

## WARTON JUNIORS BADMINTON CLUB

Hi there, my name is Mike Cooper, I have lived in Freckleton/Warton for about 30 years now. Back in 1993, myself and another qualified Instructor called Dorothy Barrett decided to start a Junior Badminton Club at what was then, BAC's, but now BAE SYSTEMS' Lightning Club Sports hall. The aim was to provide badminton coaching on a Saturday morning for children of all ages. At that time there were no dedicated junior clubs in the Fylde, although some adult clubs allowed older children to play on their club evenings. We set up 3 classes in the age groups 7yrs – 10 yrs, 11-14 yrs and 14+ between 09.00am and 13.00pm. This setup is still being used, even after 18 years.

The facilities are very good, and each class is capable of accommodating 24 children. The children are taught specific strokes and encouraged to achieve recognised awards. At the end of each season, the season being September through to Easter, the club holds handicapped tournaments, of which at least 80% of the children take part in. Every child that enters receives a medal, with trophies being awarded to the winners and runners-up in each event. All certificates that have been achieved are also awarded at this time.

The Club has been extremely successful in providing a lot of the children who have represented their schools in all age School Tournaments, and have proved successful in winning these tournaments, and going on to be selected to play for their Town teams and Lancashire.

The club is currently applying for "PREMIER" status as a junior club with the governing body BADMINTON ENGLAND, and is hoping to achieve this by the time their 19<sup>th</sup> season ends in April 2012.

The club provides a worthwhile sport to children of the local community, and beyond. At the 1996 Golden Jubilee Dinner Dance of the Blackpool and District Badminton Association, the club was referred to as "a cell of excellence for our most promising juniors". The club has provided many clubs within the Blackpool League with juniors who have played in adult teams, including our own BAE SYSTEMS teams!! Some have played at Division One and Two standard.

Should anyone have a child, or children who might be interested in trying out a different sport, please get in touch with me on 01772 633402 or Dorothy on 01253 739801. We have spare racquets, all you need you need to bring is a pair of clean trainers, and GIVE IT A GO!!!!