

Minutes, 122nd AGM of the Cumbria Chess Association.

Held at 2pm on Saturday 15th June 2013 at the British Legion Club, Holker St, Barrow.

In Attendance;- 18 members from 7 clubs. D Cole (President) Barrow, E Früchtenicht (Lge Cont) Penrith, G Horne (Treasurer) Barrow, M Gawne (Grading Officer) Barrow, K Southernwood (Junior Organiser) Penrith, W Hardwick (Secretary) Carlisle, A McAtear (Penrith), A Llewellyn (Barrow), J Woodburn (Barrow), Trevor Blower (Barrow), G Boswell (Grange), F Wright (SASRA), J Rashleigh (Kendal), P Shaw (Windermere), D Shaw (Windermere & Kendal), H Austin (Grange), N Hill (Grange), M Mackenzie (Barrow).

1. **Apologies;-** were received from I Mackay, D Millar, D Siddall, J Kelly, N Jones, D Phillips and G King.
2. **Presidents Address;-** Dave Cole said that it had been a turbulent year in view of the dispute which we were engaged in with the ECF – a situation which he hoped would be resolved at today’s meeting. The reducing number of clubs is a concern as Cockermouth will not be able to field a team in the coming season. SASRA are losing the services of their Board 1 player Phil Almond which will obviously have an impact upon them. A number of clubs have been lost from the league over past years including Workington, Whitehaven, Keswick, Arnside, Alston, and Hallbankgate. Ulverston had also withdrawn but happily their club is now up and running and known as ‘the leave ‘em laughing Chess Collective’ at the Stan Laurel pub in Ulverston. The intention is to try and sow the seeds for new clubs to be set up, especially in the larger towns which are currently unrepresented. Dave has in mind circulating “flyers” and placing advertisements to draw attention to chess in Cumbria and encourage the setting up of new clubs.

One definite bright spot during the year has been junior chess in the county. Activity has increased greatly in terms of numbers of events, schools and participants and thanks must go in particular to Kevin Southernwood, Drew Millar and Hilary Austin.
3. **Minutes of the 2012 AGM (Number 121) and of the EGM held on 13/1/2013;** - were accepted as being a true and correct record of those meetings.
4. **Correspondence;** - Bill Hardwick said that no external correspondence has been received other than various emails concerning the ECF membership issue, all of which have already been circulated to all members.
5. **Secretaries Report;** - Bill Hardwick said that clearly the most significant issue during the year has concerned the question of ECF membership. At our AGM last year it was proposed that players should have the option to become “Cumbria Only” members and be provided with a “Cumbria” chess grading – this was passed. The ECF then made it clear that they required all players to be members or that non-member’s games would be subject to a game fee payment. As a result of this we held an EGM in January at which the original decision was confirmed. However, soon after there was a sharp increase in the number of players taking ECF membership and The South Lakes Chess Congress volunteered to cover the cost of any game fees due for the first part of the year. That seems to have settled matters for this season but as things stand our rule is still that members should have the option of not taking ECF membership. Hopefully this meeting will enable us to resolve matters one way or another. Other than this there have been no major issues to report upon.
6. **Treasurers Report;** - George Horne reported that there has been a deficit this year of £59.95. The profit share from the ECF membership finished this season (£137.05 received). He had to close the Halifax a/c in March this year and also the HSBC a/c. He has instead opened current and deposit a/c’s at Lloyds-TSB. He recommended that if we should enter a county team next season, then a fixed amount should be reimbursable for each match played. This point was discussed later and it was decided

instead that any reimbursements should be dependent upon the circumstances of each match played. In conclusion he recommended that Cumbria memberships should remain unchanged (at £6.00 for adults and £1.00 for juniors). This was passed with no objections.

George provided annual accounts for the year to 31st May 2013 which will be audited and placed on the Website.

7. **Membership Secretaries Report;** - Dave Cole said that there has been a further drop in membership numbers to 96, down from 101 last year. This includes 5 Arnside members who are not actually taking part in the league. All but 22 people were ECF members by the end of the season. Two of these non-ECF members were from Carlisle club who have already confirmed that they will pay any game fees due for the season. For the remaining 20 players it is estimated that game fees for the whole season will be in the order of £378. The South Lakes Chess Congress is prepared to cover the first half of the season (£142) leaving £236 payable by Cumbria Chess. It was proposed that Clubs and individual members should be advised of the break-down of the costs and invited to contribute collectively or individually towards the payment due. Any such contributions would be most welcome but cannot be insisted upon as members were offered the option to be non-ECF members. In some instances, where a member's game fees exceed £13.00 it would be cheaper if they were to simply take up ECF Bronze membership. They will be asked if they would be prepared to do so, or if they would have no objection to their club or the county paying the subscription, as this would reduce the overall amount payable. This was voted upon and all were in favour with one abstention.
8. **League Controllers Report;** - Eggert Früchtenicht said that most results were sent in promptly, although often from only one of the team captains. He apologised for the fact that occasionally he struggled to find the time to get the information updated on the Website. He felt that the Website itself is very good but that sometimes it can be confusing and not always up to date. Both he and John Kelly the Website Organiser, can input information.
9. **Grading Officers Report;** - Martin Gawne said that there have been no real problems through the year and that all results have been submitted to the ECF. In response to a number of queries he has received he just wished to clarify that he simply passes on the results and does not get involved in calculating any gradings himself.
10. **Junior Organisers Report;**- Kevin Southernwood provided a detailed report and Junior Chess accounts for 2012/2013 showing a surplus of £273.93 for the year, both of which will be placed on the Website. Hilary Austin explained that she has a 12-member chess club at Kendal School but that the club are only interested in playing at the school. All concerned will continue to try to involve more schools at every opportunity.
11. **Match Captain's Report;** - Andy McAtear felt that we did exceptionally well this year, in the circumstances. Our team won against Lancashire in Lancaster, thanks to strong performances on the lower boards. Unfortunately, when we went on to play away to Yorkshire heavy snow was forecast that morning leading to some withdrawals and we played the match with 4 boards short. Nevertheless, we did still qualify for the next stage but simply could not raise the number of players required and had to concede our second place to the Lancashire team. Andy wished to thank all involved because the team played well above their expected strength.

We took the opportunity at this point to cover the first discussion point scheduled for later in the meeting. It was confirmed that we will still enter a team in the County competition, certainly in the early NCCU stage and if we are able to qualify, then hopefully in the National stage as well. At this point we also discussed the costs involved and it was agreed that any travelling reimbursements due should still be met as at present.

12. **Correspondence Captains Report;** - Chris Underhill provided a report on the final standings in the NCCU Competition, won by Yorkshire, which will be placed on the Website. The C&DCC event is underway with 8 players playing two games each. Gary Boswell also explained that the number of players competing continues to rise but that new players are always welcomed.
13. **ECF Delegates Report ;:-)**
14. **NCCU Delegates Report ;:-)** Dave Cole dealt with these two items together and the full NCCU Minutes (including ECF matters) will be placed on the website.
15. **Website Organisers Report;-** John Kelly reported that as things stand, all results and league standings and statistics are collected and placed onto the website by the Competition Controller Eggert Früchtenicht. Unfortunately, there have been long delays and missing information all year with regard to the availability of this information. This has resulted in a lot of confusion and frustration for people visiting the website for any up-to-date league information and is clearly unacceptable for the on-going season.

It is clear that there is a need for an additional role for collecting and collating all results over the coming season and for this information to be made available on a regular basis via email/newsletter and on the website. David Shaw has offered to assist in placing any results onto the website and can be given a login with privileges to do so. David Philips has also offered his assistance in producing a spreadsheet of current results if they are forwarded to him.

If all team captains were to send results to a clearly identified individual(s) who would ensure that the resulting data was made available to all concerned swiftly and regularly we can avoid a repeat of last season.

David Shaw confirmed that he would be happy to assist with this in any way that he can.

16. **Matters Arising;-**

Points for discussion;-

i) **Whether or not to continue entering a county team in the National Championships;-**
Already discussed above (item 11).

ii) **Confirm voting arrangements at AGMs (as discussed in this year's EGM). At present all current year Cumbria Chess members may vote at the AGM. Issues were raised about possible proxy voting and postal or email voting;-**

Hilary Austin had submitted a proposal on this issue and I apologised for the fact that it had not reached me in time because my email details on the Website were out of date. In the circumstances it was agreed that the proposal should be discussed and it was; 'that every paid-up member of Cumbria Chess Association should have the right to vote by letter, voting form or email on any issue put to the vote at any future AGM without having to attend in person. That these votes should be made by a date decided and prior to the AGM and votes counted and logged by an appointed person and available for scrutiny if desired.'

The matter was fully debated and although it was agreed that there are practical issues which have to be addressed it was voted upon and passed without any objections. This was on the understanding that the Executive Committee should decide how best this can be implemented and that it should apply to issues considered to be "major" rather than necessarily to every proposal put forward.

iii) Follow up on the debate regarding ECF membership:-

The matter had been touched upon at various points during the meeting, but when voted upon it was passed with only one “No” vote, that Cumbria Chess Association should return to compulsory ECF membership.

iv) Do Cockermouth club wish to be re-admitted to the league for the 2013/2014 season?

Cockermouth have now confirmed that they will not be in a position to enter a team in the league in the coming season.

v) Kevin Southernwood (on behalf of Penrith Club), would like the league structure and boundaries to be reconsidered as for some years now Division 2 North has comprised only two Penrith and two Carlisle teams;-

A full discussion took place covering matters such as doing away with North/South splits, whether games should be played at weekends or mid-week. In the end it was agreed that there is no simple, obvious solution but that the Executive Committee should give the matter consideration, with the possibility of introducing changes in the coming season or thereafter.

vi) Gary Boswell (Grange) would also like the league structure to be re-examined because Grange club feel that they could compete in Division 1 but two of their key players are usually unable to play at weekends. It was their understanding that all Division matches must be played on Saturdays. This is not the case but it is certainly the normal playing day. Would other clubs agree to midweek fixtures if Grange entered Division 1?

This was largely discussed together with the above point and will be taken into account when reviewed by the Committee. It is however the case that there is no stipulation as to when games need to be played.

Proposals:-

(1) From Bill Hardwick (Carlisle) - that the ringing of a mobile telephone should not incur an automatic disqualification:-

The point was discussed and while stressing that the use of mobile phones is no way encouraged it was agreed that should one ring then it does not automatically lead to a disqualification.

(2) From Dave Cole (Barrow) - that new players may choose to have a two game waiver before becoming members of Cumbria Chess. In the event of Cumbria confirming compulsory ECF membership, this would only apply to “Cumbria only” members and the club, county or player would need to cover the game fees due;-

This was discussed, but applied to all players. (see next amendment).

(3) From Mark Mallard (SASRA) - an amendment to the above proposal if passed; that it should apply to all players and not just new ones;-

Discussed along with above point and decided that the rule should relate to all players. To clarify, a player who plays more than 2 games is required to become an ECF member.

(4) From Mark Mallard (SASRA) - that if a player requests a board with numbers and letters on, to assist with recording the moves, the team supplying the boards should do their best to provide such a board to play the game on;-

It was agreed that a home team should always endeavour to provide such a board if requested and if one is available.

(5) From Mark Mallard (SASRA) - that consideration should be given to commencing the league each year a few weeks earlier than has been the case;-

Eggert Früchtenicht said that he would very much prefer to get the league under way a little sooner if possible as it would give him extra weeks into which fixtures could be allocated. The problem at present is that he cannot set things in motion until all clubs have registered with him which teams are being entered into each league. He will try to bring things forward a little and hopes that clubs will co-operate with this.

17. Prize Giving;-

The Division 2 North trophy was presented to Bill Hardwick on behalf of Carlisle “C” team.

The Division 2 South trophy was presented to David Shaw on behalf of Kendal.

The Whitaker trophy was presented to Trevor Blower on behalf of Barrow “W2” team.

All other trophies had already been presented to their winners or were already held by them.

18. Election of Officers and Committee;-

President; - D Cole

Secretary; - W Hardwick

Treasurer; - G Horne

League Controller; - E Früchtenicht

Membership Secretary; - D Cole

Grading Officer; - M Gawne

Junior Organiser; - K Southernwood

Assistant Junior Organisers (2); - D Millar (North), M Gawne (South)

Match Captain; - A McAtear

Assistant Match Captain; - G Horne

Correspondence Captain; - C Underhill

Auditor; - N Foxcroft

Press Officer; - D Cole

NCCU Delegates (2); - D Cole & G Horne

ECF Delegate; - D Cole

Website Organiser; - D Shaw (New appointment)

19. County Championships 2014;-

It was proposed that these should be staged by Windermere club, but subject to their confirmation. Otherwise Penrith, Barrow or Grange would be prepared to do so. To be held preferably in February or March 2014.

20. Next AGM 2014;-

Proposed for Penrith, probably in June 2014.

21. Any other business:-

Trevor Blower reported another very successful year for the South Lakes Chess Congress with 175 players taking part, 33 of whom were new to the event and 25 Cumbrian players.

Thanks to all and meeting closed.

Bill Hardwick
(Secretary)