

Minutes Of Cleveland Chess Association Annual General Meeting

Held At Great Ayton Working Mens Club
Whinstone View
Great Ayton
TS9 6AT

Wednesday 25th August 2021 at 7.30pm

Present

Billingham

Paul Weighman
Graham Edwards
Gary Leighton
Brian Whitaker
Matthew Harding
Kane Henderson
Graham Bartram

Hartlepool

Peter Harker

Great Ayton

Kegan Harrison
Martin McLoughlin
Andrew French
Steve Gatenby
Steven Booth
Ray Honeybourne
Virgil Szeleky
Gordon Dickinson
Alan Reed
Kevin Wilson

Apologies

Alan Stockley (The Buffs)
Peter Archer (Great Ayton)
Jim Rogers (Great Ayton)
Chris Swales (Thornaby)

Agenda

- 1 Ratification Of Andrew French As Chairman.

This was passed and Andrew paid tribute to the CCA Members who had passed in the previous year: Ron Stather, Keith Smith, Richard Moore, Peter Hollis, Alan Hare, Brian White, John Boyers and Vince Skillcorn.

- 2 Approval of Minutes of 2019 Meeting: Posted on CCA website and any Matters Arising.

Middlesbrough

Nikhil Bhandari
Ernie Lazenby
Peter Ridsdale
Ray Pallister

Darlington

Peter McKay
Jonathan Sams
Garry Hewitt

Thornaby

Francis Bachelor
Nick Tadd
Geoff Howsden

Redcar

John Cowle
(29 Members)

No questions arose and the Minutes were passed.

3 Officers Reporting: Posted on CCA Website are there any questions?

No questions were asked.

4 Prize Giving

Ray Pallister stated that as the season was unfinished and a farce Middlesbrough CC had donated their prize money to James Cook Hospital

5 Discussion and Vote on new set of Rules (Peter McKay)

And

6 Discussion and Vote on new Constitution (Peter McKay)

NB Changes to the Constitution require a three quarter (75%) approval vote to pass as per the current Constitution section 9.2

These were discussed as a together as they are inter-related but voted on separately at the end

Andrew French: The Rules had become confused and inconsistent and a new set had been written by a sub-committee following a Proposal at the last AGM. The new Rules where a simplification of the existing set.

Peter McKay: The current Rules are too long and require a legal mind to understand, all clubs were offered a place on the sub-committee and those attending meeting were Sean Cassidy (Chairman), Andrew French (Chairman), Kegan Harrison (Secretary), Peter Archer, Paul Weightman, Peter McKay, Geoff Howsden and Derek Simpson. This was done to get a broad agreement of the way forward. The Rules and Constitution are linked so one cannot change without the other, the new set were meant to be clear, concise, flexible and above all fit for the future. They have been written in English and are user friendly. The CCA currently has the longest set of Rules in the country and its Constitution is longer than the United Nations. The new set will allow the Exec to cater for change. The new set have been passed to Clubs long in advance for comment and so should be generally accepted. The new Rules are not changed but motions passed at AGMs are to be executed by the Exec but not written into the Rule set avoiding the mess that the old set had become. Above all it's a game of chess.

Ernie Lazenby: originally moved the motion and stated that the change started in 2006 after a terrible meeting which caused the current set of Rules to come into being in 2007. The aim was to stop personal abuse. However the existing documents had been corrupted by change and there was now a need to start again and move on. We need to get back to common sense and give the Exec some power.

Andrew French: If you don't like us you can vote us out.

Brian Whitaker: Asked if there was a specific example of a new Rule that conflicted with the existing Constitution.

Peter McKay: Could think of no specific example.

Brian Whitaker: The Proposal at the last AGM only called for a re-write of the Rules and not the Constitution.

Ernie Lazenby: Has no objection to the new Constitution.

Kegan Harrison: There is nothing to prevent anyone putting forward a new Constitution as a Proposal.

Andrew French: A new broom was needed to tidy up.

Brian Whitaker: Did not see why it was needed.

Paul Weightman: The new Constitution was easier to read and questions about it should have been put forward a year ago.

Andrew French: Under the new Rules the divisional structure was to be determined by the Exec.

Brian Whitaker: Would resign as Match Organiser if they were passed.

Ernie Lazenby: Ask if he was threatening the meeting.

Brian Whitaker: No he is not.

Paul Weightman: With the many changes over the past year it would be necessary for the Exec to juggle the teams to make a League.

Peter McKay: New Rules give this flexibility.

Ray Honeybourne: We should trust the Exec.

Brian Whitaker: Believes that too much control is being given the Exec.

Vote On Item 5: Overwhelmingly in favour twenty six for with one against and one abstention. PASSED.

Brian Whitaker: Is the meeting happy that there are Rules in the Constitution?

Kevin Wilson: The Match Organiser is going round in circles.

Vote On Item 6: Overwhelmingly in favour twenty six for with one against and one abstention. PASSED.

Prior to the Meeting Ray Pallister had requested that item 7.2 be discussed prior to 7.1, this was allowed hence the order of items that follow.

7.2 This proposal consists of two mutually exclusive (contradictory) parts. If part (a) succeeds then part (b) will be removed from the agenda, if part (a) fails then we will move onto (b) for discussion and voting.

- (a) Ray Pallister (Middlesbrough) Replace promotion/relegation with cash prizes for 1st 4 places to retain incentive throughout the season.

Reason: We now only have eight clubs and they have tried manfully in previous seasons to field more than one team, some 3 or 4, and relied on their Members to play for more than one team. With the pandemic, I reckon each club will have lost rather than gained Members. I can visualize situations this season if promotion/relegation remains, where clubs will desperately try and avoid their teams gaining promotion in order not to have too many of their teams in one division. That would make it farcical. Hence my recommendation to scrap promotion/relegation but replace it with cash incentives unlike a previous trial.

(b) Brian Whitaker (Match Organiser) As there is no provision in the new rules for promotion and relegation in The League, should the new rules be adopted, rules 5.9.1 and 5.9.2 from the old rules be retained.

Ernie Lazenby: Do these motions bind the Exec to action?

Kegan Harrison: Yes, but there is no option to having these Motions at the Meeting. If the AGM wants to let the Exec have freedom of action then both would need to be defeated.

(a)

Ray Pallister: with many Teams missing from the League it has become very difficult to maintain and manage Divisions; there are too few Teams and too few Clubs. To maximise this Members need to play for more than one Team. Promotion can cause difficulties and so we should scrap Promotion and Relegation and award prize money instead to promote interest, this would come from a £3 sub for Members. Three Divisions are envisaged.

Geoff Howsden: Why should we vote for this when we don't know what teams will be available?

Francis Batchelor: Believes that Promotion and Relegation are beneficial but does not want to bind the Exec either way

Geoff Howsden: Asked Ray Pallister if he wanted to Withdraw.

Ray Pallister: No.

Nick Tadd: We should wait to see what teams are available.

Kevin Wilson: If we don't like what the Exec do then we can vote them out.

**Vote On Item 7.2a Overwhelmingly against.
FAILED.**

(b) WITHDRAW without discussion.

7.1 Ray Pallister (Middlesbrough) To start entirely afresh and invite clubs to enter teams in whichever division they choose, on the understanding they only enter one team per division.

WITHDRAWN without discussion.

7.3 Ernie Lazenby (Middlesbrough) If the new rules and or the new constitution of the CCA are approved by members I propose that they remain as agreed for a period of three years unless there is a compelling reason to change any part and then only by a two thirds agreement of all members present at a meeting.

Ernie Lazenby: It is not good changing the Rules constantly and since most people present will be dead in ten years we need to stop changing them to suit particular Clubs and/or Individuals and get back to playing chess.

Geoff Howsden: The new Rules may have teething issues so can we keep together the working group to sort any issues as they arise and feed back to the AGM.

Ernie Lazenby: Agreed.

Nick Tadd: There are lots of young Members at Thornaby and Billingham so perhaps we will not all be dead.

Peter McKay: Pointed out that it was not a Proposal.

WITHDRAWN.

7.4 Ernie Lazenby (Middlesbrough) If the proposed new rules and constitution are introduced I propose the CCA management write to Mr Mitcheson expressing regret that the his original well thought out and presented set of documents became so dis-jointed and confusing in parts due to so many member requested amendments in the ensuing years and formally thanking him for his detailed work and considerable time.

Ernie Lazenby: He had been friends with Phil Mitcheson who had put a lot of work into the Rules which over time became altered and spoilt.

Vote On Item 7.4: Overwhelmingly in favour.

PASSED.

7.5 Brian Whitaker (Match Organiser) CCA adopt the ECF LMS system for management of The League and K.O. cup (and possibly the Individual.

Brian Whitaker: The LMS had been used experimentally in the last active season and I would like to thank Paul Weightman for setting CCA up on the system initially. I was entering results on behalf of team captains last season and I hope you all had a chance to look at it from time to time, as I had encouraged you to do.

It was first thought that the system may have been *desirable* for the Association to use however, after Keith's passing, it has now become essential to find another system as the links on the CCA website, to Keith Smith's website, now no longer function.

Peter McKay: Asked if there was any cost involved.

Paul Weightman: Stated that it was free. Each Captain will input the results and the opposing Captain will verify them, then the League Organiser (Paul Weightman) will re-verify and lock them; three people check each result. This should produce less errors; in addition the system forces the use of Registered players. LMS can be used for League, Cup, Individual and Internal Club Competitions. There will be Exec oversight of the system, Members must be ECF Member to play otherwise the CCA will receive a bill. The LMS makes the Match Organisers and Graders job much easier. Results on the night will be done on paper as currently and then added at a later point. Either Captain can enter results.

**Vote On Item 7.5: Unanimously in favour.
PASSED.**

7.6 Brian Whitaker (Match Organiser) As both sets of rules were written in the context of the old three digit grading system, whichever set the Association adopts, the requirement for players in a team to play within a margin of '10 grading points' be changed to '50 grading points' to be consistent with the new grading system.

Francis Batchelor: Ask if this Proposal related to Board Order in Matches.

Brian Whitaker: Yes.

**Vote On Item 7.6: Unanimously in favour.
PASSED.**

7.7 Brian Whitaker (Match Organiser) Irrespective of how often the ECF update players' grades, for CCA competition purposes, only those grades published in September and January shall be relevant.

**Vote On Item 7.7: Unanimously in favour.
PASSED.**

Election Of Officers.

President, standing Ernie Lazenby.

Ernie Lazenby: Wants to continue to write articles and arrange a 50th Anniversary celebration, wont interfere with the Exec but would like to be a figurehead for the Association.

Andrew French: Ernie has lots of experience and gives good advice.

ELECTED.

Chairman, standing Andrew French.

ELECTED.

Secretary, standing Kegan Harrison.

ELECTED.

Treasurer, standing Nikhil Bhandari

ELECTED.

Match Organiser, Brian Whitaker withdrew his intention to stand, in his stead Paul Weightman stood from the floor and was

ELECTED.

Individual Organiser, Peter McKay stood from the floor.

ELECTED.

Grader, standing Paul Weightman.

ELECTED.

Association Fund Manager, Geoff Howsden stood from the floor following a discussion as to the nature of the role and was

ELECTED.

ECF Delegate, standing Bill Metcalfe.

Garry Hewitt reported in Bills absence that although he, Bill, was unlikely to play any chess in the next year but was happy to continue in this position.

ELECTED.

Webmaster, standing Chris Swales.

ELECTED.

Any Other Business

(a) Brian Whitaker: The Individual Minor Trophy had been retired a few seasons ago but not scrapped and he had been looking after it ever since. Can we now scrap the trophy?

Garry Hewitt: Clubs and Cup Winners should be responsible for the trophies they win.

Ernie Lazenby: Offered to take it home with him.

(b) Ernie Lazenby: Following the pandemic he considered that personal hygiene standards were not good enough and the Exec should give guidance for next season.

The Exec agreed to look at this matter at a later date.

(c) Garry Hewitt: asked if we could put back the deadline for Nominations for Clubs to avoid a clash with the Durham & Darlington Leagues.

Kegan Harrison: The Exec would get in touch with Brian Bainbridge (organizer of these Leagues) and coordinate as appropriate.

(d) Francis Batchelor: With the new influx of members following the Queens Gambit (TV Series) can the Association make the most of this? Can we promote chess and the development of players?

Geoff Howsden: As Fund Manager he would look favourably on any proposals put to him.

Ernie Lazenby: Stated that he would do his bit.

(e) Garry Hewitt: Carl Stephens is in negotiation with Keith Arkell to run a clock simul in November in Darlington.

FINIT

