

SHROPSHIRE CHESS ASSOCIATION AGM held Tuesday July 8th, 2014 at Telepost.

Attendance, Gary White, Richard Sz wajkun, Fred Harris, Vincent Crean, Peter Crean, Graham Ives, Steve Sz wajkun, Alf Evans, Francis Best, Matthew Best, Glyn Pugh, Nick Rutter, Christopher Lewis, Nathanael Paul, Toby Neal, Ivor Salter, Stefan Tennant, Keith Tabner, John Casewell,

1. Apologies for absence.

Received from Richard Thompson, Joe Watson, and Steve Rooney.

2. **Minutes of 2013 AGM.** Approved and adopted.

3. **President's Report.** Francis Best thanked all those that were attending on this night of one of the semi final World Cup matches and wished for a quick finish.

Shropshire had a few events such as the Mickey Adams simultaneous and the congress. While the simultaneous made a small loss it was a good showcase event which helped to publicise and promote Shropshire Chess. The cost to play was less than similar events held in other parts of the country. The event was reported in Chess magazine and spare copies were available. Not all events like this translate into new members. The congress was the other main event which again made a large profit since change of venue. More comments on that event would follow later.

4 Officers Reports

General Secretary: Glyn Pugh wished to remind ECF membership is annual item running 1st Sept to 31st Aug. While it was not worth everyone who only played a few games registering for those playing more it was important. There were still 6 weeks for registration.

New FIDE rules for mobile phones come into operation 1st July.

FB commented that other rules such as writing down move before moving and notation of moves should be noted.

A discussion took place on these and Shropshire would have adaptations of these rules.

Descriptive notation should be allowed vote 19 for none against.

Writing moves down before moving. G.W objected to this, and I.S agreed as this can tip off mates of making a blunder. Writing down of moves was to be allowed without penalty 9 for 7 against.

Mobile phones – S.R email suggested Berkshire rules. G.P commented about MCCU discussion. F.H medical conditions. It was agreed that - mobile phones should be turned off with the exception of stated medical conditions before the start of a game otherwise the penalty is the loss of the game. 13 for 4 against.

(Rules Extract:

Exceptions to the FIDE/ECF Rules

(a) Mobile Phones

The use of a mobile phone during the match is not allowed. However, where a player has given advance notice of the need to keep a mobile phone switched on for medical or emergency reasons only, this will be permitted. In all other cases, phones in the playing area must be on silent mode. Any sound from a mobile phone or other electronic means of communication shall result in the loss of the game.

(b) Recording Moves

The recording of a move on a scoresheet or in a scorebook, before the move is played, will not result in a loss. A scorebook must not be used as a database of moves during the game.

(c) Notation

The use of recognised notation systems other than algebraic will not result in a loss.)

League Controller: Vincent Crean Thanked all for a smooth season and had few issues. The database worked without problems and all divisions had been closely fought. It was good to see two live crunch matches broadcast over the internet on the Shropshire website, using the new DGT electronic boards. First division won by Telepost A with Newport A runners up. The trophy presented to K. Tabner. While Condover & Church Stretton and Priorslee Lions B were relegated.

Second division won by Ludlow A, from Oswestry A on goal difference. No one from Ludlow was present to accept the trophy (the Bests have it for safekeeping after the AGM, until it can be handed over). Only two points separated 3rd to 7th places. Newport B and Telepost C were relegated.

Third Division was won by Telford C, runners up Shrewsbury C, and the trophy presented to Steve Sz wajkun.

The few issues that arose were 1 the use of 'reserves' in division 2 half way through the season, see later debate and 2. The stopping of a clock towards the end of a game under when under two minutes (the so-called "Rule 10.2 Adjudication"). Francis had adjudicated on the game in question and produced some detailed analysis. Vince Crean would put this analysis on the website so that there could be wider understanding of the approach and reasoning.

Vince wants to start the 2014/15 season early again so as to enable fixtures to be every other week, teams to be entered by 22nd August, dependent on league size/ divisions.

Treasurers Report – Alf Evans presented his report, audited by Richard Thompson

The bedrock of the accounts is the congress from a financial point, and accounts passed to the treasurer needed no tidying up. Depreciation kicks in with for the new clocks and equipment.ECF had switched over of game fees and registration.

The club income to the association did not cover the expenditure but while the accounts were in a healthy position it was hard to argue against not raising fees.

ECF fees for none registered individuals had been sent back to the clubs and had been paid.

FB asked whether there would be any objections in purchasing more digital boards and clocks. Currently, two had been purchased from the junior chess funds, two had been purchased by the Association and one belonged to FB personally. The meeting felt, as it was the congress that had made the profit, some of this should be reinvested back.

League fees would remain at the same as present - £10 per team, to be reviewed next AGM.

Grading officer: Nick Rutter said all the games for grading had been sent off and grades should be out 25th July. The results were all computerised and the ECF had confirmed receipt 24 hours later. Events sent off could be seen on ECF website included congress, league, and club championships and rapid play games, only Toby's event not being recorded. ECF needed congresses to be reported quickly within ten days.

County individual: Nick Rutter said there had been 18 entrants. There had been a three way tie for first place, which on count back resulted in Nick Rutter winning, Colin Roberts second and Toby Neal third. Nigel Ferrington had looked like winning but had lost the last round and Nick had saved the game against Nigel. Under 160 grading prize went to Glyn Pugh, and under 140 prize to Daniel Lockett, and under 120 prize to George Vizokai. The trophy was presented to Nick Rutter.

Cox: Keith Tabner said it was nice to see the winners being spread around the county. There had been one defaulted match. The event was won by Priorslee Lions with Newport A runners up and the trophy was presented to Glyn Pugh.

Minor : Organised by John Smith for second and third divisions. Keith Tabner reported that Newport B again had been the bridesmaid and were runners up with Shrewsbury B winning the event. The trophy was presented to Matt Best.

Rapid Play: Matt Best report Div 1 had been tight but Newport A had won it after a series of wins from runners up Telepost A. Telford A being relegated. Trophy to Chris Lewis

Div 2 had proved a comfortable win for Priorslee Lions A. Trophy presented to Gary White.

Matt was off to university next year and would not be able to run it.

Brewood had expressed an interest in playing next year, and were actually closer than Ludlow to the middle of Shropshire. No objections were raised to them entering.

Quickplay : Toby Neal gave a brief report of the event being held at the Wrekin Housing Trust with six teams played as a league before the top four entering a knockout. The time limit had been changed to 25 minutes after the one team had dropped out shortly before the event started. Telepost were prevented from a hat trick of wins and finished fourth, Telford being third. The final contested by winners Newport over Shrewsbury. The cup was presented and pictures could be seen on the website.

Toby felt 25 minutes was too long and it would be better being 15 minutes, one game each as white and black against the opposition. This would also avoid the need for 'tossing'. The only problem with this would be the number of teams entered and the time available for the event so views would be welcome.

Publicity officer: Toby Neal said the Express Star editor continued to be master but the reports were still being published. Stories and comments were welcome and Toby publishes information from wherever he can glean it but if he is not told about events or stories, then he can't report, so please keep feeding information.

Website editor: Keith Tabner, said same as Toby – like pictures and stories. He needs to be kept constantly fed with information. He thanked Vinny and Graham for behind the screens help. Keith felt the crunch live matches over the internet had been a welcome addition, increasing interest.

Congress organiser: Francis Best reported Steve Rooney bears the brunt of the advance organising and the event had successfully made a profit. The numbers had increased. The feedback had been mainly positive the only minor concern was the crowding in the main playing area. An extra section may be put in next year; this will no doubt lead to a decrease in profits. While the congress grows it may be a struggle to fit everyone in so room arrangements would be looked into. The dates of the congress would be decided shortly.

County junior organiser – FB. Need more help and he felt that it had been a 'damp squib' this year and it had been difficult to find time as S.R & FB had other commitments. Little had happened, but juniors were still the best source of new players. Any help even once every couple of months would be appreciated. The question was asked whether DBS (formerly CRB) checks would be required. FB responded that they would but these are often paid for by schools, or the Association, if necessary and this shouldn't put people off volunteering.

County first team captain: - no team

County under 140 team: Roger Brown said Shropshire U140 team had in the 2012/13 year finished in third place out of 7 in the MCCU and qualified into the national stages where they beat Kent 9-7 in the final. Unfortunately again they finished third this 2013/14 year but it was only out of three!

MCCU delegates: Mobile phones had been discussed. Juniors need to be encouraged.

ECF delegate: Nick reported that the president had resigned and a statement had been issued. The board had seemed to be in conflict with the president.

4NCL team - Nathanael Paul reported that the team had started poorly but improved and finished with 12pts and believed this was a good effort in the first season. D Gostelow doing well 5.5/8 on the top boards, being out graded most of the time. The team would like to get more players, as it is known that a few of the existing players are leaving. With the aim being promotion, stronger players are welcome. Not so bad as organising county team as only need 6 not 16.

5 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Chris Lewis to replace Matt Best, who is off to university, for the rapid play. 4NCL also included as officer. No other volunteers. Election was en bloc. Vote All for – none against.

6. New club – Whitchurch and Malpas club are interested in joining the Shropshire league and had offered getting a venue in Whitchurch. The strength of the players stated allows for following of precedence set when Newport started. This could mean that Whitchurch and Malpas would probably start in division 2.Vinny believes that fixtures could be arranged for this to happen. Distance no problem except for Ludlow/ Malpas match which could be played at a neutral venue.

Francis Best would contact, welcoming Whitchurch and Malpas club to the Shropshire League, subject to venue being around Whitchurch area and the league controller will decide which division, dependant on the strength of the players.

7 Substitutions and playing for two teams.

The discussion paper prepared by Francis Best was debated. There being no criticism implied by the paper but a review of the rules was possibly needed. Issues – playing for more than one club, inappropriate substitutions, and insufficient players. Nominations – key members should actually play for that team. Rules had been made altered in a piecemeal fashion over the years and as a result had become complicated with unintended consequences. Wanted to find out what the mood of the meeting was.

Peter Crean's proposal, being closely connected with the subject, was discussed at the same time.

Comments include

G.W how many 7 day notifications of joining clubs were not legal. Vinny - all followed rules

P.C wanted to know why T.N played – T.N because he was asked.

R.S – felt no nominated division 1 players should play in division 2. Shouldn't be a nominated player without playing in previous year, as some teams had nominated players who never had played.

FB felt this was difficult as players circumstances change but should be the general principle.

G.I – a team was more than 'one player' the table was the same mid season as at the end with little change. Should we even have 'divisions'? As this was the cause of many problems. Why not have a 'Ladder'

FB said although little change the gap between the top few had increased.

S.T when a team suddenly loses an individual overnight, there is a sudden need for players to fill in or it could curtail that team. He "scraped the barrel high!"

G.W normally substitutions are of lower strength from within club. Priorslee had to juggle players and used 11 different players in 'A' team before tying players. The same rules should be applied between divisions as between clubs.

M.B Richard Bryant now Oswestry have been promoted must decide which club he declares main club. This may materially affect the promoted club, as the average strength of the side in the higher division is significantly less than the side that got promoted.

F.H control – need a good set of rules that are vigorously enforced otherwise it will lead to a mess. Rules are present are too flexible.

C.L not happy with the consequences of several of teams gaining extra strength on top boards. The result of which means Newport B were relegated and will have two teams plus Newport juniors in division three.

K.T wants to change from allowing players to play twice to four times within a club before being tied.

A straw poll was carried out to see if want to radically change the rules rather than minor tweaks. 9 for 2 against.

N.P felt having two strong 'imported players for Wellington B did distort division – similar to when a strong player returns and is 'ungraded' and enters a congress at a lower level.

G.W While not wanting defaults players should substitute up not down.

G.I If no divisions – no problem.

R.S Want to get promotion to get to play stronger players.

R.B Peter creans proposal is on the agenda- lets use.

K.T get committee for 2015/16 season but decide this year on P.C proposal.

Confusion let to aborted vote before principle of allowing a choice of one vote for one of the options.

If a team in the second or third division plays a player who normally plays for another Shropshire club in a higher division during that season, then it is permitted only on condition that the player has a current summer grade of:

Option 1: below 150 for Div 2 and below 140 for Div 3.

Option 2: below 140 for Div 2 and below 125 for Div 3. This option would be more in line with the typical rating of a board 1 player in Div 2.

Option 3: below 135 for Div 2 - this option would be more consistent with rule 9c - 'playing up' and the same grade cut-off could similarly be applied to "playing down". A limit of say below 120 could then be applied for playing down in Div 3.

The following provision should be allowed:

A player who genuinely leaves one club, and subsequently ceases playing for that club during a season, can, at the League Controller's discretion, play in a lower division for the rest of the season in his/her new club, subject to all sections of rule 9.

Vote – option 1 8for, option 2 1 for, option 3 5 for.

Rule 9 d to be amended

Where a player is used more than four for a higher team, then (unless sub-paragraphs a, b or c apply) he / she **becomes a member of the senior team on the fifth occasion for the remainder of the season. Where a reserve wins by default the result will count as an appearance for the senior team,** Vote 15 for none against

It was recognised that this was a short term amendment in respect of some of the difficulties with the present rules. To address all of the issues, a much deeper review would need to take place but there was not time to bring this about for the forthcoming season. It was agreed that a working group should be set up with Francis Best contacting all the club secretaries and inviting them to discuss rules in a series of meetings over the next twelve months, with a view to any changes being agreed at the 2015 AGM, with implementation for 2015/16 season.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Chess boards are available in Telford town park.

First round of Newport rapid play on Tues 15th Aug.

Noted the passing of J Tunks

The meeting ended at 10:10