

I started my report 12 months ago by saying "I feel that this has been relatively calm year for the Ironmen". And that's probably where we are again and that's slightly disappointing.

Ideally, I would like to be sat here saying we regularly have 8 to 10 fit men at practice and dance outs, and we have brought back Ashford, Coalbrookdale, Jackfield, Chorley & Benthal into our repertoire , , , ,but I can't.

As with last year, numbers have been up and down, at practice and dance outs so it's been hard to work on what we wanted and even harder to dance them out.

We have however made some of the changes, The Ironman unique style is back, and the hard work has paid off. We have the oomph back and the dancing is feeling good again.

Recently we have started looking at bringing back more 6-man dances to increase our repertoire Jackfield, Horsehay are absent Squire and all coming along strong. And after their quickly put together debut at Evesham there are plans afoot to try and work on bringing young Douglas and Ben into a couple of dances so they can join us when they are available next year. Robert has come to a couple of practices over the summer and I'm sure we will be seeing more of him during school holidays getting more practice in, in the hope that he will be joining the Ironmen in the near future.

Kit is another thing we will be looking at over the winter, first impressions are very important and even though we are a Border side its what we look like people see first. There is so much competition out there now so we need to do everything we can do to set us aside from everyone else A few weeks ago, Nicola made an offer to help with kit across the team. The men have agreed that we will take her up on her very kind offer and she has now been given the authority to interfere, comment on and to generally smarten up the Ironmen.

We still have questions hanging over from last year regarding getting numbers at dance outs and hopefully we will be able to answer some of them winter.

This year we done a lot of local dance outs, we also survived a very wet Upton and weekend at Evesham.

We were not invited to Shrewsbury FF this year which was quite upsetting. I did have a reasonably open and frank conversation with the dance directors of SFF in September and manage to put "most" of the strange rumours that had been circulating to bed. But unfortunately moving forward we need to take SFF off our list of regular bookings as it has been confirmed that we are not on the list for 2025 either.

We do however have invites for Chester FF and Saddleworth would be very pleased to see us for their 49<sup>th</sup> rush cart . On top of them I have hopefully got us an invite to Beverley FF 2025 and our name is on the list for Bromyard and Warwick for 2026 . Yesterday I was accosted by Rob Tidy the Squire of Adlington Morris men, who are running the JMO in Stockport in April. Off the back of that conversation, we now have an opportunity to que jump and get our names on the list before the official invitation goes live.

On a personal note, this has been a tough year to be the Men's Squire and there has been parts that I really have not enjoyed, and that have made me question myself why I do it. After all this is meant to be fun. But here we are, and my name is still on the list, and I will try to do my best for the Ironmen moving into year 49. But don't be surprised to see some changes.

Thank you, Men, for your support over the last 12 months.

Thank you to all the Band, Gilders & my fellow officers,

And as always Thank you, to Dave, the child minders, photographers, dog wardens, drivers, and bag carriers,

Martyn Goodwin  
Ironmen Squire 2023/2024