

**Minutes of the  
Annual General Meeting of the Bury St Edmunds Chess Club  
Held 14th May 2012, at Moreton Hall Community Centre**

**1. Welcome**

*Present:*

Stephen Ruthen (SR), Bob Jones (BJ), Steve Lovell (SL), Colin Roberts (CR), Scott Taylor (ST)  
David Wood (DW), Dave Clark (DC), Dick Myhill (DM), Peter Massey (PM), Chas Szentmihaly (CS)

*Apologies:*

John Feavyour, Patrick Gembis, Sean and George Horan, Hugo Smith (HS)

**2. Matters arising from the Minutes of the AGM held 16th June 2011**

No objections to the minutes were raised. SL noted the subsequent reversal of the AGM's decision to raise the attendance fee from £1.00 to £1.20. The move back to £1 was made possible by the increase in the hire of the venue being much less than had been threatened.

**3. Reports**

(i) Match Secretary: Bob Jones

BJ summarised the fortunes of the various teams, including noting the numbers of defaults. One of our BACL Division 1 sides, the Scarabs finished bottom, although we are confident that the league AGM will not require our relegation since the Cambridge team that won Division 2, does not wish to be promoted (as that would mean Division 1 featuring four Cambridge sides.)

In the Suffolk League, one of our Division 1 sides finished bottom, and will be relegated. However, the C team topped Division 3 and will be promoted. Next season we will therefore have one team in Division 1 and two in Division 2.

(ii) Club Championship Organiser: Colin Roberts

CR summarised the disappointing support for the competition, especially in the "u120" section, where the 15 entrants only managed to play 4 games between them. SL was therefore the winner in that section, almost by default. BJ and SR will play one another for the "open" section title. BJ presented SL with a new trophy (there hadn't been one previously). The topic of the trophy for the "Open" section would be raised later.

CR hoped the situation would be better next season because, if the BACL proposals are accepted, there will be no Rapidplay, which should free a few weeks for Club Championship games, and will also endeavour to start the competition earlier. He will canvass for entries in the upcoming weeks.

(iii) Admin Secretary: Steve Lovell

SL announced the introduction of the new club website, and encouraged feedback. He noted especially the "interesting games" section, and asked members to consider submitting any of their own games which they thought might be of interest. CS also mooted the possibility of including games from non-club members, particularly games from the recent World Championship match between Anand and Gelfand (perhaps the short 8<sup>th</sup> game where Gelfand resigned after Anand's 17<sup>th</sup> move).

SL also noted the new Blog, which will become the main location for club news, and raised the possibility of a “members’ area”, which might include members’ contact details.

BJ noted that he’d still like to see the “Contact” page re-worked, and SL said he planned to do that soon, and welcomed other suggestions from members.

(iv) Treasurer: Hugo Smith (Absent)

In the absence of our Treasurer, the other committee members summarised the accounts as best they could from memory. The finances are stable, and membership is slightly up on previous years. The following matters were addressed

- ECF Membership

The changes at the ECF were summarised by SL and BJ, noting that to avoid punitive game fees players will need to be members of the ECF to play graded games. The previously lower game fees had been covered by the club membership subscription. The Committee therefore proposed the following:

- To lower the club membership fee from £40 to £30 for full members, and from £20 to £15 for concessions.
- That to be a named squad member, players will have to be ECF members, and it will be up to players to arrange this and captains to enforce it.

These proposals met with the unanimous approval of those present.

ECF membership costs a minimum of £13 (Juniors £9), with a £1 discount for those joining online. This is Bronze membership and covers game fees for League and County Chess. Those playing in congresses or the 4NCL will need Silver membership (£19, Juniors £13) or Gold membership (£28, Juniors £22) respectively.

**Action: When the Sign-up process becomes available on the ECF website, SL and/or BJ will communicate to club members.**

- Moreton Hall Community Centre Fees

Under previous arrangements, the club paid a fee to MHCC to enable those club members who wished to use the MHCC facilities to also be full MHCC members. This will no longer be the case, as all club members will automatically be able to use the bar on club nights. Those wishing to use the facilities on other nights must become members directly with MHCC. BJ and CS both believe that this is free for those of pensionable age.

- Bury Knights Contribution

As the Bury Knights Junior Chess Club approaches its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, they are looking to secure donations to invest in new equipment. BJ, who runs Bury Knights, is approaching all the original club patrons asking for a contribution of £50 from each. Members all agreed that the club should indeed make such a contribution. When SR remarked that BJ would presumably also be looking for other sponsors, CS offered to sponsor the club in this manner.

- Compensation to Bob Jones for Clocks

SL made members aware that a few years ago BJ was given the opportunity to purchase a number of very nearly new chess clocks at a substantial discount, and that he did this on behalf of the club which has now used those clocks for several seasons. However, BJ has never been compensated for this and is therefore out of pocket by c.£200. Members all agreed that we should look to compensate BJ at the earliest opportunity, but in the absence of our treasurer we were not sure whether the club might need to spread this payment over two seasons. **Action: HS to investigate this and make such payment as is within the club's means.**

There followed some discussion about the necessity or otherwise for such matters to come to the AGM for approval. Those present agreed that as elected officials, and within the club means, the committee should have the power to agree such payments as they see fit, reporting such matters at the AGM.

#### 4. Election of Officers

With no-one else wishing to stand for election or to propose new committee members, and having checked that all current committee members were happy to continue in their post, all were re-elected unanimously 'en-bloc'. The committee therefore remains as follows:

Chairman:	Stephen Ruthen
Match Secretary:	Bob Jones
Admin Secretary:	Steve Lovell
Treasurer:	Hugo Smith
Club Championship Organiser:	Colin Roberts

#### 5. Teams and Captains for Next Season

Here we first discussed whether the club was overcommitted in terms of teams entering the league and cup competitions. PM commented that it was good to be able to get graded games at an early stage of club membership, noting that this was in part due to the fact that we do occasionally find ourselves stretched. We agreed to keep the number of teams at the current level (but noting the probably disappearance of the BACL Rapidplay competition).

Though we had 7 BACL League teams, 2 Roger Goldsmith teams, 3 Suffolk League teams, and 4 (two-man) Rapidplay teams (totalling 16 teams) we only had 7 captains last season. This was possible because BJ captained 5 teams, in addition to overseeing the 4 Rapidplay teams.

Reminding members that BJ was always there as a "backstop" in the event that they couldn't find captains for their own team, BJ and CR made a plea for more members to offer their services as team captains. SL affirmed that he, BJ and HS were considering putting on a short session of advice for captains.

CS commented that he might offer his services as a captain in the 2013/14 season, and PM said he would consider being a captain. When SL emails the minutes of the meeting to members, he will repeat the plea for captains in the "covering" email. **Action: BJ to confirm entries to the leagues.**

## 6. BACL and SCCA matters

After confirming that there was nothing to discuss from the Suffolk League, we turned to matters arising at the BACL AGM.

### *Roger Goldsmith Restructure*

Those present agreed that we should oppose the suggestion to split the Roger Goldsmith into two sections, with the second tier having a lower grade limit. Instead, we will be suggesting a lower grading limit of c.500 for the existing tournament, which would be a reversion to the roots of this competition.

### *Rapidplay Restructure*

The meeting agreed to support the proposed change, which would see the current Rapidplay competition being replaced with an individual 6-round Rapidplay tournament played over two evenings.

### *Grading Tolerance*

The meeting agreed to support the reversion from a 15-point grading tolerance to a 10-point tolerance.

### *Use of January Grades*

Members agreed to support the use of January grades for board order purposes, with summer grades continuing to be relevant for eligibility.

## 7. Upcoming Events

Next Meeting: 28<sup>th</sup> June, the 2<sup>nd</sup> leg of the "Jubilee Rapidplay", cost £2.

Summer Programme: Gambit tournament, Puzzles evening and Thematic all still to come.

Jamboree: The usual season opener will take place at MHCC on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> September.

## 8. Any other business

BJ explained that following the passing of Gordon Chapman around Christmas 2010, BJ had come into possession of trophy previously relating to the Club Championship of the now defunct Bury and West Suffolk Chess Club, a silver trophy which he has had valued at £2000. Having raised questions about club insurance of such effects, BJ went on to seek members' views as to what should be done with the trophy. Several ideas arose, including using it for our own club championship. However, the group agreed that the prior question is whether the trophy can genuinely be claimed as our own.

**Action: SR agreed to seek legal advice to help us clarify the situation.**

## 9. Close

SR thanked all present for attending, and for their valuable contributions to the discussions. The meeting closed at 9:15pm.

There followed a 5 round blitz (5-minute) Swiss tournament, in which 4 players tied on 4/5. BJ was declared winner on tie-break.