

SHROPSHIRE CHESS ASSOCIATION

2022 Annual General Meeting

President: Matthew Clark

To all officers and members of the Shropshire Chess Association:

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting will be held at the Maddocks Club, Oakengates, Telford on Thursday 4th August 2022 at 7.30pm.

Please ensure that any trophies held by your club are brought to the AGM for presentation, where required.

AGENDA

Apologies for absence.

Minutes of the 2021 AGM (approval and matters arising – copies can be viewed online)

- 1) Proposal to make Shropshire a charity. CL (See separate proposal document below)
- 2) A possible review of the rule that states which grading list is used for the league.
As the list was never updated on the Shropshire site we are still technically bound by last July's grading list. CL
- 3) We scrap the online leagues. CL. (See separate proposal document below)
- 4) Charles wants to play the over the board fixtures in autumn and spring and the Shropshire League online in the winter. If this happens Oswestry would field 2 teams in the Shropshire league but only one if we play OTB over the winter months due to travel.
- 5) I would like to 2nd the proposal of Chris Lewis to abolish the Shropshire Online League as running the OTB and online at the same time has proved unworkable and unsustainable and led to many fixture issues. DB
- 6) If online chess is played then fees need to be paid as OTB is. GP
- 7) I think 2 Divisions would work well. I also would like to propose a third place play off , third from bottom of Div 1 playing third placed in Div 2 home and away. SW Further more 5 player's per team.
- 8) I would like to propose combining the current OTB 2nd/3rd divisions and create a new 2nd division. The current 1st division of 5 teams would be increased by 2 to accommodate the winner/runners up for the 21/22 season. This will give 7 teams for the new 1st division. Then the remaining 5 teams from division 2 would combine with the current division 3, of 4 teams , to make 9 teams for the new division 2. Leave the rule of promotion the same from div.2 to div.1. DB.
- 9) Teams should be docked a point per match for defaulting rapid matches not a point per night. GP

President's Report. Matthew Clark

Other Officer's reports. Incl trophy presentation

Officer	Incumbent	To include:
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a	Treasurer and Junior Organiser	Chris Lewis	
b	Auditor	Richard Thompson	
c	League Controller	Adrian Zdanowski	
d	Shropshire Rapid Play League	Chris Lewis	
e	County Individual	Nick Rutter	
f	Minor County Individual	Chris Lewis	
g	Cox & Minor Trophies	Adrian Zdanowski	
h	Summer Quick play	Toby Neal	
i	Publicity Officer	Peter Kitchen	
j	Grading Officer	Nick Rutter	
k	Website Editor	Nick Holmes	
l	4 NCL Team	Chris Lewis	
m	ECF Delegate	Nick Rutter	

2. Confirmation of new 4NCL Captain and Vice-Captain.
3. Trophy Presentation
4. Shropshire Congress Organisers.
5. AOB.

Proposal 2 - Shropshire Chess Association - Charity Registration?

-Proposal:

- To apply to the charity commissioner to register Shropshire Chess Association (SCA) as a charity.
- To establish a committee to prepare an application to the charity commission, agree our charitable objectives, establish who the trustees would be and review/revise our constitution to ensure it complies with charity law.

Background:

The legal status of SCA is that we are an unincorporated members association. Although

unincorporated SCA still has an obligation to pay corporation tax on any trading profits we make.

Most surpluses that have historically arisen in SCA are referred to as "mutual trading", essentially our members trading with ourselves. These profits are not liable to corporation tax.

With the opening of the junior chess club in September a new source of trading income has arisen. We are charging kids £2/week and by the end of the year, after costs, the junior chess organiser is projecting profits in the region of £500. This will result in a corporation tax liability of £95 payable by the association. To comply with our tax obligations HMRC have already been notified a liability will arise this year.

It's also always been ambiguous whether the congress is protected by the mutual trading rule or not. Income arising from the membership likely is but any profits (if any) arising from non-Shropshire players is likely subject to tax once costs are apportioned.

We would not be the first association to register as a charity. There are several other county associations on the charities register who have already taken this step increasing the likelihood our application would be accepted.

There are pro's and con's of registering as a charity:

Advantages of registering as a charity

- No Corporation Tax on profits
- Enhanced reputational status for SCA of being a charity
- Potential gift aid on any donations made to SCA
- Removes the ambiguity around any congress surpluses

Disadvantages of registering as a charity

- Time commitment to register and file annual return with the charities regulator
- Additional administration for the trustees around minuting of decisions
- If the association were ever to fold the reserves would have to be distributed in line with the charitable objectives rather than back to all the members
- Any actions taken by the association would have to fall within our charitable objectives

Conclusion

Taking all of the above into account we feel that the advantages of registration outweigh the disadvantages and we recommend that the AGM adopt the proposal.

Mathew Clark (President)

Tony Preece (General Secretary)

Christopher Lewis (Treasurer)

Proposal 3 - Ending the online leagues?

Proposal:

- To end the online leagues in 2022/23
- Whilst COVID levels remain high, to allow those most vulnerable to COVID to play their OTB league matches online.

I have had concerns for a number of months that the online leagues are a victim of their own success. I am proud that Shropshire online chess thrived through COVID whilst those of many other neighbouring counties and much larger associations stalled completely.

However I do feel the leagues are now damaging over-the-board chess and in particular that they reduce attendance on club nights. It has not been uncommon to turn up to my club and realise there are more people playing from home online rather than attending the club. This makes attracting new members particularly difficult when they walk into a near empty club room.

There are also several clubs who have players who during the pandemic have chosen to play exclusively online and these players have yet to return to OTB chess. My hope would be that ending the online leagues would encourage these players back although I am not confident that this would be the case.

I have discussed this with a number of other clubs and one takeaway is that with the return of OTB chess to pre-COVID levels there is far less appetite for the online leagues with many clubs considering dropping their teams from the leagues. This may result in the leagues becoming unviable to run anyway.

I think it is important to recognise COVID is still out there and a new variant may return in the winter months. There are players as a result who may not yet feel comfortable playing over-the-board. Hence the 2nd part of this proposal to cater to those players.

Finally ending the Shropshire online leagues does not mean that players can't get their online fix from elsewhere as the 4NCL online teams and the 5 counties team will continue to run next season.

In conclusion, I was on the fence on this one as I wasn't sure the association should be dictating what form of chess gets played. However when I discovered that a couple of the clubs were considering withdrawing their teams from the leagues I concluded they are about to become unviable anyway and it's the right time to end them.

Christopher Lewis