

Graham Whittock, Mr Skittles.

For the past 63 years this man has been at the heart of our league, that's before a lot of our members were even born. I remember going to see him in 2007 and asking him if there was any way I could help. He waved his hand around his living room and said, is there some way you could help with all this ! The room was full of ledgers from previous seasons, scores and tables all written out by hand, piled high like roman columns. In those days he would write the scores in a big book, then calculate the tables once a month then print them to bring to the monthly meetings. It was eye opening, and a lot of paperwork for one man to do alone. I scratched my head for a moment, I could devise a spreadsheet that would do all this and keep records on a computer I said. His eyes widened, you can do that? Hopefully, I said, with my fingers crossed behind my back, plus a website to display the tables & results weekly. Then all you would have to do is enter the results each week and the program would do the rest. His grin told me that he liked that idea. 😊

At the AGM in 2008 my skittle spreadsheet/database was approved. This would indeed do the calculating and even work out the fixtures, removing a lot of paper work from Graham. Plus the website was up and running, where all members could see tables & results on a weekly basis. Some members would still refuse to use a computer, but most would come round over the following years. The league commissioned a year's trial, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Age and health has a way of catching up with us all. So two years ago, Neil took over the duty of entering the scores via a new WhatsApp system and I took on more responsibility in running the league. Score cards were still being used, but only by a few.... Times were indeed changing. Now that I have been elected League Secretary I only hope I can do half as good a job as Graham. However the responsibility has now been shared amongst the committee, so we are all more involved in the running of the league. It now takes 6 men to do what the Grand old Master did on his own. Graham Whittock, a true legend of the Paulton & District Skittle League.



A personal view by K. Parsons