

CEO'S STATEMENT



The 2019/20 Welsh Basketball season was cut short in March 2020 when the UK government announced its first national lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Across Wales, Scotland, England and indeed the rest of the world all Basketball came to an abrupt stop and since then we are all trying to overcome the challenges that this has brought about.

Our domestic league seasons were in the final stages of their competitions looking to crown the winners of the North and South Wales basketball leagues to find out which clubs would advance to the Basketball Wales National Playoff Final Fours.

Over the past two seasons, the Final Fours at Aberystwyth have been a focus for our top Senior Men's and U18 and U16 teams to see who would be crowned Welsh Basketball champions.

Our national team age group squads that held their trials in September 2019 had been training on a monthly basis working hard and focusing on attending a number of national and international trips that had been planned by their coaches and team managers. European trips to Paris, Spain, Austria and national events in Scotland for the U14 Humph Long tournament and the 2nd Annual Tri National GB tournament in Manchester.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all our volunteer coaches for all their hard work and dedication during the year along with the group of dedicated team managers overseen by Rachel Symons who all worked tirelessly to fundraise and prepare these exciting tournaments for our players to attend.

As the pandemic worsened the inevitable news arrived that FIBA cancelled all their youth tournaments for the summer of 2019. This meant that our U16 Men and Women missed out on the opportunity to represent Wales at a FIBA European competition.

A number of these U16 players had been building up to this event some since they were U12s in the Welsh national team programmes, so for them the news must have been very disheartening and disappointing.

Whilst on-court activities came to a stop, plenty of off-court activities started to emerge to keep our members active and involved in the sport during the pandemic – all via the means of Zoom or Microsoft Teams! For our referees, we held a series of monthly online meetings with assistance from FIBA and our national instructor from Poland, Mr Grzegorz Ziemblicki. Our referees looked to improve their rules knowledge and play calling by discuss clips, plays and even sitting an online rules test!

Our Coaches developed a series of online CPD workshops where we brought together coaches of all levels from across Wales to help develop their knowledge and listen to talks and exchange ideas with a number of high profile coaches including coaches from within the GB youth teams. All sessions were very well attended, and this is something we will look to develop further as it proved to be a great way to bring the coaching community across Wales together. Thanks to Simon Fisher and Nick O'Leary for leading on this new initiative.

BASKETBALL WALES • PÊL-FASGED CYMRU

5 Cwrt Rebecca, Pontarddulais, Swansea, Wales, SA4 8JL • enquiries@basketball.wales • www.basketball.wales

Registered in England & Wales, Company No. 08273793



CEO'S STATEMENT



The lockdown period also saw the introduction of the Basketball Wales Big Quiz. This has been a great fundraising opportunity for our national teams and I'm sure that this is something that we will continue to develop further once the national team programmes are back up and running. Thanks to Nick O'Leary, our quiz master extraordinaire and Rachel Symons for all their efforts in making these events fun and enjoyable for all participants.

This year we have continued to develop our positive working relationship with Sport Wales. Basketball has so much potential to grow further in Wales and I'm confident that in the next few years as we continue to work closely with Sport Wales and develop our new strategy and exciting initiatives, great things can be achieved. We have a new liaison officer at Sport Wales, Richard Lawrence, who has provided us with great support and guidance throughout this difficult time. I would like to thank Richard for his continued support on behalf of all the Welsh Basketball Community and look forward to continuing working with you in the year ahead.

Following on from last year's AGM and the discussions around FIBA competitions for our Junior and Senior players, I can confirm that Basketball Wales has written to FIBA via the British Basketball Federation to ask for special dispensation to continue to participate in the Small Nations and Division C competitions. We realise that these events for the majority of our players are the highlights and pinnacles of their international careers and having the ability to compete annually in these competitions is vital to the development of our elite athletes.

We continue to fully support the work of the British Basketball Federation and the GB national team squads and I was proud to see that a number of our junior players were selected for the GB squads for the age group teams this year. It's a great testament to our local clubs and coaches that we are able to produce talented players that have the capability of being selected to play for GB at FIBA tournaments.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank fellow members of the board that put in so much time and effort on behalf of the Basketball Wales community to ensure that we have an organisation that is fit for purpose, with good governance and a secure financial plan to continue to advance the sport in Wales for years to come.

Special thanks must go to Helen Pearce, our part-time administrator and only member of paid staff. She has gone above and beyond during this extraordinary period. Helen has been at the forefront of our COVID return-to-play guidance attending countless meetings with Welsh Government, Welsh Sports Association and Sport Wales to ensure that basketball has been able to return to play in a safe manner both outdoor and indoors. I'm sure I speak on behalf of all our member clubs and players that your support during this time has been much appreciated. Thankyou!

As we look to the future in a post-Covid era, we look forward to working with all our Basketball Wales members, clubs and leagues to emerge from the pandemic stronger and bounce back with the aim of attracting new players to the sport, encouraging former players to lace up their boots again and taking basketball sessions to areas of Wales where there are currently no clubs set up. There are a number of exciting commercial and partnership opportunities that are in the early stages of discussion and we hope to announce many new and exciting initiatives in the coming months.

BASKETBALL WALES • PÊL-FASGED CYMRU

5 Cwrt Rebecca, Pontarddulais, Swansea, Wales, SA4 8JL • enquiries@basketball.wales • www.basketball.wales

Registered in England & Wales, Company No. 08273793



CEO'S STATEMENT



I hope that all our members take the opportunity to dial into our virtual AGM this year and I look forward to seeing you all on Sunday 20th December.

Gavin Williams

Voluntary CEO

Basketball Wales

9 December 2020

BASKETBALL WALES • PÊL-FASGED CYMRU

5 Cwrt Rebecca, Pontarddulais, Swansea, Wales, SA4 8JL • enquiries@basketball.wales • www.basketball.wales

Registered in England & Wales, Company No. 08273793

