

Cumbria Chess Association

Minutes of the 132nd Annual General Meeting

Held on Saturday 3rd August 2024 at the Crown Hotel, Eamont Bridge at 2pm

In attendance

E Fruchtenicht (President), J Rashleigh (Secretary), D Shaw (League Controller), J Lydon (Junior Organiser), A McAtear (Match Captain/Rating), G Sharkey, A Pringle (Maryport), W Hardwick, J Ovens, A Hiatt(Carlisle), D Cole, T Blower (Barrow)

1. Apologies for absence.

P Hanks, N Foxcroft, R Ellames

The meeting observed a minute of silence in memory of George Horne and Ian Hewitson who had died during the past year.

2. President's Address

It had been a successful playing season. The main concern had been the sudden death of George Horne and the consequent absence of a Treasurer for the Association and also for the Barrow club and the NCCU.

The President had recently attended the NCCU AGM accompanied by Andy McAtear where the main point of interest had been the potential grant of £10,000 from ECF to the clubs and associations in the North West of England. Applications for use of this money needed to be assembled and communicated to Richard Walsh at Lancaster Chess Club before September 1st. Ideas would be discussed later in the meeting.

3. Minutes of the 131st AGM held on 19th August 2023

These had been circulated to clubs and were approved as a true record.

4. Correspondence

The Secretary had received from ECF a request to name the Association's Safeguarding Officer. Discussion of this was included later in the Agenda.

5. Reports

5.a) Secretary's Report

Nothing apart from the above.

5.b) Treasurer's Report and Accounts

The President reported that no accounts had yet been produced following the death of the Treasurer.

Dave Cole reported that he had been putting in considerable work to try and locate what records there were and get statements from the relevant banks in order for a reconstruction of the accounts to be attempted. He would continue to take responsibility for trying to do this for the Association.

In the absence of available information, the registration fees would be left as for the previous year - £8 for adults and £1 for juniors.

The meeting also agreed that the £200 to be contributed by the Association towards the prize costs of the South Lakes Congress should continue to be available for the 2025 congress following the cancellation of the 2024 one.

5.c) Membership Secretary's Report

The Membership Secretary reported that it had proved impossible to provide firm membership numbers in the absence of the detail on subscriptions paid to the Treasurer. He had had notification of 88 names but could not be certain that this was the correct figure.

5.d) League Controller's Report

The Controller reported that the season had run very smoothly. The only problem had been in the South league where Ulverston had on more than one occasion overrun the four-week timetable for arranging fixtures. The result had been matches played in May and one match never played. The Controller had not defaulted the club although the meeting agreed that he was in his rights to do so in future if the problem repeated in future seasons.

5.e) Rating Officer's Report

It had been an easy year with no major problems.

5.f) Junior Organiser's Report

Another Cumbria Junior Chess Tournament was held. 37 players competed in the tournament, which was roughly double that of the first. The first ran at a loss of £244. The second made a profit of £74.10. It isn't a business, and making money isn't the objective but sensible and sustainable financial practice is a must.

I had great help from Peter Hanks and Neil Foxcroft and wish to express my thanks to them.

A third tournament is being organized, full details to be made public when known.

A team was entered in the Pennine Cup. Peter Hanks and I attended in Manchester, once again thanks to Peter.

Peter is also holding a tournament in Ulverston next month. Again, thank you Peter.

Two junior players that took part in the English Junior Coaches and Organizer's Association event progressed to the national final to be held in Nottingham. Congratulations and good luck to both of them.

There are now monthly on line Junior Tournaments and County Games. Neill Cooper has kindly set this up and is running it. Many thanks to Neill.

In my capacity as Chess in Schools and Communities Co-Ordinator, I have managed to supply chess sets to 3 schools. Neil and Peter teach in 2 of those schools. I am in negotiations with 2 schools for lessons of chess clubs.

The meeting thanked John for the huge amount of work he was putting in to promoting Junior Chess in the County.

5.g) Match Captain's Report

There continued to be problems arranging matches that required longer travel distances.

Matches had taken place against Greater Manchester and Yorkshire. In both cases the result was a loss 4 – 8.

The meeting confirmed that the County should continue to enter a team only at the U1850 level.

5.i) & 5.j) ECF and NCCU Delegate Reports

The President reported that Lancashire had re-affiliated with the NCCU.

The main change in the year from ECF had been the merging of gold and silver membership categories meaning that anyone who wanted to play in a congress now needed gold membership.

The NCCU School Award for 2024 had been earmarked for Cumbria. It was going to the Long Marton Community School and would be presented at the next junior tournament.

The affiliation fee was to be unchanged at £75.

The other major item was the ECF grant referred to in the President's address.

5.k) Website Organiser Report

The Organiser had nothing to report. The membership continued to provide very positive feedback on the effectiveness of the site.

It was noted that, because the site construction did not support HTTPS, some browsers brought up a 'not secure' message when the site was accessed which might put off visitors. There was no underlying need for the site to be secure.

6. Presentation of Trophies:

Whitaker Trophy champions – This was won by Penrith A. At the previous AGM, Peter Hanks had undertaken to produce a new shield for the Whitaker but it had not yet been forthcoming so could not be presented.

Cumbria South champions – Ulverston A had retained the trophy which, in the absence of any Ulverston representatives could not be presented.

Open League champions – Penrith A were again the winners and the President presented the trophy to Andy McAtear.

7. Safeguarding Policy

The President confirmed that it was necessary for the Association both to appoint a Safeguarding Officer and to formalise a Safeguarding Policy. To this end, the Junior Organiser had put together some suggestions which had been circulated and were then discussed.

There was agreement among those present that the Association should not be trying to define a policy for affiliated clubs. The Association policy should however require clubs to have a policy and should cover events which took place under its own auspices such as County matches, County Individual Championships, County Rapidplays etc.

The meeting felt that the policy should be defined within the context of the ECF's own policy. The President agreed to research this.

The meeting agreed that a committee should be formed to put together a draft policy document. The committee would consist of the President, the Junior Organiser, the Secretary and Andy Pringle.

8. Discussion and Voting on the Proposals previously notified (proposals attached)

One proposal had been submitted by Bill Hardwick from Carlisle – that a second open division be formed for the 'C' teams of the larger clubs to avoid some of the major grading disparities that currently existed when A teams faced C teams.

The other potential clubs involved, Maryport and Penrith confirmed that they were not in favour of the proposal as they did not want any reduction in the number of clubs in the Open League. It was not therefore supported.

9. Election of Officers

The President was re-elected unanimously as were the following officers:

Secretary: Jonathan Rashleigh

League Controller: Dave Shaw

Membership Secretary: Andy McAtear

Rating Officer: Andy McAtear

Match Captain: Andy McAtear

Junior Organiser: John Lydon

ECF Delegate: Eggert Fruchtenicht

NCCU Delegates: Egger Fruchtenicht and Andy McAtear

Website Organiser: Dave Shaw

Hon. Auditor: Neil Foxcroft.

John Lydon was unanimously elected to the new role of Safeguarding Officer.

The only current suggestion to fill the current vacancy for Treasurer was Peter Hanks' wife Karen. The meeting agreed that a current club player was preferred but that Karen Hanks could be approached if no other volunteer was forthcoming. It was clear however that no one could take over the role until the current situation with the banks could be resolved. David Cole confirmed that he was prepared to be the interim Treasurer until the situation with the banks could be resolved and the accounts could be reconstructed.

10. Any Other Business

John Lydon proposed that, in the context of the ECF grant, the idea of a North v South match in a public forum such as the Rheged centre be resuscitated. This would involve both adults and juniors. Plans for this had been well advanced in 2020 until Covid intervened. The meeting unanimously endorsed this proposal. John would research the potential availability of the Rheged centre and the likely costs involved so that proposal could be submitted to ECF before the deadline of 1st September.

Dave Cole suggested that there was potential for trying to promote new chess clubs in towns that no longer or had never had them with ECF funds providing the seed funding costs. Suitable contacts would need to be identified in each town.

11. Date of Next AGM.

To be agreed.