

Surrey Chess



ECF County Teams Structure Meeting 8 May 2021

Dear SCCA Participants,

A meeting was held today between county and union representatives to resolve the outstanding matter of the future county teams' structure. This was held over from the 24 April Finance Council Meeting due to running out of time.

Please refer to the relevant supporting documents (item 14) on the ECF website [Council Papers – English Chess Federation](#).

County Championship Team Rating Limits.

Surrey and Middx agreed and tabled an amendment to the ECF Director of Home Chess (DoHC) proposal, wherein team rating limits would be set at Open/U2100/U1900/U1700/U1500 vs the DoHC proposal of Open/U2000/U1800/U1600/U1400. Both counties wanted to create a better opportunity to field the lowest team and also to protect players graded between 2000-2100 from being unable to get into strong Open teams AND the first, grade limited, team. SCCU tabled a competing amendment of Open/U2050/U1850/U1650/U1450 which we regarded as better than the DoHC position but inferior to our proposal (U1450 is equivalent to the old U100 category which, in recent years, has been a significant challenge to field a team in).

After a full discussion it was clear that a large number of the smaller counties were uncomfortable with an U2100 limit for the highest-grade limited team as they simply don't have large enough squads of stronger players. There was, however, reasonably wide support for raising the limit for the lowest grade limited team. Hence the SCCU proposal was seen as attractive as a compromise which would effectively pin the highest-grade and lowest-grade limited teams at their former levels (U2050/U180) and (U1450/U100). Voting was as follows:-

Surrey and Middx (Open/U2100/U1900/U1700/U1500) proposal – 8 For 35 Against

SCCU (Open/U2050/U1850/U1650/U1450) proposal – 29 For 14 Against

Hence the SCCU amendment was adopted and the amended proposal (which reduces the number of county team sections from 6 to 5) was voted on and passed – 38 For 7 Against.

We now need to see whether the SCCU will adopt the same sections for its competitions and, following that, will need to revisit our captaincy arrangements accordingly.

Summer 2021 County Matches

ECF took the opportunity of the meeting to seek views on whether a summer 2021 (August/September) round of county matches would be desirable. I took a neutral position noting that our participants would need to be consulted.

Overall, if something is going to be arranged there seemed to be a preference for a regional, rather than national, approach to mitigate travel times. There was also talk of a hybrid format option wherein teams could gather at local venues, under the supervision of an arbiter, and send moves to their opposite numbers on the internet. There were some concerns raised about the viability of this for large county matches. The question of what COVID mitigation measures would either be mandated or advised through ECF guidance was also raised.

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ECF will produce a proposal and revert back to the counties and unions so that they can then consult with their participants with some concrete description of format and conditions. So, there is more to come on this in due course.

Paul Shepherd – SCCA ECF Council representative

8 May 2021