



Minutes of Meeting - Hertfordshire Chess Association (HCA)

Held Friday 26th October 2018 from 19.30 hrs

Chauncy Room, Hertford Club, Bull Plain, Hertford, SG14 1DT

Present

Alan Brewis, Michael Flatt, Ross Brennan, Chris Cook, Mike Price, Jeremy Fraser-Mitchell, Ray Claret

1 Apologies for Absence

Peter Dunks, Steve Law, Steve Banks, John Rhodes, Andrew du Boulay, Ian Mutton, Malcolm Harding, Peter Baker.

2 Minutes of the previous meeting held 9th March 2018

The Minutes were approved with no matters arising.

3 Treasurer's Financial Report – *Mike Price*

The Brief Financial Spreadsheet is attached.

A generally quiet start to the season financially, the main concerns being the future of county chess in Hertfordshire. We incurred a £60 fine from ECF for defaulting three boards in the U140 ECF preliminary round against Lancashire in April. This is in the ECF rules, but I consider it unjustified as it is on top of any expenses due to opponents who were left without a game. Counties with larger player resources than Herts are not entering the ECF stages, and we should give careful thought as to whether we should follow their example.

Invoices to clubs for their affiliation and entry fees for this season, and any game fees and adjudications from last season, were sent out earlier this month. I would like to thank the clubs who have responded so promptly.

The Capel, Burn and Bunce competitions took place in September, and once I have received all the entry fees, I expect this to return a small surplus.

Insurance has been renewed, albeit underwritten by Allianz rather than Aviva.

County Team Operating Costs 2017/18

	Entry Fees	Board	Venue	Expenses	Overall	Operating
Open	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
U160	(£24.00)	£0.00	£0.00	£25.00	£1.00	£25.00
U140	(£44.00)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	(£44.00)	£0.00
U120	(£38.00)	£144.00	(£157.50)	(£60.00)	(£111.50)	(£73.50)
Total	(£106.00)	£144.00	(£157.50)	(£35.00)	(£154.50)	(£48.50)

4 Secretary's Report – *Alan Brewis*

County Award A replacement quite like the last County Award can be provided by a Hertford supplier. The meeting approved a £5 per trophy cost and outstanding County Awards will next be obtained.

Newsletter An unfinished draft of a Newsletter covering the 2017/18 season was presented. It will be abandoned and in its place a Newsletter for the 2018/19 will be created from it. It will capture HCA activity over the full season but rather than wait until season end, work will start now by capturing events as they happen e.g. county team results and the Capel, Burn and Bunce Competition, etc. It is hoped to include officers' reports, possibly in an edited format, from the AGM. It would be good to have annotated games too.

HCA Meetings Much as I appreciate the regular attendees of this meeting, numbers are declining and in truth there is little real 'business' to discuss. This meeting is inquorate, for example, with only 7 attending out of the 9 required. The feeling is that players value their precious spare time too much to give up an evening to HCA Meetings. Add to this that the HCA seems to work – the competitions, county teams, finances, administration – all get done. And this age of electronic communications - email, websites, social media and the like – appears to make meetings more redundant than ever.

So in place of the two meetings required by our Constitution I will propose at the AGM a more flexible arrangement that allows a meeting(s) to be called when needed. For dealing with Rule proposals for instance. In place of paragraph 8,

'The Executive Committee shall meet at least twice a year.....'

an alternative Rule might be,

'Meetings can be convened by any two of the following five officers: President, Secretary, Treasurer, League secretary, Chairman of the Rules Committee.'

There is already provision in the Constitution, paragraph 10, that enables a meeting to be called by at least 10 members.

Two other ideas were raised at the meeting. A virtual meeting, suggested by Chris, one in which people attended online from their home using a facility such as webinar. Second, an alternative to formal meetings could be a discussion forum, proposed Jeremy. This could encourage a wide range of chess subjects.

Should the number of meetings reduce, then I would be in favour of developing the AGM.

Irrespective of the future of our meetings, the HCA needs an improved website, hertschess.com. I will pursue this.

5 Officers' Reports

5.1 Capel, Burn & Bunce – Steve Law

Hosted by the Hertford Club with co-organiser Sanjay Vig, this was quite successful with 19 entrants. Steve's detailed report appears on his chess results website, <http://chess-results.e2-e4.co.uk/>.

5.2 ECF – Chris Cook

Chris attended the ECF AGM held in Birmingham on Saturday October 13th but was not impressed. The facilities were poor; the meeting was fractious; the Board and Council sometimes appeared to oppose one another, and unachievable ideas were mooted. Chris found it quite dysfunctional with income seemingly taking priority over encouraging grass route players.

5.3 Correspondence Chess – John Rhodes

Some really good news emerged from the recent EFCC meeting. Herts A Team will be promoted from the Sinclair Division 2 to the Ward-Higgs Division 1 after all.

Apparently, Essex B, who won the Sinclair, do not want promotion and Lancashire have not entered a team for next season. This leaves Surrey B and ourselves to be promoted to the Ward-Higgs.

This is great news for Hertfordshire as it means that we have a chance of playing some of the top players from the county teams. We have played in the Ward-Higgs before and it is good to be back there again! *Refer to appendix 1, included at the end of these Minutes, for John's full report.*

5.4 U120 County Team Report – Peter Baker

After the July 2018 grade release we lost Simon Cage (130) and Austin McMahon (120) from our player "pool" and welcomed Sanjay Vig (116) and Mohammud Jaufarally (108) into the squad.

The season got off to a splendid start with our Home win v Middlesex on October 13 by 7-5. Middlesex are the current SCCU U120 champions. It was in one sense a remarkable win in that after the results of the first 7 boards to finish, Middlesex were ahead by 4½ to our 2½ but in the remaining 5 boards we won 4 and drew 1 taking our board score to 7 and only leaving Middlesex behind with 5.

6 HCA Competition Review

The intention here was to see if the range of competitions organised by the HCA was meeting the need of our players. With no input or feedback we are left to conclude that all is well. Some comments made at the meeting:-

League & Knockout Competitions Steve does a superb job. If it ain't broke, don't fix it was the view expressed. 3 new teams came into the league this season.

U120 League The 3 extra league teams made it impossible for Steve to arrange a complete set of fixtures. As a result each time has 12 matches rather than the full 16.

Capel, Burn and Bunce It would be good to have a larger venue that can attract more entrants but at least the current arrangement has allowed this tournament to continue.

County Teams The U120 team seems quite viable with an experienced captain in Peter Baker. Useful players drifting down in grade are now available to participate. Both the U140 and U160

teams depend upon lower grade players but this has become the norm for most counties. The pool of stronger players is dwindling and given the opportunity these teams would be interested in moving from a 16 to a 12 board match. Mike Price indicated that after a 15 year tenure, he cannot longer continue with U160 team administration beyond this season. **More county players are needed.**

Herts Congress A good venue, Oaklands College in the centre of WGC, has been found with, importantly, a cooperative college facilitator. We have been offered 3 sets of date, at the ends of this term, Spring 2019 and Summer 2019. The first, the week before Christmas was deemed too risky. The 2nd would compete with St Albans Congress which is unacceptable. The 3rd, some time in summer, but not in competition with the British Championships, is receiving attention. We will decide before the end of 2018 after which we risk a price increase. **The congress team needs strengthening though.** This could be the deciding factor. Anyone interested to contact Alan Brewis please.

Inter-Club Team Rapidplay Tournament (Old Puller Cup) Some years now since this took place and this competition must be considered defunct.

4NCL Herts players participate as individuals as do Watford CC since September 2017. The format, usually of two games played over a weekend with an overnight's stay, will not suit everyone.

Daytime Chess Welwyn Hatfield Chess Forum meet on Friday's from midday at their clubhouse. All welcome.

7 Any Other Business

Ray proposed that John Leake, the founder of the U120 league, be remembered through his name appearing on the trophy. This was agreed. **Action – Alan**

Meeting closed at 22.00 hrs.

Appendix 1

Correspondence Chess Conductor's Report – *John Rhodes*

County and District Correspondence Chess Championships

Division 2 Sinclair

Hertfordshire 'A' Team: - Finished the 2017/18 season on 9.5 / 16 in 4th place out of 11 teams after Essex B on 11 / 16, Surrey B on 10 / 16 and Lancashire on 10 / 16. A good result. Top scorers, Peter Rice and myself each with double wins. New Team for 2018/19 season, Board 1 SIM Keith Kitson, Board 2 SIM John Rhodes, Board 3 Ed Holland, Board 4 Peter Rice, Board 5 Ross Brennan, Board 6 Arthur Reed, Board 7 Steve Law, Board 8 Mike Dyer. Entries are in and we await our opponents. Play should start mid to late October.

Division 3 Butler-Thomas: -

Hertfordshire 'B' Team: - Finished the 2017/18 season in Division 2 on 2 / 16 in last place out of 11 teams with relegation to Division 3. A disappointing result. First, second and third teams as above. Top and only scorer David Edney with double wins. New Team for 2018/19, Board 1 Peter Dunks, Board 2 David Edney, Board 3 Jonathan Tymms, Board 4 Tim Thurstan, Board 5 Keith Woodhouse, Board 6 Ian Brooks, Board 7 Simon Cage, Boards 8 Alan Prince. Entries are in and we await our opponents. Play should start mid to late October.

You can view the 2017/18 Championships by going to the iccf.com website and selecting 'Tables and Results', 'National Tournaments', 'England' and 'British Team-Championships', then selecting 'C & DCCC 2017/18 Division 2 – Sinclair'. Play finished on 31/08/2018.

British Correspondence Chess League

Championship Division

Eight of Hearts Team: - Finished the 2017/18 season with 4.5 / 16 in 7th place out of 8 teams, although there is an outstanding result for Social CCA Team who are likely to gain another point and be ahead of us with the extra win. Top scorers were Keith Kitson and Peter Rice both with a win and a draw. A disappointing result, although we must remember that the other teams are picked from the whole country, not just from one county! There are several other outstanding results amongst the teams but, leading so far, are BCCA Dragons with 10 / 14, Friends Chess with 9.5 / 16 and White Rose A with 9 / 13. The 2018/19 Team is yet to be selected.

Division 2

Eight of Hearts 'B' Team: - Finished the 2017/18 season with 8.5 / 16 in 3rd place out of 5 teams. Top scorers were Colin Kidd, Ian Brooks and myself who each had double wins. A reasonable result.

Malvern & Worcester Dragons scored an excellent 14.5 / 16 and Insurance A scored 9 / 16. The 2018/19 Team is yet to be selected. You can view each Division by going to the iccf.com website and selecting 'Tables and Results', 'National Tournaments', 'England' and 'BCCA Events' (scroll to bottom of right hand list) then selecting 'BCCA Championship 2017/18' or 'BCCA Division 2 2017/18'. Play finished on 30/09/2018.

5th British Webserver Team Tournament, Division 3

Herts & Minds Team: - Play is in full swing and we have just completed half our games. We are currently leading with 10.5 / 15. Close behind are Schach Dragons with 9 / 13 who have 2 rating points above our average of 2234. Wins so far from Keith Kitson (1), Arthur Reed (2) and Ross Brennan (3). So far so good!