free Throw %			
W.Parry	45.45%	PLD 6 OF 6	MADE 5 OF 11 U15E
K.Bryers	38.40%	PLD 6 OF 6	MADE 5 OF 13 U15E

Top Scorers			
K.Bryers	PLD 6	88 pts	3PTS 1 240 FT 5/13 38% U15E
D.Ricarte	PLD 6	34 pts	3PTS 0 215 FT 4/12 33% U15E

Officiate at YBL Championships

Words by James Davies | director@ybl.org.uk | and Kim Humphreys | admin@ybl.org.uk |

The YBL Championships Semi-Finals and Finals are rapidly approaching and we need officials to step up and take their deserved place on court.



The YBL have want to invest in the development our current officials. This year at the Championships we will be having assessors present providing game guidance and 'SMART' feedback following each game. This provides an opportunity for a transparent feedback and monitoring process.

We need to identify referees and table officials who are looking for either development to the next level or have recently attained their qualification and are officiating at a level suitable for assessment at the YBL Championships. The games taking place will be of a high standard following a season long campaign by teams.

You can be a practising or newly qualified **level one, level two or level three** table official or referee looking to develop and enhance your skills. You could be placed as lead table, polish off your score book skills, nailing your signals or confirming your AOR. If you, or someone at your club is one of those officials then please get in touch with Kim or myself, as we would like to hear from you.

YBL Championship Semi-Finals
Saturday 16 & Sunday 17 May

YBL Championship Finals
Saturday 23 & Sunday 24 May

at the University of Worcester, St. John's Campus.

Tescos Bags for Life

Words by Kim Humphreys | admin@ybl.org.uk |



Thank you @tescofood for our #bagsforlife support. If you are in; Tesco Extra West Bromwich, Tesco Express Stone Cross or Tesco Great Barr remember to vote for us.

If your passing drop in and drop a blue chip for us to raise money for mini basketball.

Help us Achieve

Words by Brian Kinch | b.kinch@ybl.org.uk |

We have teamed up with the Aviva Community Fund Project which runs a 'Go Fund Me' page. We are offering incentives for donations and would really love to reach our target of £2,000 which would be used to continue to support and develop the U9 and U11 leagues.

If we hit our £2,000 target we receive additional funding from Aviva. Please can you share with your parents, friends and on social media to help us reach our target.

The YBL continues to grow year on year. This year has seen us introduce an Under 9's league also a wheelchair development league. We need funding to help us support that growth so that we can continue to provide competition across the area to a high standard.

The YBL is a non-profit organisation, everything we do from administration through to the YBL Championships is funded through the entry fees paid at the start of the season and by any donations.

Donating just £1 helps us out tremendously.

Either scan the QR code below to go to the 'Go Fund Me' page.

Help us to develop the basketball players of the future from the grassroots.



Development August is Back!

#OfficialFest

You've spoken and we have listened. Back by popular demand, is the YBL Development August 2020.

The month of August becomes the YBLs training ground as we host a number of courses to help facilitate the growing demand for officials and coaches. We are looking to run, level 1 and level 2 referee and table official courses for those officials ready to take the next step. In addition, we're looking at a level 3 table course and a level 2 coaching course, with Safeguarding and First Aid courses.



This gives clubs and individuals the opportunity to gain their next or new qualification in the sport they love. Giving back to their club and the YBL helps all the children and adults that brace their club. The environment is welcoming and friendly and the courses run by qualified and extremely passionate officials.

Watch this space for further details.