

Lancashire Chess Association - Annual General Meeting 2 August 2006 – Old Isaac’s, Atherton

Present: Bill O’Rourke, Armand Catz, David Clayton, Steve Fanning, Dave Gaston, Bob Tinton

1. Minutes of the 2005 AGM
Point 8 should add organisers to the end of the sentence so it should read “... or to reorganise responsibilities amongst junior organisers.”
Point 15a should add U 125 team to the end of the sentence so it should read “Steve Fanning was thanked for his efforts for the county U125 team.”

With these additions, the minutes were accepted as being an accurate record.

2. Matters Arising
There were no matters arising.
3. Apologies for absence
We had received apologies from Simon Woodcock.
4. Officers Reports
Presidents Report
The President said overall he was disappointed with the year compared with the standards of previous years. County teams had had the worst result for over 10 years. Our finances however were on a sound footing. The number of volunteers was decreasing.

Minutes Secretary
There was nothing to report.

Treasurer’s report
Bill reported that Lancashire has 25 clubs, although 4 have yet to pay. Bill said he would contact these clubs.

The junior account was up £300 to stand at £3,000. The junior fund had helped three schools with chess sets.

The LCA account stands at £2,664, which was about the same as last year.

Chorley and Blackpool congresses also made surpluses.

5. County Team Managers
OPEN
The team lost to Yorkshire in the NCCU round

U175

The U175 team won the regional section and their quarter final national event (Lancashire 9½ - 6½ Middlesex), but the semifinal clashed with a world cup match and we defaulted as the opposition were unwilling to change the date.

U150

We did not reach the national event as we lost to Cumbria in the regional rounds. Yorkshire went on to win the national title.

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U125

Having won 4 out of 4 games in the regional event, we won the quarter final against Hampshire by default. But the team lost the semi-finals to Warwickshire 10- 6.

U100

The U100 team lost to Merseyside and to Cheshire and did not qualify for the national finals.

6. Congresses

The 2005 Chorley congress was again held in Parklands School. With 130 players there was no change from the previous year. The Open was a FIDE event and we offered a £6 discount for NMS/ECF members. David was pleased to report a very healthy financial surplus which was helped by the sale of refreshments.

The Lancashire Open Champion was Brett Lund. The Major Section was shared by Paul Evans and John Whitfield. The Lancashire Minor Champion was also shared between Bill Clews and Dennis Davies.

The 2006 Blackpool Chess Conference was again financially successful even though the numbers were down on previous years. The Standard tournament was down by over 20 players, but the other tournaments remained similar to previous years. The conference offered a £5 discount to NMS/ECF members. The Friday afternoon simultaneous was played by GM Mark Hebden.

7. Report of ChessFest Organisers

Bill reported that the 2005 Blackpool Chess Festival had broke even. Saturday was the day for the NCCU junior championships. There was about 40 players at the blitz on the Friday evening.

8. Report of Junior Organisers

The under 9 team qualified for the national finals and finished 12th. The under 11 team just missed qualifying for the national finals as the lower boards struggled. Other items to note included the junior bulletin with articles from senior players, Steve Fanning and Dave Gaston. John Littlewood attends the coaching days and this is very successful. Dave Gaston is running a Primary School chess league in Blackburn.

9. Bulletin Editor

Due to ill health Nick Sinclair is not available to fulfill this role. The suggestion of an electric format was agreed. Steve Fanning would post articles provided electronically to him on to the LCA Web Site. Chessbase would be purchased for Steve to post games onto the web site.

10. Leagues

The 1st Division of the East Lancs league was shared by Burnley and Hawks. There was no information on the Blackpool & Fylde league. The Central Lancs. league remained constant with the number of clubs. Heywood were the new first division champions. Armand reminded everyone that Rochdale had changed their venue.

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11. Election of Officers

The following officers were elected unopposed

President		Bill O’Rourke
Minutes Secretary		David Clayton
Treasurer		Simon Woodcock
Team Captains	Open	Mike Conroy
	U175	Mike Conroy
	U150	Bill O’Rourke
	U125	Phil Raynor
	U100	Mike Horne
Correspondence		Andy Clarkson
Junior Congress Organiser		W O’Rourke/D Gaston/S Fanning/Ian Hughes
Team Captains	U18	Bob Tinton
	U16	Bob Tinton
	U15	Rob Hart
	U13	P Edhouse
	U11	Dave Gaston
	U9	Dave Gaston
	Girls	Ian Hughes
Congress Director		David Clayton
Congress Treasurer		Simon Woodcock
Grader Co-ordinator		Geoff Jones
ECF Representative		David Clayton
NCCU Representative		Dave Clayton & Steve Fanning
Web Author		Steve Fanning & Carl Tillotson
Auditor		Peter Howarth

The post of Bulletin editor and Web Master were merged into the new post of Web Author.

12. Appointment of Auditor - This was completed above.

13. Subscriptions for 2007 - It was agreed to maintain current fees.

14. The Northern Membership Scheme - Bill spoke about the NMS scheme and its success in attracting nearly 1,700 members. He said all went well until the 3rd week in October 2005 with the creation of the ECF. He said NMS was conceived as a scheme to bring cheaper chess to chess players of the north of England where each member would pay £10 to become a member of the BCF

The creation of the ECF as a company had meant that BCF members had to sign a membership form of ECF even though they had already signed a BCF application form. Bill said the general response was that people didn’t want to fill out the form as they were already getting the benefits from congress reductions. Some bitter rows ensued with the ECF telling Bill “You must enforce people to fill in the form” and Bill saying you cannot make them. He also believed the new ECF was not entitled to NMS members addresses if NMS members did not wish to sign the ECF legal form.

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Bill also said that the new ECF also failed to hold any meetings or to give any form of communications, as agreed in the agreement. The NMS had raised an extra £6700 for the ECF, according to the ECF acting CEO. Bill said he believed the ECF should have said "Well done!" to the volunteers from the North and the NMS members for raising this extra income. Bill felt that at least half of the surplus should go back into the north of England as opposed to the view of the present ECF board (and ECF council) that the extra income should go to office expenses and overseas events.

The first review meeting comprising 4 ECF directors and 3 NCCU representatives reached an agreement that half the extra income should go back to the NCCU. Two weeks later the NMS scheme was terminated with the ECF saying they could not agree to give half the extra income back to the NCCU. Therefore we couldn't run the NMS scheme. A lot of emails were sent by the ECF from the junior email list. Bill said he tried to raise above all the slander. The matter was raised at council by Bill. An emergency ECF EGM was organised to iron out the issue. Before the meeting, this was changed by the directors to one of a meeting to dismantle the terminated NMS agreement.

Bill said that, at the ECF general meeting, between 2pm and 4:55pm they only talked about bureaucracy and dismantling the NMS. Bill then said he stood up and said the meeting was a travesty, making the North out to be the culprits when they had raised an extra £6700 for the ECF. In the last minute of the meeting Cyril Johnson said the ECF would give a rebate to the NCCU.

A new Membership Organisation scheme had been approved by ECF general meeting that would allow unions, counties or leagues to run their own national membership scheme and keep a percentage of the income, dependent on members signing the ECF legal form.

Bill's calculations showed that this scheme would raise more money for the ECF than the amount they had received from NMS. He said "Why should we be raising more income and not benefiting from it? Especially as the ECF had reneged on the 50-50 split of extra income raised by the NMS".

The NCCU representatives had agreed to spend the £3,000 rebate from ECF as follows.

- £1,000 on chess sets for juniors/schools etc.
- £600 towards the NCCU club championship.
- £1,400 to a NCCU grand Prix.

Bob said that it was his understanding that all the people who joined the NMS at the start were becoming members of the BCF. The changing from BCF to ECF caused problems and he felt it would have been better to have made this change at the end of the year. Bill agreed that it was very difficult to get people to sign the form part way through the year and when he raised this and suggested the change to ECF should be delayed, he felt no one was listening to him. Bob said he thought a lot of people had joined NMS to get the congress discounts.

Bill showed the meeting his new proposed NMS agreement that would allow a non ECF membership and an ECF membership option. This would have to go to

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the ECF for their agreement. Bob asked what body would run the non ECF membership scheme, Bill replied that it would be the NCCU.

Bill explained that for the non ECF member scheme, the member would pay the congress discounted rate and the NCCU would pay the members game fee so their games would be graded. It was asked if the ECF would sign the new agreement as it is a condition of the ECF new scheme that we encourage ECF membership with our best endeavors. Bill said if they didn't accept this proposal from the NMS working party we would just run the non-ECF part of the scheme.

Dave Clayton and Bob Tinton said Leyland chess club had taken on board the NMS scheme as a means of joining the national federation and if successful, could be rolled out nationally and thus national body could claim to have a substantial membership base and then gain government grants.

David said that Bill should be thanked for the excellent promotional and marketing work done to launch NMS and nothing like this could have been launched without him. An area he obviously excels in. But it appeared to him that Bill was taking on all the administration of the scheme as well as the promotional work and this was putting undue pressure on one person. He wished Bill could have had some help and assistance.

15. AOB

Steve suggested LCA minutes go up on the web site. The minutes secretary said he would forward minutes to Steve.

16. Date of next AGM

It was agreed that it may be possible to hold the next meeting at Chorley Chess congress. If not a meeting would be called before the Blackpool congress in March 2007.