

## Cumbria Chess Association

### Minutes of the Special General Meeting

Held on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018 at the Crown Hotel, Eamont Bridge at 2pm

#### In attendance

D Cole (President), J Rashleigh (Secretary), G Horne (Treasurer), B Hardwick, J Kelly, P Rivers, A Hiatt, J Ovens, M Hodgkinson, W Burgess, G Glover, K Hewell (Carlisle), E Fruchtenicht (Penrith), G Sharkey, N Jones, W Henderson (Maryport), N Maxwell (Keswick)

1. Apologies for absence: D Shaw, A McAtear, K Southernwood, M Mallard, D Siddall, I Mackay, P Walters.
2. Discussion and voting on proposals previously notified:

The President outlined the background to the meeting being called. At the Annual General Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2018, a proposal that fixtures in the Open league must be played on the stipulated date or within 7 days of it had been passed by a narrow majority.

Following the AGM, the Executive Committee deliberated on the wording and implementation of the new rules. Once published, it became clear that a number of clubs had serious concerns that teams could not be raised in such a short time span and that defaults would follow.

This culminated in a request for a Special General Meeting being received by the Executive Committee which, in line with the Constitution had been backed by more than 12 Association members from more than 3 affiliated clubs. These members had proposed amendments to the Constitution as follows:

*That section 4 (2) f should be amended to; "... played on that date, an earlier date if mutually agreed, or within 4 weeks and 1 day of that date. "*

*That section 4 (2) h) 7 should be amended to;- " ..... 4 weeks and 1 day after the original fixture date...*

*That section 4 (3) c) should be amended to;-*

*".... on that date, an earlier date if mutually agreed, or within 4 weeks and 1 day of that date on the same basis etc"*

Two weeks before the meeting, the President and Secretary received an alternative proposal to the above from the Keswick club which had been referred to those calling for the meeting. It had not been considered an acceptable alternative and so the meeting was still required.

The Keswick Club had held their own club Annual General Meeting on the evening prior to the Special General Meeting and had made a second alternative proposal:

*That section 4(2)f be amended to:*

*"..played on that date, an earlier date if mutually agreed, or on a date before the due date for the next round of fixtures as set out in the Fixtures List. The home team shall offer the away captain at least 3 dates, which will include at least one weekend date and one mid-*

*week date in this period.”*

*The club would also suggest that dates for all fixtures could be agreed between the captains shortly after the fixture programme has been published.*

The President explained that he was presenting this as a formally proposed amendment to the agenda proposals. This would be voted on first and if passed would become the new rule. If it was voted down then there would be a second vote on the proposal from those who had requested the meeting. If that was passed then they would become the new rules. If not then the rules as set at the AGM would remain in place.

The President then opened the meeting to the floor for discussion. During the discussion the following points were made:

1. The difficulties for the smaller clubs in being able to raise a team for a particular day were recognised. Arranging fixtures was easier for the larger clubs who had greater flexibility in selection.
2. There was a specific practical difficulty for the Keswick club as they had to book and pay for their venue in advance at weekends which limited the dates available and made changes subsequent changes difficult to arrange. They therefore needed more certainty.
3. Although many other chess leagues did operate on the basis of fixed specific fixture dates, this had never proved practical for this league given the general desire to play matches on a Saturday and the practical and geographic issues involved in playing at other times in the week.
4. Most team captains present at the meeting believed that the problems of arranging fixtures could be overcome by working at it with mutual understanding and as much flexibility as possible in the rules.
5. There had been some suggestions that clubs might seek dates that were difficult for the opposition in order to obtain wins by default. None of the clubs present felt that this was the case as the priority for all of them was ensuring that their members could play chess.
6. Limiting the available dates to those before the next round of fixtures was generally felt to be too restrictive.
7. All present agreed that there should be no limitations on matches being played ahead of the stipulated date and that it made sense for as much dialogue as possible to take place between captains at the start of the season to reduce the likelihood of subsequent difficulties.

At the completion of the discussion, the President put the amendment to the vote. This was proposed by Neil Maxwell and seconded by George Horne. The proposal was defeated by a show of hands with 2 in favour and the remainder against.

The President then put the proposals as set out by those who had requested the meeting to the vote. The vote was proposed by Bill Hardwick, seconded by Bill Henderson and was passed on a show of hands of nearly all those present.

The Secretary would amend the Constitution accordingly.

3. Any Other Business:

Subsequent to the circulation of notification of the meeting, Mark Mallard from SASRA had asked that a proposal from his club be considered under any other business. The President had agreed that his request should be considered and read out the following:

*"I would like people to consider my ideas about 3 man matches as they will help Keswick and any small club too. The idea is to help teams struggling to field four players without penalising them.*

*To facilitate this the extra points for winning a match needs to be removed and the following needs to be in place.*

*'Three board matches are optional at either team's request. The winning team of a three board match gets an extra point. Drawing teams of three board matches get an extra half point each.'*

*Sasra are certainly out of the league this coming season without this concession. We just don't have the numbers sadly."*

In the discussion which followed, there was considerable sympathy for the need to enable smaller clubs to continue to compete in the league. Whilst there was some reluctance to move to the position where a club could insist on a three board match, a number of those present indicated that they would be prepared to agree to a three board match in the interests of ensuring that chess was played and that the smaller clubs survived. The meeting did not consider it necessary to alter the points awarded in the event that both teams deliberately fielded only three players.

On the basis of the above it was agreed that every effort would be made to accommodate three board matches but without a specific amendment to the current rules.

It was hoped in the spirit of co-operation and openness that once the fixtures came out then captain's would try and confirm match dates at the earliest opportunity.

The meeting closed at 3:45pm.