



Maximising Court Usage

1. Club Nights

This is a short guide to help encourage more members to join and play in a club evening. The key issue is that with a limited amount of court space there is often a limited membership, or members don't feel they can play because they don't get many games.

Playing Hours

Not to be overlooked, generally all but the hardcore members will prefer earlier times, so choosing the times that your club sessions are on can often help spread the load. Earlier club times – from 19.00 usually attract the most members through until about 21.00, after that, those players tend to drift off.

Club Games

The average club game, to 21, usually takes about 15 – 20 minutes. Crafty club players on busy club nights will always ensure that games run very close so that they can stay on court as long as possible. In a three-court hall it is feasible to run a club night with up to 24 members, although the sitting off time is likely to be around 20 minutes a time.

To reduce sitting off times during the busy part of the club night, say till 21.00, games could be played to 15 (still new scoring), making the average game last a maximum of 15 minutes. Scoring to 15 is also less likely to involve manipulation of the scores since these games tend to be closer. As a rule of thumb, a two-court club session should be able to accommodate 14 – 16 members on a club evening with a wait time of 15 minutes maximum, and a three-court hall up to 24 members with a similar wait time. Once players start to drift off it would make sense to make games up to 21 again.

Singles

There is always a demand for some singles play – put this at the end of the night when some players have left for the evening.

Peg Board etc.

With a busy club night, it is sensible to use a peg board and have a few members keep an eye on progress. To effectively get the best use out of the courts, the next games should be queued wherever possible so that there is no waiting between games. Having a member or committee member keep an eye on the board enables the games to keep going and to ensure that the games going on are even or balanced.

2. After School Sessions

If you have available courts in the late afternoon, typically from 4.00pm onwards, there is substantial demand for after school club sessions. Usually lasting between an hour and an hour and a half, these sessions can be set up to introduce young players to the game.

After school sessions are often about managing the number of players rather than providing any technical coaching; young players often want gentle competition and guidance on how to get more from the game. With this in mind, you could use some young leaders to help facilitate the sessions. Depending on the number of courts and players, games are the most important thing to get going. Again, it is ideal to have reduced scores of up to 11 or 15 so that games and players can be rotated quickly and easily and players are not sitting off for too long. A two-court hall should accommodate between 10 and 14 young players, and a three-court hall will allow up to 18 players, without them getting bored or distracted.

3. Day Time Sessions

There are numerous uses for daytime courts, and the numbers work in the same way as club nights. These sessions usually work best in the mornings, from 9.00am through to midday. This is just a small selection of suggestions.

50 plus clubs

There are a high number of retired 50 plus year olds who are still incredibly active. Local district councils provide some facilities, but are always looking to increase the options for this group of the community. These clubs are generally of mixed ability, ages and genders, but all provide a sociable environment for good exercise. There is an opportunity to work with local community groups or health care centres to market and provide sessions for this category.

Daytime clubs

Originally, these types of clubs catered for the non-working mother, but have become good clubs for non-working or part-time working parents. These types of clubs run on a very similar basis to a club night session with organised games depending on the numbers and standards of players available.

Beginner clubs

Replacing the old 'adult education' sessions, these programmes create a good way of introducing people to badminton who will hopefully want to improve and become a member of the club. These sessions will need a qualified coach to run, and emphasis should be placed on teaching good technique and learning how to play gam

