

# Minutes Of Cleveland Chess Association Annual General Meeting 2023

Held At:

The Conservative Club  
21 Orchard Road  
Middlesbrough  
TS5 5PN

On Monday 24<sup>th</sup> July at 7.30pm (1930hrs)

## Present

1	Sean	Cook	Billingham
2	Stephen	Roe	Billingham
3	Paul	Weightman	Billingham
4	Brian	Whitaker	Billingham
5	Richard	Kuby	Darlington
6	Peter	McKay	Darlington
7	Jonathan	Sams	Darlington
8	Carl	Stephens	Darlington
9	Andrew	French	Great Ayton
10	Kegan	Harrison	Great Ayton
11	Martin	McLoughlin	Great Ayton
12	Andrew	Smith	Great Ayton
13	Peter	Harker	Hartlepool
14	David	Kelly	Hartlepool
15	Graham	Matthews	Hartlepool
16	Nikhil	Bhandari	Middlesbrough
17	Sahil	Farooq	Middlesbrough
18	Alfie	McMonagle	Middlesbrough
19	Joe	McMonagle	Middlesbrough
20	Ray	Pallister	Middlesbrough
21	Francis	Batchelor	Thornaby
22	Geoff	Howsden	Thornaby
23	Joe	McGinnis	Thornaby
24	Chris	Swales	Thornaby
25	Nick	Tadd	Thornaby

## Apologies

Peter Archer Great Ayton

### 1 **Approval of Minutes of 2022 Meeting: Posted on CCA website and any Matters Arising**

PASSED without discussion

## 2 **Officers Reporting: Posted on CCA Website are there any questions?**

Brian Whittaker: stated that he was unhappy with the Executives decision to fund the NCCU team this year as this went against members wishes citing a vote taken six years previously.

Kegan Harrison: After discussions within the Exec and with the organizers of the Team the Exec had decide to use its discretion to fund the entry fee for the year and that there was a motion later in the meeting relating to NCCU funding.

Brian Whitaker: left the meeting without discussing the matter with other members or requesting a vote.

*On 31/07/23 Brian Whitaker stated in an email: "You state that I did not seek the views of others before I left the meeting. On the contrary, I certainly DID seek the views of others. If I recall correctly I asked this question of the meeting - "Does anyone in this room agree with me when I say that the committee have no right to overrule the wishes of members voted on at a general meeting?" In response to this question I only saw one hand go up, which was one of the main factors that prompted me to leave!"*

## 3 **Prize Giving**

## 4 **Members Proposals**

### 4.1 **Exec**

Invite entries for the D Division at the start of the Season with a view to having a double round competition.

Graham Matthews: if teams didn't know how many players they would have then deciding this could be a problem

PASSED

### 4.2 **Exec**

Introduce a new u1500 (ie D Division) Cup Competition to be run on the lines of the existing Cup/Plate competitions.

Peter McKay: Do we have the capacity to run it?

Paul Weightman: felt that the cap was too high as have too many players under 1500

Nick Tadd: Agreed and suggested 1400

Graham Matthews: Maybe allow one over 1400 and the rest under

Richard Kuby: It should be on the agenda if it is to be changed

Ray Pallister: Could it take team away from the Plate? And should there be a minimum number of teams entering to make it viable?

Chris Swales: It gives opportunities for players who can't play in the Plate to enter a knock out tournament

Geoff Howsden: Perhaps wait a year before starting

Chris Swales: People may want to play in a Cup rather than a League as it is a knock out

Nick Tadd: Can we defer entry?

Francis Batchelor: there is no harm for asking for entries.

The vote was TIED in the room and the Chairmans casting vote was against.

FAILED

#### 4.3 **Exec**

Cancel the Swiss Competition. This has be a useful experiment but has not been deemed a success. Its removal is also intended to shorten the playing year.

Paul Weightman: stated that the competition is labour intensive for him as LMS does not directly support a Swiss tournament and went on to highlight various issues

Joe McGinnis: can we move to a vote as explanation is in the documentation

Francis Batchelor: motivation for having it was that the Cup competitions weren't working but it had not worked as hoped.

PASSED

#### 4.4 **Exec**

Subject to analysis of the Associations Accounts remove the £3 registration fee and remove the prize money offered for the League Competition to be replace with a £5 per team or £10 per team fee. Keep Individual prize money

Chris Swales: 40 players registered with the CCA after the start of the season and this proposal simplifies matters

Richard Kuby: ask what the fee for the D Division is

Paul Weightman: the same as for other Divisions

Nikhil Bhandari: it was be necessary to increase the amount to £10 to keep the accounts in the black

Francis Batchelor: the idea for this came from our survey and was one of the more popular ideas

Ray Pallister: was in favour of removing the £3 fee but was against scrapping prize money

Andrew French: there was need to look at the detail of the proposal and the accounts

Nick Tadd: asked whether the money was a motivation for anyone

Kegan Harrison: suggested that perhaps we should look at this as an advisory

Paul Weightman: there are 27 teams

Nikhil Bhandari: £265 was the standard CCA spend per season

Joe McGinnis: keen to move things on we should vote as the proposal is provisory

Richard Kuby: Exec to decide the levels required

Geoff Howsden: if it needed to be more then so be it

The vote was held on two elements of this:

- i. Fees on a per team basis: PASSED
- ii. Abolish prize money: PASSED

#### 4.5 **Exec**

Allow players three days to join the ECF/CCA *after* they have played a game whilst unregistered.

Graham Matthews: would it be better to make it a week?

Paul Weightman: could not see any practical issues in adopting this proposal

Geoff Howsden: see how it works in practice and maybe review next year

Paul Weightman: said he would report any issues that occurred

PASSED

#### 4.6 **Exec**

Players must be registered with the ECF and CCA prior to being nominated for any Team.

Paul Weightman: non-ECF registered players have been nominated and never played and then the nomination is removed in January, this gives clubs an unfair advantage

Geoff Howsden: asked if any rules had been broken by clubs doing this

Paul Weightman: No

Peter McKay: all it means is that players need to pay ECF membership

Chris Swales: joining the ECF shows intention to play

PASSED

#### 4.7 **Exec**

Have 5 players in a Team in the B Division with 3 nominations.

Peter Harker: it would probably be possible for Hartlepool to manage under this arrangement

Carl Stephens: believe Hartlepool had many new players

Graham Matthews: 2 nomination might help

Peter McKay: even in a big club finding four players to play can be an issue

Francis Batchelor: this issue was popular in the survey and this is why it was put forward as a motion

FAILED

#### 4.8 **Exec**

Have 4 nominations in the A Division

Ray Pallister: this is too restrictive and would reduce the number of players available for the B Division

Chris Swales: it would reduce the overlap between the B and A Divisions

FAILED

#### 4.9 **Richard Kuby (Darlington)**

For the D division only that there is no need for an estimated grade, estimated grades need only be done (if required) for C division games or higher. This is to allow a natural grade to be achieved and used for new chess players. Ungraded players must be played from the lowest board available after those with a grade. Term for this amendment to be for one year and automatically to be reconsidered for AGM in 2024.

Richard Kuby: it makes thing simpler if there is no estimated grade

Chris Swales: why not have a default grade of 1000?

Paul Weightman: what is the problem with estimated grades? And without such players could not play in higher Divisions

PASSED

#### 4.10 **Graham Matthews (Hartlepool)**

Increase the Board Order Margin (to enable players to swap Board Order) to 75pt from 50pts.

Graham Matthews: 75pts is closer to the pre-four digit grading

Carl Stephens: this would give more flexibility

PASSED

#### 4.11 Peter McKay (Darlington)

CCA Individual Tournament.

Despite efforts to increase participation for the above, the number of players does not increase. Before the start of the last 2 competitions notices were sent to all captains and club secretaries but clearly the enthusiasm for the competition in its current format does not exist. *(for further details see agenda).*

Peter McKay: The Individual had been on life support for a while and something needed to be done, this year only 12 players had entered and of those 3 had withdrawn. One idea was to put it into the Durham congress which is held over one weekend

Paul Weightman: felt people aren't playing because they are generally playing too much

Peter McKay: disagreed

Carl Stephens: said it took too long to organise a game

Joe McGinnis: how would splitting it into sections help?

Carl Stephens: the competition needs more good players

Joe McGinnis: how does it work in the Durham Congress?

Peter McKay: results from the congress are used as the CCA individual

Francis Batchelor: we would still keep the prize money

Peter Harker: could it be a rapid play?

The vote to keep the competition was

PASSED

And subsequently the vote to move it to the Durham congress was

PASSED

Nick Tadd: stated that he would play in the individual but not the congress

#### 4.12 Carl Stephens (Darlington)

Whilst it is understood that players in the Cleveland league are allowed to keep their mobile phones switched due to exceptional circumstances ie on call doctors, or people with possible family emergencies. *(for further details see agenda)*.

Carl Stephens: suggested that the penalty should be amended to a time penalty

Nick Tadd: stay with the default

Andrew French: it has to be either phones are allowed or not allowed there cannot be any loopholes which would create difficulties

Ray Pallister: said we were talking about sportsmanship

Andrew French: people may want stricter rules

Carl Stephens: had asked a player to leave his phone at the table and that taking it out of the playing area was against FIDE rules

Nick Tadd: agrees with proposal

Ray Pallister: in his games with Great Ayton there have been no complaints about mobile phones

PASSED

#### **4.13 Andrew Smith (Great Ayton)**

Proposal: Funding for county chess be made available from the CCA, with the Exec given a mandate to, at their discretion, pay:

- (a) membership of NCCU (in 2022/2023 this was £75 to enter the NCCU plus £25 per team)
  - (b) and in addition cover match expenses up to a maximum of £100 per team for the season (in 2022/2023 this was the approximate venue hire costs paid by Cleveland for 3 matches).
- (for further details see agenda)*.

Andrew Smith: stated he was unaware of the 2017 vote but 22 players had played, Peter Harker did a terrific job as Captain and the County Team was a great way to represent the CCA. But for this there is a cost. Peter Harker had paid many of the expenses out of his own pocket

Carl Stephens: perhaps there should be a team at a lower level

Graham Matthews: but then we may lose the best players

The vote was taken in two parts:

- i. To pay the NCCU membership fee (£75) and the team entry fee (£25)

PASSED

- ii. To fund venue expenses at up to £100 per team

PASSED

#### 4.14 Paul Weightman (Billingham) And Chris Swales (Thornaby)

The following two proposals are being presented together as they both represent a change from the current Nominations system to a Grade Capping System for the lower Divisions. As they cannot both be passed they will be discussed together then voted on separately, if both are rejected then we will continue with our current system (as amended above) if only one is Passed that will be in use next season. If both are passed we will hold a further either/or vote to determine the outcome. *(for further details see agenda)*.

Richard Kuby: stated that he liked playing at higher levels and liked the league to be free and was against both.

Chris Swales: the Divisions need to be equalled up.

Paul Weightman: the A and B Divisions are very similar and this is a way of differentiating them and making them fairer

Andrew French: it would cause more defaults

Ray Pallister: earlier in the meeting some had said the maths having 75pt rather than 50 gap in board order would be difficult but this would be much more complicated. Also is a player couldn't play at the last minute then it may be impossible to find another who fits the criteria

Jonathan Sams: this discriminated against bigger clubs like Great Ayton as they have a good number of higher graded players

Ray Pallister: it would be more difficult to get teams to enter as this is complicated

Both parts of the proposal

FAILED

#### 4.15 Paul Weightman (Billingham)

Reintroduce promotion and demotion of the top division winning team and the upper division bottom team. In other words, only 1 team gets promoted and 1 team gets relegated. Except when a division total team is less than 8, then there is no relegation from that division. Beginning at the start of the 2024/25 Season.

Ray Pallister: against as second teams would be very weak in a higher Division

Joe McGinnes: if a club has enough strong players then it should be promoted

Chris Swales: teams are often promoted then immediately relegated as they are not strong enough to remain

Ray Pallister: teams will deliberately lose games to avoid promotion

Jonathan Sams: A and B Division teams are not separate teams but include a lot of the same players



Ray Pallister: clubs already try hard to play as many teams as possible

Francis Batchelor: we don't have a big enough pool of players to make this possible unlike other leagues I have played in, but it may be possible between the B and C Divisions

Peter McKay: a team that plays in the B is not the team that is promoted

Jonathan Sams: concurs

Nick Tadd: there are not enough teams in the A Division

Paul Weightman: we need to build up the A Division

Andrew French: clubs know their players best and where they should play

Geoff Howsden: asked if the league was actually that bad and would this make it better

Peter Harker: believed that Hartlepool after having been promoted had not actually won a A Division game for a very long time.

Chris Swales: players join and leave clubs during the season and in the summer

FAILED

#### **4.16 Paul Weightman (Billingham)**

Was provisional on 4.15 passing and was therefore not discussed

#### **4.17 Paul Weightman (Billingham)**

This will be a 5-year plan! To get the league running as a league system should! *(for further details see agenda).*

Paul Weightman: gets the league to three strikes and your up, together with promotion and relegation over five years

Carl Stephens: what about changes in personnel in clubs

Ray Pallister: it is nonsense to consider a 5 year plan when clubs don't even know what they are doing next year. Redcar recently were very strong and now not so

Francis Batchelor: likes the proposal in general but not the detail, there is need to stretch players so not limit them to two teams (as per year 1) but in general agrees that if you consistently play for a higher team you should stay there.

Andrew Smith: just vote on the year 2 proposal

Paul Weightman: have a working party to see how we can move forward

Jonathan Sams: the detail counteracts nominations as players effectively become denominated

A vote was held to establish a working committee of this idea and was

PASSED

5      **Election Of Officers, Members Elected As Below**

President Francis Batchelor

Chairman Andrew French

Secretary Kegan Harrison

Treasurer Peter McKay

Match Organizer Paul Weightman

Individual Organizer Peter McKay

Grader Chris Swales

Association Fund Manager Geoff Howsden

NCCU Delegate Peter Harker

Webmaster Chris Swales

Publicity Officer Geoff Howsden

6      **AOB**

Graham Matthews: requested there be no fixtures on Bank Holiday Mondays

Peter McKay: wanted to record the meeting thanks for Peter Harker and his efforts in the NCCU

Ray Pallister: if the meeting returns to Middlesbrough he may provide refreshments

Carl Stephens: time controls need to be looked at

FINIT