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**Minutes of the AGM - Hertfordshire Chess Association (HCA)**

**7.30 pm Wednesday 25th July 2023**

**Held at the County Constitutional Club, 29 Ridgmont, St Albans, AL1 3AG**

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|  | **Present** Jeremy Fraser-Mitchell, Ray Claret, Michael Flatt, Matt Ball - St AlbansMike Price - StevenageAlan Brewis, Andrew du Boulay - HertfordSteve Law - Hemel HempsteadTim Thurston – LetchworthRoger Lancaster – WatfordChris Cook , Oliver Cook - Little Heath |
| **1** | **Apologies for Absence** |
|  | Adam Hirst (Bishop’s Stortford), Stephen Banks (Enfield), Chris Dyer (Rothamsted), Chris Pines (St Albans), John Rhodes |
| **2** | **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**  |
|  | These were approved.  |
| **3** | **Matters Arising**None.  |
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| **4** | **Treasurer’s Report – *Mike Price***The Financial Statement is the final page of these minutes. It is good to be able to report on a season for over-the-board chess in Hertfordshire, which returned to something approaching normality, as we returned to five divisions and a schedule based on pre-pandemic norms. There was still no return to the closed county competitions known as Capel, Burn and Bunce, but our U1850 county team competing in the East Anglian Chess Union, qualified for the ECF national stages. The activities that we did participate in largely covered their costs, and we finished with a deficit for the year of £876.23. Once again we received substantial donations from eight of our vice-presidents, and we are grateful for their continuing support, although a number are no longer active in playing chess. One of those eight is indeed no longer with us, as Graham Williams passed away in May, only two years after moving to Llandudno in North Wales. Graham was for many years our Correspondence Chess organiser, and we are grateful for the contribution he gave to chess in Hertfordshire.At last year’s AGM, it was agreed that following legacies received in recent seasons, HCA would make available a total sum of up to £1,500, to be distributed among the chess clubs affiliated to the Hertfordshire Chess Association at March 2020. Five clubs duly made an application for a financial grant, which came to a total of £1,199.94. This extraordinary expenditure was a one-off exercise and was the primary reason that we recorded the deficit stated above, and not a surplus on the year’s activities. Apart from the financial grants stated above, our other main administration cost was the annual insurance bill. Trophies are a significant part of that bill, and it is several years since we last had them valued.On balance I consider our affiliation and competition entry fees to be about right, so I recommend to the AGM that they remain unchanged for the 2023/24 season as follows:* £20 Affiliation fee
* £7 League entry fee per team
* £5 U1600 league entry fee per team
* £1 K/O entry fee per team

A motion to retain the existing fees into the 2023/24 season was carried nem con.After the nightmare season in 2021/22 with problems caused by HSBC, it has been a relief to have banking services return to calmer waters. Following the switch of accounts to Lloyds, we subsequently closed the HSBC deposit account, and transferred the proceeds into our one Lloyds account. You will now see on the Financial Statement that our bank balance stands at £9,805.61, rather than the separate amounts that were shown in 2022. An invoice from the ECF has just been received for 9 x £18 unpaid ECF membership fees. Where relevant the HCA will pass on the charges to the clubs concerned.  |
| **5** | **Secretary’s Report – *Alan Brewis***The missing winning team identities have all been added to the HCA trophies, with the following two exceptions:Steve Law has repaired the Division 2 Montague Board and is hoping the missing winning team information will be found in the archives to enable him to update this trophy.A trophy has been procured for the U1600 division 2 league which ran for the first time this season. The engraving of this is in hand.Thanks to Corinne Mountford for her captaincy of the U1850 county team. She has now stood down and Matt Ball has agreed to replace her. Herts were not represented at the recent East Anglian Chess Union AGM but registered their preference for the team size to remain at 12 boards (and not increase).I will stand down at the 2024 AGM after 10 years in office. This provides an opportunity for a new secretary to help support chess services across the county.  |
| **6** | **League Secretary’s Report – *Steve Law*****Overall impressions**The 2022-23 season saw normality returned, at least for most clubs. Some clubs are thriving and their membership increasing, most of these have a team or two in the U1600 league. But there are a few who are clearly still struggling to entice players back and also recruit new players. The number entering the League was still down on the norm and Knockout entries were lower than expected. But U1600 League had more teams albeit from fewer clubs. Overall, the future seems bright with many clubs fielding new and younger players.**Hertfordshire League**The League was back to 5 divisions of double round all-play-all. Initially there were 36 teams, allocated in 5 divisions by average rating and the previous seasons results. I placed the extra team in division 1 for few reasons. Firstly it was difficult to decide which team would miss out. Secondly the fixtures are easier with 8 in a higher divisions. Lastly I felt we should try and give more clubs a chance to compete in the top division. Unfortunately just before the matches began Stevenage 3 had to withdraw from division 5 leaving it with only 6 teams.Both Hemel and St Albans have set new records in the League.The division winners were :-Division 1 – Hemel Hempstead 1 followed by Hemel Hempstead 2. I believe this is a first in the Herts League.Division 2 – St Albans 3. Another first for the League, a third team in division 1 next season.Division 3 – St Albans 4. Another first for the League, a fourth team in division 2 next season.Division 4 – Little Heath 2.Division 5 – St Albans 6 on game points from Little Heath 3, and a sixth team in division 4 next season.**U1600 League**With several teams indicating they would like to enter a second team in the U1600 League, a second division was added. In the end ‘only’ 13 teams entered leaving the top division with only 6 teams.Winners in both divisions were Hertford, both teams winning on game points and both on the last day of the season. Both divisions were very closely fought, division 1 covered by just 3 match points and the top 5 in division 2 by just 2 points.**Knockout**Disappointingly low entries in all the sections.The winners were :-Russell Trophy – Only 6 teams with Little Heath beating Letchworth & Hitchin in the final.Sharp Trophy – 8 teams with Bishops Stortford beating Watford in the final.U1750 Cup – 8 teams and a repeat of last year’s final, with St Albans beating Bishops Stortford.U1600 Cup – 8 teams with Little Heath beating St Albans in the final.**2023/24 Season**From information I’ve already received it’s likely there will be at least 3 or 4 more teams entering the Herts League and a couple more in the U1600 League. With the expected new teams in the Herts League I propose to again have 8 teams in division 1, with 7 teams in divisions 2, 3 and 5. Division 4 will be the ‘large’ division with teams playing 12 matches, not the full double round. This will likely result in some teams being moved from division 5 to division 4. I’m unsure if the 8 in division 1 will remain for the future and will take guidance from clubs, this could lead to a 2 down 1 up in some divisions.The plan with the U1600 League is to continue with 2 divisions with no enforced promotion or relegation. Division 2 primarily being for new players to get match experience. |
| **7** | **Closed County Competition Rules**Proposals 8.1 and 8.2 of the agenda are carried forward to a meeting of the Rules Committee (or else a Special Meeting) where there will be a review of the player nomination process.  |
| **8** | **Equipment Officers Report – *Mike Price***There is no change in the equipment owned by the HCA. Of the 40 digital clocks some 23 are DGT 2010. The clocks are divided between Sanjay and myself.  |
| **9** | **Correspondence Chess Conductor – *John Rhodes*****Graham Williams Funeral**Many of you will have watched the video link to Graham’s funeral held in Llandudno in June. John Harris, of Hertford Chess Club, attended the service and gave a moving tribute to Graham on behalf of Herts Chess Association.**The late Arthur Reed is the posthumous winner of the BCCA 2022 Gold Medal Tournament!**After Arthur passed away in August 2022 he had four games in this event which were adjudicated. Three were adjudicated as draws and one a win giving him a final score of 8/12, a full point ahead of any other of the, mainly titled players, including an SIM and an IM. The final game of this event only finished in June 2023 and the winner was due to receive an engraved Gold Medal. James Reed, Arthur’s brother in America, was contacted and said *“Wow great news! I knew he had won the silver group a couple of times but I don't think he won the gold before.”* There is no doubt that James will be delighted to receive Arthur’s medal and I am sure Arthur would have been too.**2023 Season****Hertfordshire Team in C&DCCC 2023/24 Division 2 – Sinclair**Boards: - 1 SIM John Rhodes; 2 IM Peter Rice; 3 SIM Keith Kitson; 4 Mike Dyer; 5 Steve Law; 6 David Edney; 7 Tim Thurstan; 8 Ian Brooks. We now have 4.5/8 in 3rd place which includes a fine win by SIM Keith Kitson against Robert Hurn of East Wales B and a draw by myself against CCE Michael Bowley of North Wales. Surrey B are leading with 7.5/8 but this includes 3 games won by time defaults which distort the final results. Unfortunately, looking at the remaining games, we can only hope for another 1.5 points to come our way. The Ward-Higgs was tough, but this seems even tougher! Start date was 14/04/23 and finish date is 23/03/24.www.iccf.com/event?id=101597**Eight of Hearts Team in BCCL Championship 2023**Boards: - 1 SIM John Rhodes; 2 IM Peter Rice; 3 SIM Keith Kitson; 4 Steve Law; 5 Pete Dunks; 6 Tim Thurstan; 7 Ian Brooks; 8 Mark Duggin. We now have 6.5/11 in 4th place. BCCA Giants lead with a remarkable 9/10. Steve Law has won against Robert Collins of Insurance. Looking at the remaining games I think that we can get another 2.5 points with any luck. Start date was 20/02/23 and finish date is 20/01/24. www.iccf.com/event?id=100993 |
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| **8** | **Election of Officers** |
|  | President | Jeremy Fraser-Mitchell |
|  | Secretary | Alan Brewis |
|  | **Treasurer** | ***Vacant*** |
|  | League Secretary | Steve Law |
|  | U120 League | Steve Law |
|  | Capel, Burn & Bunce Organisers  | *Vacant* |
|  | Knockout Competition Organiser | Steve Law |
|  | Open Team Captain | *Vacant* |
|  | County U1850 Team Captain  | Matt Ball |
|  | County U1650 Team Captain  | *Vacant* |
|  | County U1450 Team Captain  | *Vacant* |
|  | Correspondence Chess Conductor | John Rhodes |
|  | Webmaster | Stephen Dicks\ Alan Brewis |
|  | County Grader | Steve Law |
|  | Chief Arbiter | Tim Thurstan |
|  | Equipment Curator | Mike Price |
|  | ECF Representative  | Chris Cook |
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| **9** | **Any Other Business** The decision was taken to reaffiliate to the SCCU. Ray Claret reported a very successful St Albans Congress with 211 players. The next Congress is set for 13 - 14th April 2024.Matt Ball gave a very entertaining short presentation on the Chessable course, Zwischenzug! A Comprehensive Guide to Intermediate Moves, he has prepared with WIM Natasha Regan. He has visited some chess clubs in London to promote it and offered to the same for interested Herts clubs. |
|  | The meeting closed at 10.16pm.  |

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|  |  | **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS** |  |  |  |  |  |
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|  |  | SUMMARY OF |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 15th June 2023** |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Derived from the Detailed Financial Report (DFR) |  |  |  |
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| DFR |  | **Income** | **Expenses** |  | **2023** |  | **2022** |
| Part |  |  |  |  | **£** |  | **£** |
| 2 | Administration | £554.28 | (£1,695.60) |  | (£1,141.32) |  | £126.11 |
| 3 | HCA Competitions | £322.09 | (£57.00) |  | £265.09 |  | £255.64 |
| 4 | County Teams | £0.00 | £0.00 |  | £0.00 |  | (£18.95) |
| 5 | HCA Congress | £0.00 | £0.00 |  | £0.00 |  | £0.00 |
| 6 | Game Fees | £36.00 | (£36.00) |  | £0.00 |  | £0.00 |
|  |  | £912.37 | (£1,788.60) |  | (£876.23) |  | £362.80 |
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|  |  | **BALANCE SHEET AT 15th June 2023** |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | **2023** |  | **2022** |
|  | **ASSOCIATION FUNDS** |  |  |  |  |  |
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|  | Funds at 16th June 2022 |  |  | £10,741.84 |  | £10,379.04 |
|  | Deficit for the Year |  |  | (£876.23) |  | £362.80 |
|  | Total Funds at 15th June 2023 |  |  | £9,865.61 |  | £10,741.84 |
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|  | **Comprising** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Congress Fund |  |  |  | £0.00 |  | £7,244.75 |
|  | General Fund |  |  |  | £9,865.61 |  | £3,497.09 |
|  |  |  |  |  | £9,865.61 |  | £10,741.84 |
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|  | **ASSETS & LIABILITIES** |  |  |  |  |  |
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|  | Assets |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Bank and Cash Balances |  |  | £9,805.61 |  | £5,636.28 |
|  | Money in Deposit  |  |  | £0.00 |  | £5,022.83 |
|  | Add sums due to Association |  |  | £60.00 |  | £111.73 |
|  | Deduct Liabilities |  |  | £0.00 |  | (£29.00) |
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|  | **Total Net Assets** |  |  | £9,865.61 |  | £10,741.84 |
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|  | **Other Assets** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Insurance Value |  |  |  |  |
|  | Capel Cup | £2,750.00 |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Sharp trophy | £1,850.00 |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Burn Cup | £895.00 |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Hakanson Cup | £600.00 |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Old Puller Cup | £600.00 |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | New Puller Cup | £1,900.00 |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Total** | £8,595.00 |  |  |  |  |  |
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|  | Signed on behalf of the Hertfordshire Chess Association as of 5th July 2023 |  |  |
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|  | M. K. Price Treasurer |  |  |  |  |  |  |