**Sussex Chess League**

**Annual General Meeting**

**11/6/24**

**Draft Minutes**

**Attendees**

Jeffrey Boardman – Chair (non-voting)

Julie Denning – Fixtures (non-voting)

Robert Wall – Treasurer (non-voting)

(League Officers may have held voting rights on behalf of their clubs)

Alex Taylor –Collyers

Brian Stockham – Uckfield (non-voting)

Jim Wheeler – Hastings

Robert Wall – East Grinstead / Treasurer

David Fryer – Webmaster/Crowborough

Anthony Higgs – Horsham

Colin Clark – Eastbourne

Chris Baldry – Haywards Heath

Viv Cole – Haywards Heath

Luke Rutherford – Brighton and Hove

Paul Batchelor- Brighton and Hove

Matthew Britnell – Lewes

Chris Jones – Worthing

Robert Counsell – Brighton and Hove

Belated apologies – Bexhill Chess Club

**1. Chairman's Opening Remarks and Apologies for Absence**

A round of applause was given to Mark Attree and Peter Farr for their work as secretary and tournament controller earlier in the year. Jeffrey Boardman introduced himself to the meeting, expressing his gratitude to these colleagues, and that the league would not survive without self-less volunteers giving up personal time to ensure smooth running. It was discussed, that games on the whole had been played in good spirit with no adjournments.

Jeffrey talked about the £500,000 grant from the UK government and whether any clubs had ideas for spending the monies, such as applying for grants to grow the game at grass roots.

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**2. Minutes of Last Year's AGM**

The Minutes were approved without comment.

**3. Secretary's Report and Matters Arising**

As Mark Attree had resigned his post – there was no matters arising from the secretary.

**4. Treasurers Report and Matters Arising**

Robert Wall presented accounts showing a healthy balance of approximately £600 held over 2 accounts. Arrears from members who had not joined the ECF had fallen significant and in the main resolved, or paid.

There were a few new arrears cropping up in the current season but nothing significant. Robert to continue chase the individual clubs for this money.

The main issue is that we still are paying a lot of money in fees and do not have an interest bearing account. Robert Wall to investigate switching to Natwest – Antony Higgs mentioned Horsham don't currently pay any fees on their account with Natwest. Robert to look to open two accounts including an interest bearing account if there were not fees.

It was discussed, how the league proposed to pay for missing cups and whether the current fees of £4 per team were appropriate given they hadn't been put up for some years? It was agreed that fees would be increased to £6 per team in the future season.

It was discussed whether Junior teams could contribute £6 per team towards costs of the new cup as 50% is currently to be funded to the league – agreed that Junior teams will now cost £6 per team in the Junior team league.

**5. Fixture Secretary's Report and Matters Arising**

Julie reported as follows:

*"I volunteered to take on this role mid-season following the decision of the incumbent that he needed to step back. Having done this task in the past for several years, I felt I understood it and the workload involved. I was duly appointed by Committee decision. As a result, this report focuses only on the latter part of the season, once I was in role.*

*"An open issue when I started was the withdrawal of East Grinstead Bookshop's first team, having already played 2 matches. I decided the results of the matches they had played should be deleted from Division 2 to avoid distorting the division statistics, but in a way that enabled the individual games that had been played to be graded. With assistance from David Fryer, this was achieved with those match results transferred to a new pseudo-division called "League Withdrawals".*

*"On a happier note, I'm pleased to report that all other matches were completed in a timely manner, albeit with some fairly short notice changes of dates. In this regard, it has been my practice to be prepared to enforce the League rules regarding late requests to reschedule if*

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*necessary, but if the teams involved have been able to find an amicable solution, I have not sought to interfere.*

*"I have attempted to monitor individual players' participation in each team so as to ensure compliance with Rule 4.2.2 concerning nominated players. I have posted in LMS those players who I've noticed have reached the limit of 4 appearances for higher teams. Whilst I try to spot such cases in a timely manner, it remains the responsibility of individual players and captains to ensure this Rule is adhered to. Non-compliance can be very costly, as an instance this season showed. An ineligible player on top board turned a 3.5 – 0.5 win into a 1.5 – 2.5 defeat.*

*"Winners of the various divisions and events were:*

- *Division 1: Horsham 1*
- *Division 2: East Grinstead 1*
- *Division 3: Brighton & Hove 3, with an immaculate record of 10 wins from 10 matches.*
- *Junior Rapidplay: East Grinstead Bookshop Juniors 1*
- *Knock-Out: Lewes.*

*"The anticipated changes for the next season, based on 2-up / 2-down, relative to 2023 / 24 divisions are:*

- *Division 1: Hastings & St Leonards 2 and Eastbourne 2 down.*
- *Division 2: East Grinstead 1 and Brighton & Hove 2 up, Crowborough 2 and Eastbourne 3 down.*
- *Division 3: Brighton & Hove 3 and Hastings & St Leonards 3 up.*

*"I say "anticipated" as from my past experience I'm aware that changes in team entry numbers may lead to the Committee deciding further adjustments might be needed to keep the divisions reasonably balanced.*

*"I am standing for formal election to the post of Fixtures Secretary for the coming season, but with one caveat as I have already mentioned to club contacts. I am going to be away for a couple of weeks in mid-September which might make it challenging for me to get fixture lists circulated, or at least posted into LMS, by the deadline stipulated in the Rules of 28th September. Provided clubs have been diligent in supplying all the information required by the deadline of 14th September, I should have a sporting chance of doing my bit on time. However, if I still need to be chasing for missing details, or if there are significant changes to team entries that require Committee consideration of the composition of each division, I could have an issue. At worst, any delay shouldn't be more than a very few days and not really compromise the start of matches around mid-October. If elected, I will contact clubs around mid-August detailing the information I require."*

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**6. Tournament Controllers Report and Matters Arising**

There had been no disputes or controversies requiring intervention beyond some nomination issues.

**7. Presentation of Trophies**

Division 1 Trophy was received by Antony Higgs of Horsham.

Division 2 Trophy is to be Presented to Robert Wall of East Grinstead.

Division 3 Trophy was not returned last – Jeffrey Boardman is to reach out to Sussex University to investigate.

The Knockout Trophy was received by Jonathan Britnell of Lewes.

Rapidplay Division Trophy was not available for presentation.

The tankards for Overall performance, Division 1 – Luke Rutherford, Division 2 to be presented to The trophy for Division 3 was not available, but then neither was the person who had won it.

Overall Tankard was received by Robert Counsell.

Division 1 Tankard was received by Luke Rutherford.

Division 2 Tankard was received by Robert Wall on behalf of Peter Kemp.

Division 3 Tankard is to Robert Counsell of Brighton and Hove 3 – currently with Jeffrey Boardman.

**8. Election of Officers**

Current officers were re-elected on a show of hands with thanks to David Fryer for the website.

There is a vacancy of Secretary which needs to be filled. Currently there were no volunteers from the meeting.

**9. County Adjudication Secretary's Report and Matters Arising**

There had been no formal adjudications, although reports of spectators accidently resetting the game clock had emerged.

**10. SCCA Matters relating to the League (and ECF)**

Peter Farr was not in attendance, but Jeffrey Boardman advised of his findings. No significant comments – it was raised whether clubs such as Uckfield (Brian Stockham) wanted to request funding to support better room amenity for next season?

Applications for Club of the year were raised – any takers?

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Nominations to deal with SCCA – no takers but happy for members to speak to Peter Farr should they wish to do this.

**11. Proposed Rule Changes – Team order of strength**

**(a) Team Order of strength**

Proposal (Crowborough)

4 Nominated players

Add

4.1.3 For the purpose of declaring nominations the strongest players are determined by their playing strength as defined in 5.2

(the intention is to remove any ambiguity regarding the determination of players strength in selecting nominated players)

Proposed David Fryer –

Approved 10 votes for none against. Rules to be amended.

**(b) The Playing Session**

Proposal (Crowborough)

8.1.2 Where the FIDE Laws of Chess require the intervention of an arbiter the clock should be stopped and the players should quietly resolve the issue between themselves. If this is not possible then they should retire from the playing area and consult an appropriate member of the home club.

( the intention is to avoid the disturbance to other players caused by any dispute regarding the Laws of Chess. By appropriate member I mean an experienced player who knows the rules or can look them up and preferably someone who is not currently playing a game in the match.)

A long discussion of the merits ensued or having other pre-nominated persons. Smaller clubs may have issues with the rules. Proposal was withdrawn.

**12. Location for 2025 AGM**

Lewes venue seemed ideal, and subject to availability agreed that Lewes is most suitable.

**13. Any other business**

Discussion on changing the websites name from Mid Sussex to Sussex Chess – David Fryer to look into costs and report back but minimal redirect costs may give others time to update their website so worth considering.

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Expanding Division 2 in the league to East/ West Conference – to be discussed next year in greater detail – so having 4 divisions again.

Whereabouts of the Division 4 cup queried – found – situated with Peter Farr.

Question whether Junior teams can have a vote -raised by Brian Stockham of Uckfield or members that do not have any teams in the league. The committee indicated this could be something of interest, but as no rule changes were proposed in advance of the meeting this can be discussed next year.

The committee will meet again in a month to discuss Trophies, engraving.

The committee are to email clubs in the next few weeks to request that they get entries in.

In the absence of a secretary the Chairman offered to take the minutes of the meeting but would be unable to take on the responsibility of being secretary on an ongoing basis as has a young family/ busy job in London.

Meeting closed at 9.45 pm.

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