

Minutes of the
Annual General Meeting of the Bury St Edmunds Chess Club
Held 15 June 2017 at 7:30pm

1. Welcome

Present:

Steve Ruthen (SR), Bob Jones (BJ), Steve Lovell (SL), Ed Player (EP), Adam Leigh (AL), Adam Harvey (AH), Sean Ramsey (SRa), Greg Hart (GH), Stephen Lewis (SLe), David Wood (DW)

Apologies:

Hugo Smith (HS), Colin Roberts (CR), Dick Myhill (DM), Mike Harris

2. Matters arising from the Minutes of the AGM held 16 June 2016

The circulated minutes were agreed as a true record of events. SL queried the success of the captains meeting which was organised by BJ last summer. BJ and those captains who were present agreed that it had been a useful and enjoyable evening and would take place again this summer, most likely in August.

Action: BJ to convene a meeting of captains to discuss issues and share good practice.

3. Reports

(i) Match Secretary: Bob Jones

Match secretary BJ circulated a report showing the numbers of games played by each member and the teams for which they played. 58 players feature for Bury teams across the season. Just one game was defaulted in the BAFL, while in the SCCA 11 games were defaulted (which included two whole match defaults). The only silverware won by Bury teams was for the Roger Goldsmith (Div 1), while the Vipers finished bottom of BAFL Div 2.

(ii) Treasurer

In the absence of treasurer HS, BJ summarised the finances from HS's report. Not all monies are banked, so the bank balance itself shows an apparent deficit of £262, but the annualised figures show a deficit of just £3 for the year, indicating the general stability of club finances.

The report also noted a significant loss (£62 plus venue hire) incurred by hosting the masterclass with Lorin D'Costa last year. SL noted that the attendance was significantly lower than the previous year, perhaps because he hadn't advertised the event so heavily. The meeting approved SL's decision not to repeat the event this summer, and EP suggested that he, FM Adam Taylor or FM Andy Lewis might offer their services.

During the season the club committee had agreed to hire out the tea-trolley to offer improved hospitality to our guests. To meet the additional cost (£5 per session) HS proposed an increase in the annual membership fee:

I [HS] have argued in the past that the ratio of full members to concessionaries has got somewhat out of balance, both in terms of members and in subscription rate. I propose that £15.00 concessions should rise to £20.00, and £7.50 concessions rise to £10.00. Full membership to remain at £30.00. These measures should cover the cost of the tea trolley.

EP noted that the £5 or £10 increase in fee would be easily recouped by anyone who visited often and used the tea-trolley a few times rather than paying for drinks at the bar.

The accounts and HS's proposals were accepted by a unanimous vote.

(iii) Admin Secretary

SL outlined the plans for the Summer Programme, notably the intention of running the Club Championship at the club during July and August, with the option of reverting to a varied programme of events if uptake is insufficient to make the Club Championship sustainable. EP mentioned that he and perhaps other strong local players might be willing to run coaching sessions.

SL went on to mention concerns about the sustainability of the current methods of communicating with the club membership. Keeping contact details up to date can be problematic. In relation to the first point floated the idea of using an online system to allow members to update their own contact details. Although a minority were in support of this, the group felt that the current arrangements were adequate.

SL also raised concerns about the sharing of email addresses amongst and beyond the membership: members ought to have to agree to have their contact details shared. EP suggested that we should have a set of forms/cards on which new members could write their details when joining and this could include a checkbox to agree that those contact details could be shared with other club members for club business such as arranging teams for a fixture. For those currently receiving emails from chess club, we agreed that they should be assumed to already have agreed to this, but also be permitted to "opt out".

Action: SL to design and produce a set of cards for collecting contact details for new members.

4. Election of Officers

The incumbent officers are all willing to continue in those roles, and were duly re-elected *en bloc*. No-one stepped forward to take on the running of the club championship, so that responsibility remains with SL. The committee noted that although no longer responsible for the club championship CR would continue to be part of the committee on an *ex officio* basis. In response to EP's query SL and others explained that an *ex officio* member has no official duties but would actively partake in discussions amongst the committee in relation to any decisions the committee is required to take between AGMs. CR's election as *ex officio* was unanimous. The committee is therefore as follows:

Office	Office Holder
Chairman	Steve Ruthen
Match Secretary	Bob Jones
Admin Secretary	Steve Lovell
Treasurer	Hugo Smith
Club Championship Organiser	Vacant
Ex Officio	Colin Roberts

5. Teams and Captains for Next Season

BJ circulated his proposal for teams for the 2017-18 season. Several players are expected to leave the club ahead of next season, including Adam Leigh (heading to Newcastle to complete a Masters degree), and Alan Watkins and Dick Myhill may also move away. Meanwhile several juniors will be less available due to being in exam years at school.

Under the proposal most teams would continue as previously, but due to several members moving away and the some teams having considerable difficulty fielding a consistent set of players, BJ proposed to drop three teams (one from BAFL Div 3, one from RGT Div 2, one from SCCA u125). EP raised some concerns about the proposal in relation to possible transport difficulties for certain teams. BJ explained that these issues looked like they should be manageable. The proposed team structures were duly approved by the meeting.

6. League Matters

BJ summarised outcomes from the recent SCCA AGM.

- Tim Kent (Rowan Kent's father) will be Suffolk Junior Organiser, and SR will be 1st Team Captain (taking over from John Peters who had stood in for a year).
- In the u145 and u125 competitions, the visiting team would have white on odd boards.
- Renominations will be permitted for three weeks after the release of mid-season grades.
- Division 1 will now use Fischer timing by default, with 75 mins + 15 sec/move.

The BAFL AGM takes place on Wednesday 19 July at our venue. SL outlined the issues. After rehearsing the arguments on both sides, votes were taken on what the club position should be.

Likely Proposal	Decision
That the Chairman may not vote as a club representative, but has only a casting vote.	We voted to oppose this change.
That clubs should be forbidden from mandating their representatives.	We voted to oppose this change.
To increase the grading tolerance from 10 points to 15 points.	[Outcome]
To extend Fischer timing to Division 3 (on the same basis as in Divisions 1 & 2).	We voted to support this change.
To extend Fischer timing to RGT Div 2 That in all competitions we should raise the default time from 30 minutes to 1 hour.	We voted to support this change. We voted to oppose this change, but would like to give captains the option to allow a later arrival if they wish.
That when rearranging matches, the new date need not be agreed before the match was originally scheduled to take place, but must be agreed within one week after the original date.	We voted to support this change.
That RGT Div 2 either have the grading limit increased or be merged into Division 1 That RGT Div 1 grading limit be increased from 580 to 600.	After discussion, we agreed to put forward our own proposals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That Division 2 competition shall be suspended in any season where fewer than 4 teams are able to take part. • That in any season where Division 2 is suspended, the grading limit for Division 1 shall be lowered to allow teams which would otherwise play in Division 2 could compete on a more even footing. <p>Action: SL to put forward these proposals for the BAFL AGM.</p>

Close of Meeting: 8:55pm