

NCCU AGM held on 12th August 2023 at 13.00

Venue: West Riding Public House, 38 Wellington St, Leeds LS1 2DE

NCCU AGM MEETING MINUTES

Attendees

Tim Wall – President and Northumberland representative
Dave Cole – General Secretary and Cumbria representative
George Horne – Treasurer and Cumbria representative
Bryan Bainbridge – County Controller and Vice President
Bill Metcalfe – Durham and unofficial representative for Cleveland
Damien McElvenny – Greater Manchester representative
Dave Kilmartin - Greater Manchester representative
Mike O’Mahony – Merseyside representative
John Holliday – Yorkshire representative
Steve Mann – Webmaster, Yorkshire

1. Apologies for absence – Rupert Jones, Dave Almond, Pat Ridley, Steve Westmoreland, Andrew Wainwright

2. Minutes of the NCCU AGM 8TH October 2022
The Minutes were agreed as a true and correct record

3. Matters & actions arising from last minutes not otherwise covered in the agenda
There were no matters arising.

4. Officers Reports:

a. Report of President

Tim was happy to report that a number of congresses in the North were getting back on their feet, notably Durham, Northumberland, Bolton, Sheffield, Swinton, Doncaster and Blackpool. The Lancaster congress last week was new and Rhyl was happening in September. Also Northumbria has 120 entrants already. It was suggested a mailing list of events be created of Northern events to reps, when Steve Mann pointed out the NCCU website headlines congresses in the North.

The 125th Anniversary of the NCCU was discussed as to how we could celebrate the event within a congress. A number of congresses were suggested such as Blackpool, Stockport, Scarborough (as in the 100th Anniversary) or Manchester. Also a 2024 Congress Grand Prix circuit was suggested with a number of events to count in a cumulative score. **Action: The President and Secretary to consider further and come up with proposals.**

Tim also reported that the NCCU Champion Virgil Szekely played in the British Championship and got a respectable score.

The main strategy going forward was to reach out to Counties that are currently fairly inactive and encourage greater participation in the NCCU, taking part in Club, County and Individual events.

As an interesting aside, Steve pointed out, reference the 125th Anniversary, that Lincolnshire were founder members of the NCCU back in 1899.

b. Report of General Secretary

Dave had nothing of substance to report apart from the breaking news that the UK Government was providing £500k to the ECF to promote chess and that there was an article in The Times by the ECF President Dominic Lawson on Sunday 6th August 2023 on the 'Turing Gambit' reference the £500k award.

After a discussion it was agreed to draft a letter to the ECF referencing the financial windfall.

It was also thought appropriate to write to chess playing politicians in the North inviting them to the 125th Anniversary events. **Action: The President and Secretary**

c. Report of Treasurer (including Affiliation fees 2023-24)

George Horne tabled the latest accounts which show a surplus of £166.75, with a bank balance of £2380.76. The 8 chess clocks remaining are valued at £350.40.

Due from Lancashire are Affiliation fees for 2019-20 and 2022-23 and County match fees of £114 for the year 2021-22. The Affiliation fee for 2022-23 is not included in this year's accounts.

George recommended Affiliation fees to remain at £75 per County, which was agreed.

George also passed the Audited a/c's for 2019, 2020 and 2022 to the Secretary which were confirmed as a true and fair account.

d. Report of County Championships Organiser

Bryan provided tables of National County results and reported the NCCU 2023 County winners as follows:

Open: Northumberland

U2050/U1850/U1650, U1450: Yorkshire

Congratulations were given to Greater Manchester who became U1450 National Champions.

Manchester pointed out that having 12 boards was a great incentive to participate.

15 teams had entered the Northern stages and were well contested.

The kick off fixtures meeting was thought a good innovation and will be continued next season as it clarifies dates, teams, sections and people involved.

Calendar clashes were considered a serious issue, especially with Junior events and congresses. It was pointed out the ECF Gigafinal and Megafinal dates clashed and that the NCCU should talk to the ECF on dates for County National stage matches.

Action: The President to contact the ECF on this.

Starting the season earlier was discussed and agreed to try and play two games before Christmas. It was thought that in the graded limited County sections, matches between close graded sections be kept apart, so that for example the U2050 could play the same weekend as the U1450, but not the U1850.

Action: Reps to give Bryan Team Captains names by mid-September.

e. Report of Club Championship Organiser

No report as the 2023 Club Championship was not held. The plan for 2024 is to hold a one day Club jamboree event (4 players per team) perhaps nearer the end of the season to avoid date clashes with other events.

Action: Secretary to provide Tim with details of the last jamboree held at Bradford football stadium.

f. Report of Rating Officer – no report, but the role and need for a Rating Officer was discussed.

It was agreed that rating could be done through LMS for NCCU events as Bryan is doing currently for County events and that the role of Rating Officer be abolished. (**see post meeting note in Elections*)

g. Report of Trophy Officer

No trophies were at the meeting, but need to be transferred and updated with inscriptions.

Open: Yorkshire to Northumberland – Dave Mills confirmed he had the Open Trophy

U20250, U1850, U1650 – Dave Almond confirmed he has these trophies.

Action: The Secretary to provide current trophy list and locations to the new Trophy Officer.

h. Report of Webmaster

Steve Mann provided a written report (see Appendix to these Minutes).

Steve appealed to reps to submit Congress and match details and reports.

Dave Cole mentioned the Keith Arkell Simultaneous event in Maryport the previous Saturday where Keith won 25, drew 8 and lost 2 games. Dave to pass details to Steve.

Tim suggested that he produce a monthly NCCU report starting in September which would feature on the NCCU website.

Steve Henderson had written to the Secretary that the NCCU.org.uk domain name was about to lapse and Steve Mann asked if we should keep it as the current site was free. After discussion it was agreed to keep it (as it was only £12pa) and redirect the name to Steve's site.

i. Report of ECF Delegate

Tim reported that he stood for the post of Non-Executive Chairman of the ECF at the ECF AGM and although lost received a respectable number of votes. He aims to continue to promote his progressive National plan for chess.

A discussion ensued on the ECF Membership scheme proposal to create one membership category instead of the current traffic light system. It was generally thought that if it occurred the starting point should be from an affordable figure (given the cost of living crisis).

Action: Tim to talk to the ECF on the options and financial implications.

The issue of Northern votes at ECF meetings was discussed and it was agreed that not enough were being used, especially proxies and voting intentions. Clear instructions to be given to all reps and to utilise information on the Voting register. Club affiliation was also thought worth exploring.

Action: Tim to advise NCCU reps on the process involved.

5. Proposals

There were no Proposals submitted, although the Yorkshire President emailed suggestions to be considered. These included: Greater County participation; earlier dates to start County matches; having NCCU flagship events and using the 125th NCCU Anniversary in 2024 with a celebratory event. These were mostly covered in the President's report discussions, with suggestions for a 2024 event in either Hull or Manchester. 2025 was considered a great opportunity as Bradford is the City of Culture.

1. NCCU Individuals and British Qualifying Congress 2024

Although Northumberland can hold the NCCU Individuals, given 2024 is the 125th anniversary, other Congresses are entitled to apply to host for 2024.

Action: County reps to nominate a congress (suggest by the end of 2023)

Action: Northumberland Congress as fall back if none forthcoming

2. U16 Pennine Cup 2024

It was suggested and agreed by Manchester that they would look at hosting a one day jamboree day event in 2024. The Secretary to send Manchester the details and format of the last event held.

Action: Secretary to provide details of past events

3. Schools Awards 2022/23

BCET Award: No nomination

NCCU Award: Lady Barn Junior School Cheshire & NW (Award agreed and delivered)

4. Schools Awards 2023/24

BCET Award – Nomination required before March/April deadline – **Action Yorkshire**

NCCU Award - Nomination required before 2024 AGM – **Action Cumbria**

5. Presentation of Trophies

No trophies were presented.

6. Election of Officers

- President – Tim Wall (for a further two years)
- General Secretary – Rupert Jones
- Treasurer – George Horne
- County Championships Organiser – Bryan Bainbridge
- Club Championship organiser – Tim Wall
- Rating Officer – This position was abolished
*(*post meeting, 'Grading Officer' is retained due to requisite notice not being given to a change in the Constitution)*
- Trophy Officer – Dave Kilmartin
- NCCU Webmaster – Steve Mann
- Delegates to the ECF – Tim Wall and Steve Westmoreland as reserve
- Vice-Presidents to Council – (last two Presidents: Bryan Bainbridge & Bill O'Rourke)

7. Appointment of Auditor

- Neil Foxcroft (Ulverston, Cumbria)

8. Time & date of next meeting

Either hold the Council meeting in December or nearer the ECF Finance meeting in April 2024 - **TBD**

9. Any Other Business

George Horne raised the question of the three signatories currently able to sign cheques – George Horne, Dave Cole and Bill O'Rourke. After a discussion it was decided to keep them as is for now.

Bryan Bainbridge gave a vote of thanks to the outgoing General Secretary for the many years in the post.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 4.08pm.

Dave Cole
General Secretary

Appendix

NCCU Webmaster's Report to 2023 NCCU AGM

I took over the NCCU website when my predecessor Lewis Self decided he no longer had the necessary time to devote to it. Rather than take over an existing site written and managed using software unknown to me and structured in a way contrary to my own way of thinking, I set up a my-style NCCU website in September 2022 and was formally appointed NCCU Webmaster at the 2022 AGM.

Most of Lewis's site material got transferred across. The one casualty was the part on past correspondence chess activity from when the Union ran inter-county team correspondence competitions. The link on the old site went to the wrong page and attempts to retrieve that data failed. (There may have been no more data than I have retrieved from other sources.)

Such websites obviously hold much data which is largely static or lasts for a year. My aim was to incorporate more on-going news of Northern chess activity ran within the Northern Counties.

I have covered NCCU inter-county matches in a manner more "accessible" than resorting to the copout of hyperlinks to the ECF LMS system. Thus, all match results, the league table and the cross-chart for a given rating section appear on a single page. In this way what is held on LMS as 27 different pages is held on the NCCU website on 5 pages.

As a new feature, I have as far as possible reported results of congresses held in NCCU territory and open to all to enter. True, if you know about it, you can root out results on Chess-Results.com, but rather than display links to the source website, I convert the source data into full wall charts, as far as possible correcting name spelling quirks of the source sites and adding in clubs and progressive scores. Congress organisers are welcome to send in reports to add to the basic coverage I give.

Where an event publishes games during its progress or soon after, I am able to give selected games for playing through on screen, but that actually happened so far only for the Harrogate 4NCL congress in January 2023. I see live coverage is advertised for the Northumbria Masters in late August, so I shall be ready with my own software to convert .pgn files to game-playing webpages on the NCCU website ("if re-elected" as the saying goes).

Steve Mann
09/08/2023