

Mid Sussex Chess League

Annual General Meeting

13/6/23

Draft Minutes

Attendees

Jeffrey Boardman – Chair (non-voting)

Peter Farr – Fixtures (non-voting)

Matthew Britnell – Lewes (non-voting)

Alex Taylor – Collyers

Jim Wheeler – Hastings

David Fryer – Webmaster/Crowborough

Roger Waddingham - Horsham

Chris Baldry – Haywards Heath

Luke Rutherford – Brighton and Hove

Chris Jones – Worthing

Sue Forde- Bexhill

Mark Attree – Secretary (non-voting)

Jonathan Britnell – Lewes

Brian Stockham - Uckfield

Robert Wall – East Grinstead / Treasurer

James Mansson – Horsham

Colin Clark - Eastbourne

Viv Cole – Haywards Heath

Paul Batchelor- Brighton and Hove

Peter Larwood – Worthing

Bill Tracey- Bexhill

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks and Apologies for Absence

Mark Attree opened the meeting, apologies had been received prior to the meeting from John Pye, East Grinstead Bookshop. A brief period of reflection was held for Doug Stevenson, long serving Chairman and Treasurer of the League and other chess friends and opponents we have lost during the last year. Jeffrey Boardman introduced himself to the meeting, expressing his gratitude that so many were attending the meeting and expecting that the discussions would be held in a good spirit.

2. Minutes of Last Year's AGM

The Minutes were approved without comment.

3. Secretary's Report and Matters Arising

The location of the Rapidplay Trophy remains unknown. It was agreed that a new trophy should be purchased, with Crowborough Chess Club offering to contribute, whilst other trophies will need to be replaced in the next year or two.

4. Treasurers Report and Matters Arising

Robert Wall stated that he was in the process of assuming control of the accounts and no accounts were available at present. The bank statements included a number of payments, but there was currently no way of knowing which clubs had made the payments. The League was being charged a monthly fee by the bank, and statements indicated a current balance of +-£400. There was currently an ECF Game Fee payment for +-£60 outstanding. This would be passed on to the relevant clubs and it was proposed that a reminder be sent to all clubs regarding this season's game fee payments, which could be avoided by individuals joining the ECF by end June. Brian Stockham suggested that a list of Club Treasurers should be made for the use of the League's Treasurer. A start was made on this with a request for those present at the meeting to supply names and email addresses if known.

A number of expenditures would soon be required, principally engraving of trophies and within a couple of years new trophies might be required, so avoiding unnecessary expenditure such as bank fee payments would be a priority.

5. Fixture Secretary's Report and Matters Arising

Peter Farr informed the meeting that the League had returned to its normal format this season, with three divisions of ten teams. He thanked team captains for their flexibility in re-arranging fixtures though one or two re-arrangements had pushed the limits of what was acceptable. There had been no board defaults and no contested adjudications in the adult league.

Winners of the various competitions were;

Division 1 – 1st Brighton and Hove 1

Division 2 - 1st Haywards Heath 1

Division 3 – 1st Bexhill 3

Rapidplay Division – 1st East Grinstead Bookshop 2

Knockout Trophy - Lewes

6. Tournament Controllers Report and Matters Arising

There had been no disputes or controversies requiring intervention beyond some nomination issues.

7. Presentation of Trophies

Division 1 Trophy was received by Luke Rutherford of Brighton and Hove.

Division 2 Trophy was received by Viv Cole of Haywards Heath

Division 3 Trophy was not returned last year for presentation (there had not been a 3rd Division). Robert Wall was tasked with ascertaining its location.

The Knockout Trophy was received by Jonathan Britnell of Lewes.

Rapidplay Division Trophy was not available for presentation.

The question of paying for engraving was considered. Normally the League re-imburses clubs for the costs of engraving, but several clubs indicated that they did not re-charge this (others did). The proposal that clubs pay for their own engraving had been rejected a few years ago according to Matthew Britnell, this proposal should be considered again.

The tankards for Overall performance, Division 1, Division 2 were presented. The trophy for Division 3 was not available, but then neither was the person who had won it.

Overall Tankard was received by Vivian Cole on behalf of Felix Kwiatkowski.

Division 1 Tankard was received by Luke Rutherford.

Division 2 Tankard was received by Vivian Cole on behalf of Felix Kwiatkowski.

Division 3 Tankard was not available for presentation to the winner John Pye, but Robert Wall is recorded as having it. He undertook to look for it.

8. Election of Officers

Current officers were re-elected on a show of hands with thanks to David Fryer for the website.

9. County Adjudication Secretary's Report and Matters Arising

Although there had been no formal adjudications required in this last season there was in fact no County Adjudication Secretary at present and a route for adjudications was not clear. Luke Rutherford stated that the process lies with the County Association but until this is clarified the League should specify an interim solution, Peter Farr to consider. David Fryer mentioned an incident involving a Junior where in the absence of support at the time it was felt that a younger player had been pressured into agreeing a result at the board rather than having recourse to adjudication, so the process of ending a game on the night needs to be made clear.

10. SCCA Matters relating to the League (and ECF)

Luke Rutherford updated the meeting.

Peter Farr informed the meeting that the ECF was considering changing it's levels of membership.

11a. Proposed Rule Change – Team Size

Currently

Five-board matches shall normally be played in all divisions, but for season 2022-23 four-board matches shall be played in all divisions.

Proposed

1. Four-board matches shall be played in all divisions.

Or, alternatively

2. Five-board matches shall normally be played in all divisions, but four-board matches shall be continued in all divisions for season 2023-24. (NOT DISCUSSED FOLLOWING APPROVAL OF 1.)

There is a further proposal that should be treated separately in case of 4 boards being approved.

3. If both teams agree to a fifth board, or more, then these can be submitted directly for grading by the Home team but do not affect the match outcome. (WITHDRAWN AFTER DISCUSSION)

11a.1. Both sides made points on this change. The argument for 4 Boards was principally about the ease of travel, where a non-playing driver could actually take an entire team, very useful for teams made up largely of Junior players. The point was also made that in some clubs this made an additional team possible eg Bexhill. Conversely for some clubs it denied players the opportunity of taking part eg Lewes, where 2 teams of 4 may not be possible whilst one team of 5 definitely is. Luke Rutherford pointed out that the League had 6 Boards at one time, then reduced to 5, now 4, which makes the matches less substantial, also the view of Roger Waddingham. Colin Clark's view was that 4 Board teams had worked well and had given lots of new players matches, though he could see the argument for 5 Boards in the First Division.

Approved, 15 for, 9 against.

11a.3. The proposal for extra optional boards was discussed. Practically it appeared to be possible to do this, with extra rated games, within the ECF-LMS system, but there was no reason the clubs could not do this without the involvement of the League. Peter Larwood withdrew the proposal on this basis.

11b. Proposed Rule Change – Team Order

Currently

In each match, a team must play in descending order of current playing strength. It is recognised that, for many reasons, a player's grading may not be the best guide to current form, and considerable discretion is allowed a team captain in this area. Nevertheless, the Tournament Controller may require a team captain to justify his team order, and, should he/she be satisfied that the provisions of this rule have been clearly disregarded to the detriment of the opposing team, he/she shall refer the matter to the Management Committee who may adjust the match result as seems appropriate

Proposed

In each match, a team must play in descending order of current playing strength. It is recognised that, for many reasons, a player's rating may not be the best guide to current form, and considerable discretion is allowed a team captain in this area. Nevertheless, for K-ratings players should play in order of decreasing rating, subject to an allowable difference of 75 rating points. For P-ratings the Tournament Controller may require a team captain to justify his team order, and, should he/she be satisfied that the provisions of this rule have been clearly disregarded to the detriment of the opposing team, he/she shall refer the matter to the Management Committee who may adjust the match result as seems appropriate.

Views both for and against making a formal rating limit that needs to be followed were expressed. Firstly, it was considered that some clarity in the rule might be required as too much is left to 'discretion', both as guidance to team captains and something against which changes might be judged. It was noted that there had been several instances where the ratings listed next to player's names were clearly not in descending board order and this had caused concern with several clubs. David Fryer (as the ratings officer) explained that any P-rating was extremely unreliable and that K-ratings (which required 10 games) were often also unreliable since in many cases that rating would be based on games against players with P-Ratings. In response to a question from Brian Stockham, Peter Farr confirmed that the Management Committee had not investigated any instances and that no formal complaint or concern had been raised with the committee during the season though they had become aware of it through informal discussions. An amendment for extending the proposed limit to 100 points was proposed by Alex Taylor and seconded by Brian Stockham as the proposed 75 point limit was itself arbitrary. On David Fryer's advice, the 'Official Revised Monthly Rating' should be the rating used within this rule, this amendment was approved as was the replacement of the word 'considerable' with 'reasonable' after a discussion regarding whether any qualifier was required at all.

Amended proposal as follows;

In each match, a team must play in descending order of current playing strength. It is recognised that, for many reasons, a player's rating may not be the best guide to current form, and **reasonable** discretion is allowed a team captain in this area. Nevertheless, for K-ratings players should play in order of decreasing rating, subject to an allowable difference of **100** rating points*. For P-ratings the Tournament Controller may require a team captain to justify his team order, and, should he/she be satisfied that the provisions of this rule have been clearly disregarded to the detriment of the opposing team, he/she shall refer the matter to the Management Committee who may adjust the match result as seems appropriate.

Where * is the Official Revised Monthly Rating set by the ECF for each player.

Approved 20 for, 0 against.

11c Proposed Change - Name of the League

That the 'Mid Sussex Chess League' be renamed the 'Sussex Chess League'

Peter Farr introduced the proposal. The League had expanded geographically from its original area and now encompassed all of Sussex except those other clubs in West Sussex that play rated games (specifically Bognor & Arun and Chichester). It may be a matter of fact already since those clubs may apply to join the League anyway but for distance of travel reasons play in the Portsmouth and District League instead. Luke Rutherford mentioned that in simple terms 'Sussex League Champions' is a better sounding title. The possible need for structural change (eg East and West Divisions- David Fryer) to avoid excessive travel could be handled when it became an issue since those clubs were in the same position as Hastings, who play in both Sussex and Kent Leagues - David Graham. Brian Stockham considered that Mid Sussex was an antiquated term and that the reality is that this is in effect a Sussex League.

David Fryer raised the issue of the relationship of the renamed League to the SCCA and whether this could be considered a first step towards a merger of the two. Peter Farr stated that this might be a possibility but that it would require a lot more discussion. Practical issues regarding the name change were also brought up..bank account, trophies, web site for example.

Jeffrey Boardman proposed a vote be taken.

Approved 19 for, 0 against.

12. Any Other Business

Matthew Britnell mentioned that the meeting needed to decide on a proposed location for the next meeting. The Secretary agreed to address this with the current hosts.

Meeting closed at 9.55 pm.

DRAFT