

BUCKS COUNTY CHESS ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting Held at Bourne End Community Centre, on Tuesday 23rd May 2006 at 8.00pm

1. Present

George Parker (Chairman), Carl Weaver, Jon Melsom, Brian Hicks, Chris Stothert, Brian Lacey, Nick Butland, Andrew Hill, Peter Forrest, David Gittins, Graham Brown, Frank Rich, Neville Harper, Philip Makepeace, Brian Atkinson, Neville Belinfante and Fred Day.

2. Apologies

Alex, Dave Turner, Nigel Jennings, Ian Hall, Roger de Coverly, Monica Vann, Andrew P Smith, Luke Beamish, Colin Walker.

3. Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes of the AGM held on 16th May 2005 were approved without amendment.

4. Matters Arising (not covered in this agenda)

None

5. Treasurer's Report and Recommendations

The Treasurer was unable to be present for the start of the meeting, but had circulated his unaudited final figures to the Executive Committee, and the essential Income/Expenditure and Balance Sheet were abstracted for circulation to attendees. There was a surplus of some £66 for the year to 30th April 2006, and a balance in hand of some £1402. The accounts were accepted unanimously, subject to audit. The Treasurer later explained the largest expenditure items as follows:

SCCU/ECF Game Levy fees - £ 535.39

Chilterns League Game Levy - £111.20*

SCCU Annual Sub - £50*

* listed as one item of £161.20

Although the ECF had raised the game fee from 44p to 45p/player/game, it was felt that this increase could be absorbed, and the Treasurer's recommendation for no changes in club or individual entry fees or prize monies was agreed nem con.

6. Secretary's /Individual Controller's Report

The Secretary referred to the Executive Committee's concerns regarding decreasing club memberships, which had led to team withdrawals and defaulted games. The proposals under item 14 were related to this situation.

He also mentioned the following:

- a) Berks and Bucks Congress – Entry forms were available for the annual August Bank Holiday week-end congress, which will be held at Nine Mile Ride Primary School, Finchampstead.
- b) Year Books – the entry in the accounts under this heading really covered our county entry, for which the county received four gratis copies. These had been received very late this year – just before the Executive meeting. Copies were passed on to the County Match Captains.
- c) Chiltern's Jamboree – through the good offices of Nick Butland and Chris Stothert, this popular event had been held at Mandeville School this year, although Bucks had ended fourth with 5/20 points.
- d) National Club Championships – Bourne End had reached the final of the u-160 competition, and Wycombe/Hazlemere the semi-final of the u-125 Plate.

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- e) Individual Competition – Phil Makepeace and Manfred Egby had finished joint winners of the top section, and would either play off or share this year. Some games were still outstanding in the lower divisions, but Dave Turner had won Div 2, Arthur Reed Div 3 and a newcomer, Ray Wild Div 4. Also promoted were Doug Forbes from Div 3 and Mike Porter from Div 4. Most relegation places had been decided, but play-offs were necessary to finalise some promotion/relegation issues – see appended results tables.

(Controller's Note: I should have mentioned that although there had been no reports of any disputes regarding actual games, some concerns had been expressed regarding problems with contacting opponents and late arrangements for games. In the interests of encouraging chess, I tend to control with a loose rein, being understanding where business commitments can cause difficulties, but maybe I'll have to be more strict in future).

- f) In the absence of Dave Turner, the Secretary presented the Grading Officer/Webmaster's report – for details, see appendices. Essential Point: Results of games for Grading to reach DT by 4th June. All present were very happy with the efficient manner in which results and other items had been published on the Website.

7. Club Championship Controller's Report

Jon Melsom confirmed that both the Division 1 and 2 titles had been won by Wycombe and Hazlemere, the championship having been claimed for the first time since 1975/6.

He had nothing further to add to his report to the Executive meeting, but expressed his doubts about the proposed changes to the league rules proposed for later in the meeting. He felt that the increased number of defaults were principally caused by the extended size of the second division causing clubs to have more than one fixture in each week, and by clubs being unrealistic about playing resources.

8. County Chess

In the discussion of the two Match captains' reports (appended with Chilterns League results), both expressed their disappointment regarding the unwillingness of strong players to turn out regularly for their respective county teams

9. Junior Chess

Brian Lacey had presented a written report (appended) and he summarised the 75-year history of Bucks Junior Chess, that he hoped to publish shortly. (See also item 11)

10. ECF/SCCU Matters

Jon Melsom and Neville Belinfante had attended an ECF meeting at which the Game fee increase to £0.45 had been confirmed.

ECF meetings appeared to be no better run than those of the BCF and although some attempt has been made in recent years to adopt a more strategic outlook, meetings still tended to get bogged down in minutiae. Whilst Game Fee remained the current basis of funding, it was possible that a return to some sort of membership scheme might arise in future, because of pressure for this from other regions. The NCCU pilot scheme had proved a financial success but administratively problematic.

Discussion at the SCCU/ECF regarding a place being allocated to a Chilterns League team to the final stages of the National County Championship had eventually come to nothing. The SCCU were willing in principle to allocate a place, but would not accept Berkshire as a possible candidate county, as they had withdrawn from the SCCU, though the other "Chilterns" counties (Oxon, Hants and Bucks) had not.

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County match captains, past and present, were dubious that Bucks could currently raise a strong enough team willing to travel to such matches.

11. Presentation of the President's Prize

The Chairman congratulated Brian Lacey on his well-deserved award, in recognition of his 21-year stint as Junior Organiser. His dedication had provided opportunities to many youngsters, and a number of very promising players had emerged, including Phil Makepeace, last years winner and this years joint winner of the Bucks Individual Competition.

12. Presentation of Team Trophies/Prizes

The Chairman presented the Championship Trophy to Jon Melsom, representing Wycombe and Hazlemere. Jon also received the cheque for the prize monies for the two divisions.

13. Presentation of Individual Competition Trophy/Prizes

Manfred Egby and Phil Makepeace have to decide whether to play off or share the trophy and prize money this year. The Treasurer will forward cheques to the winners of the other divisions.

14. Consideration of proposed amendments to the Constitution:

Three proposals below were discussed, with the object of facilitating the club championship by encouraging more teams and reducing the tendency for unavoidable end-of-season defaults. David Gittins said that items a) and c), suggestions submitted by Ian Hall, had been successfully adopted in the Herts League.

- a) To consider reducing the number of players in a club championship team to five. - only one in vote in favour.
- b) To consider allowing un-nominated players with ECF grades of up to 105 to play an unrestricted number of games for any of their club teams- votes 10 to 4 in favour.
- c) To allow players to play up to FOUR games for a higher team before they become ineligible for lower teams – votes 7 – 5 in favour.

Note: Rule 26 of the BCCA constitution states:

“Alterations to these rules or to those in Schedules 1 and 2 shall only be made by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting at a General Meeting of the Association, and there shall be a minimum of 12 votes in favour.”

Thus technically NONE of the above propositions meets the criteria for a formal change to any part of the Constitution, though no doubt the Controller will take into account the majority views, if occasion demands.

2. Election Of Officers

As all officers were willing to serve a further year and no other nominations were made or volunteers came forward, the Chairman declared the existing officers duly re-elected for the 2006-7 season. As usual, these are set out in an appendix to this minutes in the format submitted for inclusion in the ECF Year Book.

3. Any Other Business

- a) Vice-Presidents - As a former Vice-President, Brian Atkinson observed that he was had not been approached for a donation by the treasurer for some years, and enquired whether there still were Vice-Presidents. Carl Weaver confirmed that a small number(one or two) still donated under this heading, but he had not

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pursued individuals in this connection. Perhaps members who are willing to serve and make such donations (typically £5) will contact the secretary or treasurer direct. They will then be added to the published list of officers, as used to be done some years ago.

- b) Best Game Prize – Nick Butland said that he had initiated this prize for games played in county matches, but to the best of his knowledge no games had been submitted this year. It was generally agreed that games from Club Championship and Individual Competitions should also qualify, and Nick was willing to arrange adjudication for any games submitted.

Appendices

1. County and Club Officers
2. Match Captains' Reports
3. Bucks League Results
4. Bucks Individual Results
5. Junior Organiser's Report
6. Webmaster/Grading Officer's Report.
7. Chilterns League Results (Separate item)