

Shropshire Chess Association

2021 Annual General Meeting

Monday 26th July 2021 – Telepost Club, Shrewsbury

President: Matthew Clark

Minutes

Present – Matthew Clark, Nick Holmes, Mark Smith, Ivor Slater, Francis Best, Ian Jamieson, Tony Preece, Richard Thompson, Steve Wilson, Paul Billington, Fred Bunch, Jonathan Smith, Martin Ayres, (John Casewell, Tony Purser, Toby Neal – virtual attendance)

Agenda

No Apologies

1. Minutes of the 2020 AGM – agreed as true record of that meeting.
2. Election of New General Secretary – Tony Preece nominated and selected unanimously.
3. Proposal 1 – John Casewell – ‘I propose that the Shropshire Chess Association continue to embrace online chess by running an online league alongside the over the board version and consider running a rapid play competition and an individual competition online.’ All present agreed to the proposal on a one year trial basis.
4. Proposal 2 – Mark Smith – ‘Senior teams should be allowed to enter the League with the same privileges as Junior teams.’ – The proposal was rejected with MC casting the deciding vote (4 For, 5 Against, 8 Abstain). Senior teams were defined as those including 75% of over 70’s. It was suggested that more support for the proposal is built up over the next 12 months and to gauge whether the proposal is needed.

Proposal 3 – Chris Lewis – ‘All Blue Badge holders should be permitted to play their games online.’ After further discussion this proposal was amended to the following:

‘Blue Badge holders may request to play any of their matches online. This request must be sent via their captain to the opposing captain 48 hours prior to the match. The match cannot be played online without the agreement of the opposing captain. The opposing captain should endeavour to find a player willing to play online and may select any of their eligible players to play against the blue badge holder. If the opposing captain is unable to find a player willing to play online all games must be played over-the-board. For the purposes of rule 13 the opposing player selected to play online can be played outside of the usual board order.

The Blue Badge holder must either be resident in Shropshire or have a close connection with Shropshire Chess. It is at the discretion of the league controller which non-residents have a close connection with Shropshire Chess.

The time limit of the match shall be the same as rule 11 (1 hour and 25 minutes plus an increment of 10 seconds per move). With this exception the match will be subject to the same rules as the online league.'

Proposal 4 – Nick Holmes' Proposals about Grading and the Minor Knockout.

It was agreed that the league controller would have the discretion to re-register weaker or stronger players and change board nominations, halfway through the season, in January.

With regards to the MKO it was agreed that the earlier rounds could be scheduled within the main season.

5. Presidents Report

Shropshire President's Report. 26/07/21

1) I wanted to pay tribute to the members we have lost in the last year; David Everington from Shrewsbury Chess Club and John Waller from Oswestry Chess Club. I want to pay particular tribute to David, who was one of the first Chess players to welcome me to Shropshire back in 1993.

David was one of the county's finest players and a real gentleman of chess. Please can I draw your attention to the tributes to him on the Shropshire website and Shrewsbury Chess club website

2) I want to congratulate all players and officers for their resilience this season. I want to pay particular thanks to Adrian for his hard work as League Controller, to Chris for all his hard work in many roles and particularly as the Rapid Play League Controller and to Nick Holmes for all his work on the website.

3) There was just one incident during where an anti-cheating probe was needed. In that case, LiChess suspended the relevant account. A committee then applied the maximum penalty permitted under the rules. I remind all players that use of electronic assistance in any online competitive match is unacceptable and that strong measures are in place to deter such a breach of the rules. The rules will be rigorously applied in the event of any further incidents.

7. Other Officers Reports

Treasurer Report

- I have recently changed the mandate on our account to put in place dual signatory authorisation. At the moment Matt is the 2nd signatory and when the general secretary is in position, they will become the 3rd. This just protects both the organisation and myself.
- I've also been in contact with Barclays about getting a card reader for the junior club. This will allow me to take card payments on my phone and so next season people in the league should be able to pay me their individual entries etc. via card instead of cash.

Profit and Loss

- Last year we made a loss of £8.48, compared to a profit of £134.60 the previous year. COVID is largely responsible for this as the congress is our most profitable activity and that got cancelled.
- The activities can be broken down into 5 main revenue streams.
- First the league administration fees including income from team entries and expenses on trophies and the website. Almost all clubs have paid their fees now although it took longer than usual. The accounts say £56 are outstanding but another club have paid now leaving only £10 for one final club outstanding but this is related to an issue with their bank. This year we made £57.60 profit on league activities.
- The congress made a loss of £23.98 although this is just the upkeep costs of the congress site.
- The Shropshire individual made a profit of £35 as in 19/20 an accrual was made for a 3rd grading prize which was never awarded. There are still 4 entries outstanding although these are most likely players unfamiliar with online banking who usually pay in person and I'm sure will pay once over-the-board activities resume.
- The minor individual made a £1 loss. It would have been bigger except 1 player kindly donated their prize last year. No entry fees are outstanding.
- The 4NCL made a loss of £28. This is because the cancellation of the over-the-board season meant that we didn't cover our entry fee as some players hadn't played a match in the season so it wasn't right to chase them for their subs. The online 4NCL seasons all broke even although there is still 1 player yet to pay his subs because of issues with online banking.
- Finally, there is a depreciation charge of £48.10, a significant drop from £406 last year as many assets previously purchased, including digital clocks, are now fully written down. During the year we purchased the Colin Roberts Memorial Trophy paid for from his donation.

Balance Sheet

- The change in asset value is the purchase of Colins Trophy less the depreciation charge
- Debtors outstanding on the 31st May were significantly higher than prior seasons although of the £105 debtors at the end of May, only £53 still remain outstanding for reasons mentioned previously.
- Our bank balances decreased by £178 in the year. This is mainly because of the outstanding fees, the website hosting fees that are invoiced in advance although half the spend relates to next year, and the purchase of Colin's Trophy. We ended the year sitting on the healthy cash balance of £5,315.08.

- Accounts finalised and audited.

Budget

- The only recurring league costs are the website fee and any trophy engravings. All the other activities should be self-funding. There will potentially be new expenditure this year on Junior chess although because the venue is free, I'm hoping that it will fund itself.
- In the past we have agreed to maintain our reserves around the £5,000 mark.
- I therefore recommend keeping the league subs at £10/team this year.

Rapidplay

- It was agreed at the last AGM the competition would take a new format last year, switching from a more traditional play to 5 arena's where it was a 2 hours free-for-all as players attempt to score as many points for their team as possible in the time allowed. A time limit of 3+2 heaped the pressure on.
- There was insufficient interest for an arena for the lower leagues so in the end there was only one open arena.

Division 1

Team	Arena 1	Arena 2	Arena 3	Arena 4	Arena 5	GP	Total Points
Telepost Dark Knights	4	5	5	5	5	543	24
Mad Wolves	5	4	4	4	3	465	19
Newport	3	3	2	3	4	375	15
Wellington Speed Kings	2	2	3	2	2	298	11
Shrewsbury light squares	1	1	1	1	1	159	5

- 5 teams entered division 1, Telepost Dark Knights, Newport, Wellington Speed Kings, Shrewsbury Light Squares and Mad Wolves, a combination of Maddocks and Wolverhampton.
- In the first arena Mad Wolves threw down the gauntlet by controversially fielding a very strong side drawn from their friends across Birmingham including Dimiter Daskalov, Louise Head and Richard Lee. This side took everyone by surprise and they ran away with it on the night.
- In the 2nd arena Telepost responded by recruiting Keith Arkell and Don Mason. When added to an already strong side of Nigel, Nat, Phil and Rich they swept away all before them in the subsequent arenas in the end winning 4/5 arenas and claiming the title. Mad Wolves finished 2nd with Newport some way behind on 3rd.
- Arena individual winners were Dimiter, Keith, Keith, Keith and Dimiter again.

Minor Individual

- This year we started off with 17 entries although 2 subsequently withdrew. Last year we had 14 entries so we had one more entry than the previous year.
- Richard Thompson led the way for most of the season and was half a point clear heading into the final round. The only player who could catch him was Nick Holmes on 5 points.
- In the final round Nick was drawn against his clubmate Dennis and needed a win to keep his hopes alive. Dennis got the better of the middle game, so much so that analysis had him 7 points up for 6 moves. However, one poor pawn capture suddenly allowed Nick's pawns to crash through on the queenside and the match reversed. In a match that featured 8 inaccuracies, 6 mistakes and 7 blunders by Dennis, vs 8 inaccuracies, 2 mistakes and 8 blunders by Nick, Dennis made the final blunder and thus it was Nick who emerged victorious. Not a perfect match by any means but totally brilliant to watch as a spectator.
- With the hard work done all Nick could do was sit back and pray that Phil could overcome Richard in their final match. By the 20th move Phil was dominating the game and Richard was running out of squares to put his pieces. Richard's only hope was that Phil made a mistake. However, he resisted the urge to sack a piece like he normally would and instead tightened the noose for another 30 moves until Richard resigned.
- Therefore, congratulations to Nick for a well-deserved triumph scoring 6/7 ahead of Richard who finished 2nd on 5.5. Grading prizes went to James, Malcolm and Alf.

Name	Grade	Played	Wins	Draws	Losses	Byes	Points
Nick Holmes	1540	7	6	0	1	0	6
Richard Thompson	1503	7	5	1	1	0	5.5
James Holyhead	1473	7	5	0	2	0	5
Phil Love	1630	7	5	0	2	0	5
Dennis Bonner	1555	7	3	2	2	0	4
Dave Lovegrove	1480	7	2	1	2	1.5	4
Malcolm Price	1398	7	4	0	3	0	4
Andrew Pritchard	UG	7	3	1	3	0	3.5
James Birch	1570	7	2	1	3	1	3.5
Ian Jamieson	1398	7	2	1	3	1	3.5
Ivor Salter	1555	7	3	0	4	0	3
Tony Purser	1443	7	1	1	4	1	2.5
Alf Evans	1368	7	1	1	4	1	2.5
John Casewell	1300	7	1	1	4	1	2.5
Martin Ayres	1255	7	1	0	5	1	2
Javier Pico Ruiz (withdrawn)	UG	1	1	0	0	0	1
Stephen Priestley (withdrawn)	1638	1	0	0	1	0	0

Prizewinners

1st: Nick Holmes
 2nd: Richard Thompson
 U1500 Grading Prize: James Holyhead
 U1450 Grading Prize: Malcolm Price
 U1375 Grading Prize: Alf Evans

4NCL

- In the 3rd 4NCL online season we entered 6 teams drawing on 32 players.
- The previous season our first team did really well to stay up in the 1st division despite losing our boards 1 and 2. However this was not a feat they could repeat getting absolutely clobbered during the season losing all 7 games. The average opponent was 2245 and so this might have had something to do with it. Not one person managed to win a single game although 6 players managed to draw
- Shropshire 2 did well to come 3rd in their group in division 2 with a special mention for Dave scoring 5/7 against an average opponent of 2024. Shropshire 2 just missed out on a play-off match on tie-break.
- Shropshire 3 were relegated from division 3, Shropshire 4 finished mid table and Shropshire 5 came 3rd in their division 6 group.
- In division 6 Shropshire 6 finished mid-table.
- Our highest performing player this season was Andrew Pritchard who scored 80% with 4/5.
- Again, I want to thank everyone for being so reliable and not making my job too difficult.
- This was my final season as 4NCL captain. I am stepping down due to the clash with junior chess and I nominate Charles and Matt as joint captains to take over, both of whom I'm sure will do a brilliant job.

Summer Quickplay

- The summer 2020 quickplay was held in January 2021.
- There were 5 teams entered with a close fight at the top between Newport, Telepost A and Mad Wellies.
- Newport had strengthened their team with Lawrence Cooper whilst for Telepost Nigel made one of his few appearances in the season. On paper Mad Wellies were outgunned by the Newport and Telepost sides and so did really to stay in competition.
- Newport and Telepost were both tied at the top of the group stage with 6.5 points each. However, Newport won the group by half a game point. A new rule in the competition this season meant that in the event of a tie in the knockout stage, whoever finished higher in the group would win the match and so winning the group could end up being critical later on.
- It is always worth mentioning a special congratulations to Shane Greenwood in the group stages who beat Nigel not once but twice, a truly tremendous achievement.
- Unsurprisingly both Newport and Telepost sailed through the knockout stages to the finals. In the final draws on boards 1 and 3 and a win a piece for Telepost and Newport meant it all came down to former club mates Gavyn vs Nat for the title. However, Gavyn had steadily outplayed Nat during the match and clinically dispatched him. Therefore, congratulations to Newport on winning the cup, Telepost on coming 2nd and Mad Wellies coming 3rd, having beaten Shrewsbury in the 3rd/4th playoff.

Team	P	W	D	L	Bye	GP	Pts
Newport	7	4	1	1	2	19.5	6.5
Telepost	7	4	1	0	2	19	6.5
Mad Wellies	7	4	0	2	1	20	5
Shrewsbury	7	1	0	5	1	7	2
Telepost	7	0	0	6	1	4.5	1

Knockout Stage:

1st - Newport

2nd - Telepost

3rd - Mad Wellies

4th - Shrewsbury

Junior Chess

- It's still my plan to open up a junior chess club on Saturday mornings between 11am and 1pm. I've taken the opportunity COVID provides to create all the child protection procedures, create the website and Facebook page and create lesson plans modelled on the step-by-step training guide.
- Last month I spoke to Tom who is the owner of the Nerdy Cafe. I was a bit worried about their future when COVID first hit but it seems like they're going to be ok which is brilliant as they are still offering us the venue free of charge.
- After speaking to Tom, I've decided to limit the numbers to 20 kids as his advice was that any more than that is a waste of time.
- Running the club will incur costs including DBS checks, teaching aids and courses and I've recently purchased a demonstration board. I've drawn up a budget and have set the entry fee at £2/week.
- All being well we will start the club on the 4th September and so I'm going to start advertising on the 1st August. Tom has said we can advertise on the Nerdy Cafe Facebook page and so that seems a good place to start along with the Shropshire page and then if any of you know anyone who is really keen on chess, please do point them in our direction. If take-up is slower than hoped there are other routes of advertising planned so we can all start posting about it on our individual Facebook pages and we may pay for a few Facebook ads and try to get some adverts through the school newsletters.
- Currently I am actively recruiting volunteers. I've got 2 people signed up being Matt and Francis and Kate has also agreed to act in a reserve role but I need more. I don't need people to commit every week but having a large pool of people to call on so we always have the minimum adult-

to-child ratio would be really good. Your role would more be watching the kids and keeping them safe or collecting money and dealing with parents rather than having to stand up and teach or anything like that.

- Once the club is up and running, I still plan to hold a couple of junior chess tournaments each year and probably organise a Shropshire mega final. Long term I may enter a junior 4NCL team and consider setting up an intra-school's league which may just be a 1-day tournament. However, I will likely see what happens with COVID over winter before really committing to any of these.

8. Confirmation of new 4NCL Captain and Vice Captain – Charles Higgle to take on Captaincy with Matt as Vice Captain.

9. Trophy Presentation

10. AOB

Current Publicity Officer, Toby Neal, announced that he would be stepping down from his role as Publicity Officer and would be looking for someone to take his place.

Proposal by MC to name the First Division trophy after David Everington.