

SHROPSHIRE CHESS ASSOCIATION AGM held Wednesday July 20th, 2016 at Wrekin Housing Trust.

Attendance. Francis Best, Matthew Best, Glyn Pugh, Roger Brown, Gary White, Alf Evans, Nicholas Holmes, Richard Szwajkun, Vincent Crean, John Casewell, Malcolm Price, Willie Gormley, Richard Thompson, Nick Rutter, Nathanael Paul, Chris Paul , Christopher Lewis, Simon Mayhew, Toby Neal, Steve Szwajkun, Daniel Griffiths, Joe Watson.

1. Apologies for absence.

Received from Matthew Clarke, Steve Rooney, Keith Tabner and Graham Ives

2. Minutes of 2015 AGM. Approved and adopted with matters arising. Brewood would not be joining the Standard chess league.

3. President’s Report. Francis Best welcomed everybody. He said no meeting had taken place to discuss the rules during the year and nobody had come forward with proposals. There were no contentious issues and should anyone wish to take a discussion forward they would be welcomed.

He thanked all those who helped to organise and run events. Francis’s only regret was an unfulfilled desire to get new members for all clubs.

Officers Reports

General Secretary: Nothing to report as items were on the agenda.

League Controller: Vincent Crean thanked all the teams for completing all of the games as per the timetable and felt it helped that there were no date changes. There were only two defaults in division 3.

Three teams had battled for First division and the top two were tied on points, but it was won by Newport A who scored two more game points than runners up Telepost A. At the other end of the division Shrewsbury and Telford had a fight to stave off relegation, and it was won by Shrewsbury with the same number of points but scoring three games more. Telford were relegated along with Wellington. The trophy was presented to N Paul.

The second division was another tight fight between three teams and was only resolved when Shrewsbury B lost the last match of the season which left them third instead of first. This left Ludlow A as champions and Newport B runners up. Church Stretton B and Priorslee Lions B were relegated. No one was presented with the trophy as Church Stretton had not returned it.

In the third division Telepost C managed to edge out Newport Juniors in a race to be champions. The trophy was not presented as it had not been returned by Newport.

Vince again thanked everyone for the support he had received over the six years he had been league controller and was standing down in accordance with the notice he gave last year.

Treasurer’s Report – Alf Evans presented his report, which Richard Thompson had audited with minor amendments.

The congress had again been the main item in the accounts.

Points to note are –

- the large amount of depreciation charged against the value of assets to write them off quickly,
- a surplus on the congress after a £1000 anonymous donation.

There was a small loss incurred on the 4NCL teams. The income from Sunday Chess in the cafe venture covered their expenses.

The ECF had sent Alf a list of all the players who hadn’t been ECF registered and he had contacted the clubs concerned. ECF fees are due from 1st September.

It was recommended that league fees of £10 per team should remain the same for 2016/17. This was voted on and unanimously agreed.

Auditor – Richard Thompson said it was now more onerous being the treasurer than it was in his day, with ECF and the congress getting larger.

Grading officer: Nick Rutter said all the games for grading had been sent off and grades should be out 25th July. Richard Hadrell (ECF grader) sends feedback immediately but he is ill at present and likely to step down.

County individual: Nick Rutter said the entries had risen to 17 this year. N Ferrington had won 6/7, J Hopkins second 5/7, with S Ross getting the U160 grading prize, A Ansari the U140, and D Lovegrove U120. There was a problem with the trophy as names could not be put on the cup or the tiers. There was a brief discussion on the how to resolve this with possibly a new tier being added at the bottom. The competition had been running since 1927 and would be 90 years old next year.

Cox & Minor: Keith Tabner sent in a report congratulating all the teams who took part and thanking Francis for arranging the internet broadcast of the finals from Wrekin Housing Trust. Keith was disappointed that there were several defaults – indeed one club defaulted each of its three teams in turn. However the finals night was memorable – the Cox final had many twists and turns with the result being in doubt until the last few seconds.

Commiserations to Newport who were runners up in both competitions and congratulations to the winners Telepost A in the Cox Trophy (not presented, still at Newport) and Ludlow A, winners of the Minor KO presented to Joe Watson.

Rapid Play: Chris Lewis reported in Div 1 that it appeared Newport A and Telepost A had dominated the final positions but were helped by the fact a few teams had defaulted the last set of games on the Bank Holiday Monday and it also being the same day as the last 4NCL match. Telepost A narrowly won the title. The trophy was not presented (still at Newport).

In Division 2 Church Stretton had won a three way battle with Telford A and Shrewsbury A. The trophy was not presented (again at Newport). Richard Thompson made a joke that perhaps we should hold events at Newport and that way get the trophies back.

Quickplay: Toby Neal gave a brief report of the event being held at the Wrekin Housing Trust with six teams played on a home/away basis. The final saw Newport beat Telepost on a tie break with Shrewsbury coming third.

Publicity officer: Toby Neal said he managed to get radio coverage to publicize the congress. As regards the Shropshire Star he is limited to just producing short reports and cannot get games in the paper due to the editorial restrictions. Vince passes on any comments made from the match card to Toby but there are very few made, anything is welcome.

Website editor: Vince Crean on behalf of Keith said he had nothing to report. The website itself was going to move as the current hosting server are increasing the price from £70 to £186 per year. This change was likely to happen at the end of July.

Congress organiser: Francis reported that Steve Ronney does a lot of the work accepting entries, ECF registrations etc. This year a donation of £1000 enabled the congress to get Grandmasters to the event. Incremental time controls had been introduced and this was useful as it enabled the stronger players to demonstrate how their technical endings should be played. There had been more space between tables and the congress had broadcast ten games per round over the internet. There is the opportunity for the internet boards to be used for other community events.

It is thought that the venue for Jan 2017 congress is available but there was a potential problem for future events in that one wing of the Housing Trust venue may not be free and another venue may be needed.

Francis and Steve hoped everyone enjoyed the event and asked for a few more people to help eg: transport of GMs if possible, setting up of venue. The congress expenses were up, mainly due to GM expenses of hotels / travel, two controllers being employed and new equipment of clocks and boards. With these changes the congress had become a stars included rather than barred tournament and most people enjoyed seeing GMs in action and possibly playing them.

From previous feedback internet coverage of the top boards in major and minor had been changed and given to the open event as people preferred to see titled players on the demonstration boards. While some requests had been made to change the date this would mean clashing with other events. Changing round one to Friday instead of having three games Saturday showed divided opinion 50/50 and did not adversely affect the numbers attending the congress and, while discouraging some competitors, it encouraged others. The only thing this did affect was when and not the number of byes people would take.

OPEN 1st= (4/5) Keith Arkeil GM, Stephen Gordon GM, Danny Gormally GM, Mark Hebden GM and Jahongir Vakhidov GM

Grading prize - Under 2000 FIDE(3/4) Golam Ali and Richard Bryant, Top Shropshire player in the Open - joint trophy winners(3/4) Richard Bryant and Nigel Ferrington

MAJOR 1st= (4/5) Michal Bukojemski, Robert Clegg, Ed Goodwin and Ben Graff, Grading prize U140 ECF

(3.5/5) Athar Mehmood £100

MINOR 1st= (4.5/5) Roger Brown and Chris Fraser, 3rd= (4/5) David Curran, Chris Paul, Tim Skidmore and Stefan Tenant

Grading prize U100 ECF(3/5) Nick Holmes

County junior organiser – Simon Maydew reported several players had represented the Midland Monarch 2 in the junior 4NCL, they had finished second in Div2 on the first Weekend but, due to the change in venue which made it difficult, the team didn’t continue for the other weekends. D Holmes had played in the U11 ECF championship and participated in the U12 junior squad tournament. Zach Maydew had won the U11 boys Mercian megafinal and qualified for the Tetra final. Simon said relationships with primary schools were important but schools do not get involved with the league apart from a few players who joined clubs. Simon also reported that modest fees were needed to cover expenses of trainers.

MCCU delegates: Roger Brown reported that there was a change in the junior representative. The MCCU would be running a MCCU tournament in August and he left some entry forms.

ECF delegate: Nick had nothing to report

4NCL team - Nathanael Paul reported that with the change of venue to Telford he had managed to field three teams with players from lots of clubs. The first team had narrowly missed promotion from Div3, one of the best performances being by B White beating IM L Cooper. The second team had finished ninth and third team fourteenth in Div 4. This had been an experience for the third team players who were hugely outgraded being in the 100-130 range, playing 160-170 graded players.

Next year only one Div 3 & 4 weekend will be in Telford, all the other four weekends will be at Wokefield Park. If the team is struggling for players Nathanael asked for the team to be opened up to players outside Shropshire. The meeting felt it should be at the discretion of the team organisers but Shropshire players should be given priority.

4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Elected enbloc with Nathanael Paul taking over the League controller, Proposed by R Thompson, Seconded by J Casewell

5. Review of last year’s rule changes

Summer grading would be used for eligibility purposes but the order within a team could change with the winter grades. A problem had arisen with regard to ungraded players and their eligibility for different teams. A player had been estimated to be 135 and he had performed well in the first part of the season to a 160 standard and in the second part of season 124 standard. Being ungraded he was not tied. A discussion about ungraded players for clarification was sought.

Comments brought up – Being ungraded means lowest eligibility and so can play in different divisions.

If a player plays six times in the first team then that player must surely be good enough, so why can he still be eligible to play for a lower team.

Previous rule changes were made with regard to ungraded players to help teams continue and not fold.

Once graded a player should use that grade.

The problem with January grading is that it comes out mid/late January so one opponent could face a player twice but all the other teams might only have to face him once.

This caused controversy and one player has now given up as a result of it (not the player that was at the centre).

A ruling was requested on the interpretation. The team concerned explained that they would have used more flexibility on player selection if they had known it was going to cause a problem.

The rule does fulfil trying to get people to play and players have to live with being under-graded, such as juniors grades which can be change dramatically as they improve.

A proposal by Richard Thompson was seconded by M Francis to add the words “Ungraded players -if they have past history, the last know grade is to be used provisionally. If not, the player has the maximum flexibility subject to league controllers approval and a provisional grading will not be given if the last historic grade is older than five years.” to rule 12.

Roger Brown asked for proposal to be amended removing league controller’s approval but received no seconder.

Richard’s proposal was voted on 15 for, 1 against and 4 abstentions

Other rules reviewed –

Rule 14 - no changes as it was felt all clubs were in a similar situation and clubs could plan and possibly bring games forward.

Rule 15 - no changes

6. Junior school Chess discussed earlier in with junior report.

7. Junior team definition

Simon Maydew wished to clarify the definition of a “junior team” as Newport Juniors had been promoted to Div 2 and a team now consists of five players rather than four. Proposed - At least 3 juniors play in the team. The junior team can continue to play all matches at home (unless playing another junior side). In division two this may mean two adults playing (on most occasions Newport Juniors team will be 4 juniors and 1 adult. However if illnesses prevail the team will be 3 juniors plus 2 with a Newport C player stepping in. No one had any objections but officially this is not in the rules and is only adopted by league controller planning of the fixtures.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Joe Watson asked if anyone had any sponsors and how did they manage to get them.

Fixtures would be published in the second week of September.

J Casewell suggested that when the National Trust has an open day, would it be possible to try and get a demonstration board organised at Attingham Park, May Day Bank Holiday?

The meeting ended at 11:00pm

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