

ESSEX CHESS ASSOCIATION

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MINUTES OF A GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT THE OLD HOUSE, BRENTWOOD, ESSEX ON 20 MAY 2009 AT 8.00pm

Present: Gavin Strachan (in the chair), Steve Abbott, David Brock, Alistair Clark, Aidan Corish, Malcolm Crane, Russell Fisher, Howard Grist, Ian Hunnable, Peter Laundry, Arnold Lutton, Mark Murrell, David Millward, Jef Page, David Payne, John Philpott, Joe Rosenberg, Robin Slade, Ivor Smith and Stephen Wedlock.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from David Smith and Colin Ramage.

2. Minutes of the meetings held on 15 May 2008 and 30 June 2008

These were approved as drafted (proposed David Millward, seconded Malcolm Crane).

3. Matters arising from these minutes

None

4. League review for 2008/9

David Millward reported that for 2008/9 the League had lost two clubs, but entries reduced by only one team to 25. He was not yet aware of any changes in entries for 2009/10.

Only the very last scheduled match had been defaulted. No quick play finish disputes had been reported. All trophies expected had been returned by the start of the present meeting, but it had not been possible to trace the Division 4 trophy last held by Newham.

David advised the meeting of the results for each Division. It was not yet known whether Wanstead 2, which had won Division 2, wished to be promoted.

5. Proposed changes to League rules for 2009/10

The central element of proposal (a) concerned a move away the mandatory single session format that had been introduced for 2008/9 by permitting adjournments. David Millward advised that the League Management Committee supported the mandatory single session. When the debate was thrown open to the floor, a number of strong arguments both for and against the mandatory single session were advanced. Eventually a vote was taken on the motion (proposed Alistair Clark, seconded David Payne) that the mandatory second session should be retained. This was carried by 10 votes to 8, with 2 abstentions.

The supplementary elements of proposal (a) and proposals (b) and (c) as a whole did not need to be considered in view of this vote.

Proposal (e) concerned the replacement of the time limit of 24 moves in 60 minutes plus a 30 minute quickplay finish by either 30 moves in 75 minutes plus a 15 minute quickplay finish or by all moves in 90 minutes. An alternative suggestion that the players should be able to choose between the three limits did not receive any support on the night. After the merits of the alternative limits had been debated a proposal by Ian Hunnabale seconded by David Brock to move to all moves in 90 minutes was approved by 12 votes to 3.

Proposal (e), to allow alternative time limits for venues where only 2½ hours playing time was available, was withdrawn after it was pointed out that all Essex League venues had for several years, allowed for a 3 hour session.

Proposal (f) was to allow a captain the use of a mobile phone without penalty until a full team had arrived. It was recognised that the relevant FIDE law could be too draconian for an amateur leagues where the captain needed to deal with players who had been delayed. It was proposed Gavin Strachan, seconded Malcolm Crane and agreed nem con that a captain should be able to have his phone on silent/vibrate mode up to default time to receive a call, but should leave the playing room to speak. The League Secretary will draw attention to this in a circular at the start of the season.

Proposal (g) by the Treasurer was to cap the League deposit at £15: with the disappearance of adjudications, the Association was holding more by way of deposits than was required. This proposal was seconded by David Millward and approved nem con.

6. 2009 Congress update

The 2009 event would mark Ivor Smith's 10th year as Congress Secretary, but he had great reservations about the likely outturn. Despite the unwritten rule that a new congress should not be organised over a weekend when an established event is taking place in the same area, Sean Hewitt is organising a new event in Amersham over the bank holiday weekend which includes Major and Minor sections as well as a FIDE-rated Open. It is difficult to compete with such an event, as it is able to offer good playing conditions at a hotel, cheap accommodation for the players and a healthy prize fund. If Amersham continues over the same weekend in future, the viability of the present Ilford congress will need to be reconsidered. For 2009 there is likely to be a significant financial hit, as several regulars from the Major and Minor have switched to Amersham, and entries as of the day of the meeting were 30 short of those on the corresponding day in 2008. Some steps, such as cutting additional prizes, could be taken to limit the 2009 financial loss: an anonymous Donor had offered £200 - £300. Joe Rosenberg pointed out that the Association's finances were in a generally healthy state, and a one off loss could be absorbed given that the congress had made a surplus of £500 over the previous 6 seasons.

7. Knockout competition

In the absence of Colin Ramage, Ivor Smith reported that the 2008 event had been won by Writtle and the Plate by Upminster. Entries for 2009 needed to be reach Colin by 1 June.

8. Tournaments for 2009/10

The Team Blitz and Individual Lightning Championships would be held at Ilford's venue on 12 July, and the Individual Rapidplay Championship at Writtle on 19 July.

9. Officers for 2009/10

Ivor Smith indicated that he might decide after ten years that it was time for him to relinquish the post of Congress Secretary. John Philpott reminded the meeting that the post of Match Captain was currently vacant, and advised that he was not willing to undertake the responsibilities of this position in an acting capacity for a third season. Ivor stated that if he ceased to be the Congress Secretary he may consider becoming the Match Captain. None of the other elected Officers present indicated an intention not to seek re-election. John Philpott emphasised that the Executive was not a closed shop, and that fresh blood would be welcome.

10. Any other business

None.

The meeting closed at 9.35 pm.