

Surrey County Chess Association

a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital
company registration number 5602632
registered office 38 Glebe Road, Ashtead, Surrey KT21

Minutes of Annual Finance and Annual League Composition Meetings 23 AUGUST 2021

The meetings were held at Cheam Parochial Halls and started at 7.32 pm.

Paul Shepherd (President) was in the Chair.

Attendees:-

Nominated Members entitled to vote:

Ashtead: Dan Rosen, Bertie Barlow (also proxy for Richard Jones)

Chessington: Murugan Kanagasapay

Dorking: Brian Skinner (also proxy for Peter Lawrence)

Epsom: Marcus Gosling, Michael Wickham, David Flewelling

Guildford: Mike Gunn, Julien Shepley, Trevor Jones (also proxy for Phil Stimpson)

Kingston: Alan Scrimmour, Nick Grey

Redhill: Paul Dunican

Richmond: Huw Williams

Streatham: Richard Tillet (also proxy for Martin Smith)

Surbiton: Nick Faulks, Graham Alcock, Paul Shepherd (also proxy for Paul Durrant, David Morant, Angus James)

Wallington: Daniel Young

Wimbledon: Gordon Rennie

Attendee entitled to a casting vote: Paul Shepherd (Chairman)

Attendees not entitled to vote: Clive Frostick (Farnham & Guildford), David Sedgwick (Life Vice President),

Paul Shepherd welcomed attendees and gave safety advice covering fire exits as usual but also about additional measures that had been taken to reduce the risk of COVID transmission. Extra tables had been used and all seating been spaced about. Doors and windows had been opened to maximise ventilation. He also pointed out that this was something of a trial run for the conditions that would be provided for County matches. These would be held in the large room, and as single matches rather than the traditional cost-saving practice of holding 2 matches simultaneously whenever possible. It was agreed that conditions seemed acceptable apart from traffic noise (and the anticipated extra street noise on a Saturday afternoon) through the front door. A special welcome was issued to Murugan Kanagasapay representing Chessington, a new club attending their first SCCA meeting

Annual Finance Meeting

1. Apologies for absence

Had been received from Martin Cath, Peter Lawrence, John Foley, Martin Smith, Phil Stimpson

2. Budget for the Year to 30 April 2022

Dan Rosen provided a commentary to the document which had been previously circulated before the meeting. There are uncertainties about total costs for this year – particularly regarding county matches – and

also about income in view of the potential loss of 2 or 3 clubs. The best estimate is for a deficit of about £220 which Dan described as not sustainable long-term, but tolerable for one season given the SCCA's reserves of £5,000. David Sedgwick asked for more details about the "lost" clubs, and Dan explained that Walton-on-the-Hill had joined for online chess only and had no apparent interest in OTB. There was no news from Battersea. Richard Tillet updated the meeting with news that Crystal Palace intended to merge with Streatham, although the team in the Fred Manning Trophy would like to be called "Crystal Palace" citing a precedent for this in a neighbouring league. Paul Shepherd said that a decision on team naming would be considered and ruled on by the Board.

In response to a question from Trevor Jones, Dan Rosen explained that for county matches he had assumed fewer boards and single matches in the larger room at Cheam. He also reminded the meeting that county chess costs were not fully covered by board fee income in previous seasons and that SCCA had been budgeting to cover the difference for some years.

Club membership fees for the 2021/22 season had been budgeted as follows:

Affiliation Fees: unchanged at £30 per club

Team entry fees: for Knockouts increased from £11 to £12 per team, for league entries based on the expected number of games on the basis of 54p per half-game (an increase from 50p in 2019/20 season)

A proposal was made by the chairman to accept the accounts and the revised affiliation fees together. This proposal was passed Nem. Con.

There was no other business, and the chairman closed the meeting at 7:50

Annual League Composition Meeting

1. Apologies for Absence

Had been received from Martin Cath, Peter Lawrence, John Foley, Martin Smith, Phil Stimpson

2. Amendments to Bye-Laws to reflect changed deadlines

Dan Rosen explained that the board proposal passed at the last EGM on 27 August 2020 which involved changes to the Bye Laws to accommodate revised timelines caused by COVID delays now needed to have some further adjustments. For reference the proposal passed at the EGM is given in Appendix A

The proposal at this meeting was to drop the change to Bye Law 1.1 (as that would give us dates a month too early), drop the change to Bye Law 3.1.2 (which is meaningless in the absence of a further meeting adjournment) and to make to Bye Law 3.4, so that the changes from 7 September and 1 October are to 1 November. The proposal was approved nem. con.

3. Bye-Law amendments to change terminology from grades to ratings

The ECF has now decided that following the change from 3-digit grades (Clarke system) to 4-digit (Elo system) the terminology will also change from "grade" to "rating". To be consistent it was proposed that all references in the Bye Laws to "grade" or "graded" shall be changed to "rating" or "rated" respectively. See Appendix B. The proposal was passed nem. con.

Trevor Jones pointed out that (although not part of the Bye-Laws) references to the job of "Grader" should now be a reference to "Rating Officer"

4. Acceptance of entries into Inter-Club Competitions for 2021/22 season and Allocation of teams into various divisions (combining items 4 and 6 from the agenda)

Huw Williams introduced an updated spreadsheet based on the one circulated by Peter Lawrence in advance of the meeting, which now included a few changes. Although there are fewer matches for some clubs, Paul Shepherd pointed out that the return to OTB after a difficult period and great anxiety was based on keeping pressure on club organisers as low as possible given uncertainty about the availability of all their players. There was some brief discussion about alternative options but most clubs seemed happy with the proposed structure and the proposal was accepted all in favour with one abstention

5. Agreement on the number of boards per division for 2021/22 season

Paul Shepherd proposed as a starting point for discussion that each competition should have the same number of boards as per the 2019/20 competition. So that all divisions have the default number of boards, except the Beaumont Cup which will have 7 boards and Ellam Trophy will have 6. In the absence of any alternative suggestions the meeting took this as a formal proposal which was passed nem. con. Agreed structure including number of boards is as per the attached spreadsheet

6. Draw for the Alexander Cup and Lauder Trophy

Brian Skinner volunteered to draw the letters from the bag. Pairings were made as follows:

Alexander Cup:

1. Wimbledon v Surbiton
2. Chessington v South Norwood
3. CCF v Guildford
4. Epsom v Kingston

Lauder Trophy:

1. Kingston v Epsom
2. Ashted v Dorking
3. Wallington v South Norwood
4. Chessington v Guildford

In each case, the first named team is at home, with semi-final pairings being winner of 1 vs winner of 2 and winner of 3 vs winner of 4

7. Trophy Presentations

Four of the team competitions in the 2019/2020 season had reached a position where one team would finish as winners regardless of the results of outstanding matches. These teams have been declared winners and trophies were presented by Paul Shepherd to clubs as follows:

Ellam Trophy, presented to Mike Gunn on behalf of Guildford 3
Centenary Trophy to Marcus Gosling and Michael Wickham on behalf of Epsom 1
Beaumont Cup, presented to Graham Alcock on behalf of Surbiton 2
Minor Trophy, presented to Graham Alcock on behalf of Surbiton 5

Recipients were asked to arrange their own engraving and forward a receipt to the Treasurer for repayment

8. AOB

8.1 David Sedgwick congratulated the team responsible for the SCCA Online chess and noted that his own fears of disputes related to cheating claims had proven unfounded. Huw Williams said that thanks for that were due to all the participants who had played in the required spirit

8.2 Huw Williams recapped the SCCA position on restarting OTB play. There will be no additional SCCA rules over and above legal requirements in place at the time of playing, although we recommend that government guidelines are considered. Clubs are asked to check with their venues asap for their conditions and to share with the SCCA so that these can be publicised on the website. Club organisers will need flexibility and a spirit of cooperation to support this return to OTB particularly regarding players' concerns and preferences in regard to mask-wearing.

Clubs were also reminded of the current planned timetable for starting play, previously issued by SCCA. Remaining fixtures required to decide the winners of remaining competitions in the 2019/20 season will be completed in October. Rules in place for the 2019/20 season will apply, including the use of the grades current at the time [post meeting note: these grades have since been converted to 4 digit rating format on the SCCA website and so the rules in the latest Bye-Laws in respect of ratings will apply for the completion of 2019/2020 – they are exactly equivalent to the previous grading rules.]. The 2021/22 season will start in November. It is understood that SCCA may issue fixtures ahead of the London League and the Surrey Border League, although we will give those leagues time to produce fixtures on the normal timetable before publishing ours. Consequently, clubs may need to rearrange some fixtures in the period leading up to 1st November

8.3 Mike Gunn reminded the meeting of Guildford's 125th Anniversary celebrations which include three 125 board simulms on the 12th September in Guildford High St. It is a chance to play against Gawain Jones, Nick Pert and other masters/strong local players and is free to enter. Currently about half the places are booked and the masters would welcome more opponents from Surrey clubs. Paul Shepherd asked those present to forward the invitation to members of their clubs

The meeting closed at 8:55 PM.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Amendments to deadlines in respect of Covid-19:

Background: At the EGM on 27 August 2020, various deadlines were amended with effect for the 2020/21 season. This proposal extends the effect of these amendments to the 2021/22 season. If the 2021/22 season runs on the same timings as in previous years, then the amendment will not change the deadlines that would have applied to a normal year; however, in the light of continuing uncertainty vis-à-vis Covid-19, it seems prudent to accommodate any possible delay.

For reference, the changes passed at the abovementioned EGM were as follows:

For the 2020/21 season, the Bye Laws shall have effect as if:

In Bye Law 1.1,

- the reference to 31 October were to the end of the calendar month following the conclusion of the Annual Finance Meeting;
- the reference to 30 November were to the end of the second calendar month following the conclusion of the Annual Finance Meeting; and
- the reference to 31 January were to the end of the fourth calendar month following the conclusion of the Annual Finance Meeting.

In Bye Law 3.1.2, the reference to the Annual League Composition Meeting were to the resumption thereof.

In Bye Law 3.2.2, the requirement for re-nominations at 31 January were omitted.

In Bye Law 3.4,

- the reference to 1 October were to 3 weeks after the conclusion of the Annual League Composition Meeting;

- the reference to 30 April were to 30 June; and
- the reference to 7 September were to 3 weeks after the conclusion of the Annual League Composition Meeting.

In Bye Law 3.6,

- the reference to 1 May were to 1 June; and
- the references to 28 days were to 21 days.

Appendix B: Change in terminology from grades to ratings

All references in the Bye Laws to “grade” or “graded” shall be changed to “rating” or “rated” respectively, *mutatis mutandis*.

This is to reflect the change in terminology by the ECF when moving from the 3-digit grades in 2020