

SUFFOLK COUNTY CHESS ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Suffolk County Chess Association, held at the Ipswich Institute on Tuesday 11 September 2012.

Present: Andrew Paige, Arthur McCormick (Saxmundham); Melvin Steele, John Lambert (Clacton); Dave Wild, Mark Weidman (Aadal); Dave Robertson (Felixstowe); Rob Sanders (Sudbury); Vicky Allen, Mike McNaughton (Stowmarket); Colin Roberts, Bob Jones (Bury St Edmunds); Tim Lunn, Ted Matthewson, Tim Serpell (Ipswich); Adrian Sanderson (Hadleigh); Jim Buis (Manningtree).

1. Apologies: were received: from Ian Wallis, Steve Lovell, Adam Hunt and Alan Watkins.

ACTION

2. Minutes of the AGM held on 1 September 2011: At the 2011 AGM the minutes for the previous AGM held on 31 August 2010 were not approved because of their manner of presentation. The Secretary had agreed to make appropriate revisions and did circulate an amended version by e-mail. Members who had seen this agreed that it still required further amendments.

The Minutes for the 2011 AGM that had been circulated to most members the day before the Committee meeting in May had not been amended following that meeting or produced for general circulation, So it was agreed that TL should summarise the contents for consideration by the meeting.

After a discussion as to whether an accurate record of the two meetings should be produced, CR suggested that the best way to proceed would be to produce a summary covering the items of major importance. MS said this needed to be produced quickly with action points noting who was expected to deal with them.

AS noted that he had asked that the resolution required by Barclays Bank to open the account be included in the 2011 minutes and had e-mailed a copy to the Secretary but it had not been included. It was agreed that approval had been given by members at the meeting and the copy should be submitted to the Bank.

Proposed DW; Seconded RS that the Minutes as summarised by TL be approved. Agreed unanimously.

TL

3. Matters Arising:

Election of Officers - Dave Wild's position is 'Grading Officer'.

Bob Jones was u160 team captain.

In response to an enquiry concerning the agreed purchase of equipment, AS confirmed that 20 new sets and boards, as well as five digital clocks had been purchased for use by the First Team at a cost of £490. The location and responsibility for keeping all equipment had still to be ascertained; in the meantime TL undertook to look after the new equipment.

A long and detailed review of proposed Rule changes was included in the minutes. A Rule Committee had not yet been set up. The Competition Secretary has reviewed several of the rules in the light of his experience in running the Suffolk League. MM noted that although some of the rules were not completely clear, everyone had dealt with them in a fair way and no one had tried to take any unfair advantage. MM has prepared and circulated a paper of amendments for consideration. The relevance and description of the August and January grading lists to the Rules was discussed in respect of team nominations and playing order. BJ said that once we have a final set of Rules we need to ensure that these are readily available online.

TL

Following discussion it was agreed that the new Secretary, when appointed, should find out how SCCA can contribute and vote at ECF meetings and then report back to the President. TL noted that we had not been represented at these meetings for some time. CR recalled that he used to attend meetings and felt it wholly wrong to give away our vote on important matters by not attending. VA proposed that the next Committee should get more involved, to which there was general agreement. The EACU need to know who our Secretary is and to ensure that all communications reach him. We must try to attend EACU AGMs. Some matters arising have not been dealt with promptly due to long delays before the issuing of Minutes.

BJ

4. Officers' Reports:

4.1. President. TL noted that he had not been very active this year and apologised that he had been unable to attend the Committee meeting in May. He had however organised the Suffolk Closed Championships in three sections, with more participants than in 2011. The winners were:

Open - Shaun Munson (Suffolk Champion 4/5; Grading Performance 220)

Challengers - Leif Dixon (4.5/5; GP 193)

Intermediate - Melvin Steele (4/4; GP 151)

4.2. Secretary. No report was presented.

4.3 Treasurer. AS presented written accounts for the year. He briefly outlined the accounts and referred to various paragraphs in his report.

VA asked what our insurance policy with ECF covers. AS explained that the £1m public liability relates to any activity undertaken by the SCCA (eg closed championships or congresses) and the equipment cover is in respect of the listed trophies which were either valued in a 1993 or purchased subsequently, as well as County sets, boards and clocks. It was agreed that ECF should be asked to provide information to confirm if this understanding is correct and AS should provide full information to the next AGM to enable a decision as to whether the cover is necessary. Unless information is provided which informs that the cover is obviously not needed the payment due on 1 October should be made.

AS

AS

The budget was reviewed and the three alternatives discussed. It was proposed by BJ, seconded CR that column 3 (budgeting for an extra county team) should apply, charging £20 for league teams, £7 for Suffolk League Cup entry and £2.50 for knock-out cups. *The motion was carried unanimously.*

VA thanked AS for all his work on SCCA finances which was endorsed by those present.

4.4. Competition Secretary – MM had circulated two reports, one at the end of December and an end-of-season document recording the season's results both for clubs and individual players of the year. He noted that he had come to the previous AGM to receive a trophy and had come away with a new job. He pointed out that he was based in Norfolk but with experience from the north of England (they do things differently up there); he had found that everyone had been most helpful while he was finding his feet. MM said that DW's website is an amazing resource, and a great help to him. He was pleased that there had been no trace of dubious practices by members when dealing with rules which needed clarification. All those competing had showed excellent sporting spirit. He was pleased to note that all competitions had been completed on

time, whilst noting that Manningtree had withdrawn from the SL Cup in order to obviate delay. JB noted it was not completely clear as to how aggregate grades were worked out, but it seemed that Manningtree's were probably higher overall so it was not really a withdrawal.

MM listed the winners, promotions and relegations as recorded in his report. No one had queried the re-drafted Player of the Year rules and these had been used in determining winners.

There were two main issues which have to be clarified, the ECF membership arrangements and the publication of the January grading list. Proposals for amending rules in order to comply with these had been circulated.

MM has also circulated a draft Directory of Clubs. He will complete this as soon as possible. Most clubs have responded to e-mails.

MM

Entries for the Suffolk League Cup, u125 and u145 Cups would be finalised by the end of the current week.

MM

The Fixture List had been completed but two clubs have yet to submit their lists of nominated and registered players.

After discussion it was agreed that the Committee should try to provide a website which would include the Suffolk League Constitution and Rules, Minutes of meetings, links to Clubs and other current matters of importance.

BJ

4.5 Grading Officer. DW provided a written report recording that all results to date had been submitted for grading. He was confident everything should continue be in order for the coming season.

4.6 Suffolk Chess Journal. BJ apologised that no issues had been produced last season. He said that he wanted to put together up-to-date information on clubs and hoped to publish the next edition before the Bury Congress, which was in five weeks' time.

4.7. County First Team. TL reported that the team had come second and should have participated in the later stages. Unfortunately Ian Wallis had had to cancel due to lack of support. Ian would like to resign from the captain's role but would be prepared to carry on for EACU fixtures only.

4.8. County u160 Team. BJ had produced a written report thanking those who participated in mostly close-fought matches and looking forward to extra matches with Hertfordshire in the coming season.

4.9. Women's Chess. DW had tried to encourage women to participate in a Ladies' Championship, to no avail.

4.10 Correspondence Chess. JB reported that the competition did not take place last year. Suffolk is entered in the second tier section this year. He expects to hear next month whether it will go ahead. He noted that it is no longer a postal competition as it is now being organised through a computer server,

JB

4.11 Suffolk Junior Chess. No report had been received and no junior representative was present.

5. Presentation of Trophies . Only four trophies were available for presentation:

Bob Jones accepted the Division 3 trophy on behalf of Bury C

Vicky Allen received the u125 trophy for Stowmarket

Player of the Year awards were collected by Melvin Steele for Division 2 and Bob Jones for Division 3.

Martin Fogg was not present to collect the Division 1 award, which was collected on his behalf by the Ipswich club.

It is hoped that the relevant trophies can be found for Ipswich B (Div 1 winners), Manningtree (Div 2 winners), Ipswich A (Suffolk League Cup) and Ipswich (u145).

TL

6. Election of Officers. The following officers were (proposed/seconded) and elected unanimously:-

President: (BJ/MM)	Colin Roberts
Vice President:	(No proposal – vacant position)
County Secretary: (DW/DR)	Bob Jones
Competition Secretary: (VA/AS)	Michael McNaughton
County Results Officer: (VA/TM)	Dave Wild
Suffolk Junior Chess Representative	(to ask Adam Hunt)
Suffolk Women’s Organiser: (AS/CR)	Vicky Allen
Correspondence Captain: (CR/JL)	Jim Buis
County Captain - First team: (CR/RS)	Ian Wallis
County Captain - u160: (JL/CR)	Bob Jones

BJ

For other possible teams (u140/u120/u100) clubs need to ask around to find out if there is any interest and report back to the President.

All

At this point the newly elected officers replaced previous officers. Those present thanked TL for his services to the Association.

7. SCCA Competition Rules. It was agreed to take the proposals shown as AOB on the meeting agenda in reverse order. There were four proposed amendments to the Competition Rules (Rules 11/13/20/22).

MM explained in detail the reasons necessary for the changes.

Rule 11c. The amendment was needed to clarify the definition of eligibility and to stress the need for providing information about changes to the Competition Secretary before a match is due to take place. *This was approved with one person voting against. Rule 11c is thus amended; a new Rule 11d is added and the former Rule 11d is now 11e.*

Rule 13b deals with board order and eligibility for playing in grade-restricted competitions. *This amendment was approved unanimously.*

Rule 20. Last season Woodbridge School did not nominate any players. MM proposed that if this re-occurs the participants in the first match of the season should automatically become the nominated boards. *This was approved unanimously.*

Rule 22 deals with avoiding nomination for two teams at the same club. *This was approved unanimously.*

MM also proposed a minor amendment to Rule 47 which *was also approved unanimously.*

A further list of seven rules were discussed. These were mainly non-contentious clarifications. The meeting was asked to choose a method for deciding a tie for Player of the Year; it was agreed that the award should be shared. *These additional rules were then approved unanimously.*

MM said he would circulate amended Rules which would be used for the coming season.

MM

A vote of thanks was given to MM for all the work he has done over the last year. He then left the meeting as he had to catch a train back to Norwich.

8. Date of Annual General Meeting. The possibility of holding a Jamboree at the beginning of each season was noted but no decision was made.

VA expressed an opinion that it would be better if the AGM was held at the end of a season, rather than at the beginning of the next one. Matters occurring in the previous year are in recent memory and there is plenty of time to consider necessary changes for the forthcoming season. It was pointed out that the Constitution would need to be changed if this was to happen. As required by the Constitution, ten members then signed a request to hold an EGM to consider the proposal. It was agreed that the EGM would take place during the Bury Congress provided that a quorum of members (12 including six of the signatories to the request) were present. *It was agreed that this would be held at 2 pm on Sunday 14 October.*

All

9. Suffolk League Cup Competition: JB proposed that the Cup should revert to standard play format. Most players do not have rapid-play grades, therefore problems can arise in board order. RS summarized the history of this Cup. It had been introduced as something different: more social evenings, but unfortunately over the last year fewer clubs had participated. Perhaps this was because specific weeks had not been allocated for matches to be played. MW suggested more games on a blitz basis might be more popular. After discussion a vote was taken on JB's proposal. *A majority of 7 to 2 (with 5 abstentions) were in favour of continuing with the existing arrangements.*

10. English Chess Federation Funding Changes: The ECF proposals, which were now in operation, had been circulated. It was necessary to decide whether to make ECF membership mandatory or to make arrangements for accommodating the ECF charge of £2 per half game played in SCCA competitions.

DW proposed that we allow any non-member a limit of three games unless he joins the ECF. He had produced some statistics showing that most clubs would be likely to have to make fairly small payments (or none if all are members).

BJ stressed the importance of the financial implications to clubs if they allow non-members to play.

TM said clubs need to know urgently as club subscriptions had already been collected from members who were unaware of the need to join the ECF.

AS agreed to record financial implications on the bills he would soon be sending to clubs covering team charges for the next season.

AS

JL noted that all games covered by SCCA competitions are to be graded. We cannot have a competition where some of the games only are not graded.

BJ put forward a counter-proposal that everyone should arrange to be members of ECF; if not they should pay £2.00 for each game played. Each club would be responsible to the League for fees of its members after submission of games for grading.

DW said there could be a lot to pay as any payment to the ECF made based on the games he would be submitting for the January list would be doubled on the basis that the second half of the season would be the same as the first.

A vote was taken. Nine were in favour of BJ's counter-proposal, with three in favour of DW's original proposal.

11. Any Other Business

11.1 TL reported that Alan Merry deserves our congratulations on achieving a grading of 225 at the age of fifteen. This was endorsed by all present.

11.2 RS pointed out that the final round of matches should ideally be played on the same date. In Division 1, the final matches were scheduled for 9, 10 and 16 April. This could possibly give some advantage to the teams playing on the final date.

11.3 It was agreed that trends over the past five/six years should be analysed to see if any competitions need to be changed. RS suggested that a Divisional Cup might be appropriate.

RS

The meeting closed at 10:45 pm.