

**NORTHERN COUNTIES CHESS UNION
FOUNDED 1899**

Minutes of the NCCU AGM 2009

**Held on Saturday July 11th 2009, at the Latvian Club, 5 Clifton Villas,
Manningham Lane, Bradford, BD8 7BY Tel: 01274 546235**

PRESENT

John Turnock (President and Northumberland representative)
Dave Cole (General Secretary and Cumbria representative)
George Horne (Treasurer and Cumbria representative)
Graham Marshall (Durham representative)
Graham Matthews (Durham representative)
Stuart Johnson (Yorkshire representative)
Ihor Lewyk (Yorkshire representative)
Simon Woodcock (Lancashire representative)
Jim Tennant-Smith (Lancashire representative)
Brian Bainbridge (Vice President)

1. Apologies for Absence

Dave Farley, Jim Moran, Bill O'Rourke, Chris Underhill, William Metcalfe.

2. Minutes of the 6th of December 2008 NCCU Council Meeting

The minutes were accepted, with a clarification from Stuart Johnson on item 5a, where 'Leeds might be the only club in favour' of an NCCU grading list, to the 'Leeds league might be in favour', not the Leeds Club.

3. Matters Arising (including matters not covered in the Agenda)

Item 3. – The MCA - Jim Tennant-Smith contacted Matthew Pollard of the MCA to impart information on the background surrounding the boundary issues with Lancashire. Matthew Pollard is to consult with the MCA and report back to Jim.

Item 5 A. NCCU Grading List. – The NCCU Secretary had produced a draft list, intended to be an on-line easy access list for NCCU Counties and Congress organizers on the NCCU website. There was some debate as to the purpose and legality of it, but if it helped chess organizers then the meeting accepted it could be useful. Ihor mentioned putting links on the website into other such lists such as chessnuts.org.uk – **ACTION - D Cole to look at this and the Grading list.**

Item 5 B – Chess for Schools Project. – John Turnock had written to the ECF CEO about the state of the project and received a reply. Things have moved on and following a telephone call with Chris Majer, John learnt that there is still no Director for the project and that an open day had been held to receive sets, but some schools had not turned up to receive them. However, the ECF website states that schools can still apply for sets until the end of July 2009.

Item 9 – BCET Schools Award – A nomination from Ladymount primary School on the Wirral was approved and will be forwarded to the ECF.

Item 10 – Chess in Prisons – no progress on this as John Turnock had written to Cyril Johnson for more information as to what was involved and is still waiting for a reply.

Item 12 – History of NCCU Presidents. This list is now on the NCCU website, but with a few gaps – if anyone has any information contact the NCCU Secretary.

4. Officers Reports

a) Report of the President

John attended the ECF Finance Council meeting and produced a report which was circulated at the meeting. The issue of the U18 NCCU individual champion being eligible for the British was raised, but since the ECF junior event is no longer held, there is no eligibility issue.

John had located and collected the NCCU Individual trophies for the York Congress in January and brought them to the meeting. The trophies were passed to Jim Tennant-Smith who is to forward on to Cheshire.

John also mentioned the County Jamboree issue, which is discussed later in the County Organiser's report.

b) Report of the General Secretary

The NCCU Calendar was circulated and the Secretary asked if there were any gaps. The Secretary is to email to all reps and officers.

An email was received from Richard Palliser on whether there could be any help given to NCCU players entering the British Championships, other than the Individual champion. It was thought that the costs of helping other NCCU qualifiers was prohibitive; there was a discussion on eligibility to be the Individual Champion. It was thought that the winner at the York Congress might not be eligible to be NCCU Champion and did not qualify for the British. If this is the case Richard Palliser is the Champion. **(Post meeting – it would seem that MG Diaz did meet the criteria for being NCCU Champion as he was resident at Sheffield University for 5 months).**

ACTION – D Cole to look at the Individual Rules, especially on residency.

The Secretary mentioned a proposal from the Cumbria Chess AGM, that because Yorkshire was such a strong County, in order to give others a chance, that they look at splitting up into 4 separate Counties. The NCCU felt this was a Yorkshire issue and were sure they would give it the attention it deserved!

A change in the constitution was agreed requiring the date of the NCCU AGM to be more flexible.

ACTION – D Cole to amend NCCU Constitution.

c) Report of the Treasurer

George Horne reported that the NCCU had a balance of £6401.30 in the bank at 30/04/09 and a membership fee balance of £835.11. £6000 has been paid to the ECF for this years' membership. A small balance is still due. Rebates from last year are still to be paid to Durham and Merseyside. Durham reps gave George the name of the Durham Treasurer, but Merseyside are yet to claim their rebate. A debate ensued on the affiliation fee disparity, which appeared to be a legacy of the ECF Levy system. It was agreed that the NCCU affiliation fee would be set at £75 pa for all Counties and only reviewed if the NCCU finances came under pressure. The report was accepted.

d) Report of the County Championship Organiser

Jim Moran sent his apologies, but sent a report via email on who won each NCCU section, which unfortunately was not available for the meeting. However, the winners were as follows:

Open: Lancashire, runners up Yorkshire, who went on to win the National title.

U175: Lancashire, runners up Yorkshire, who went on to win the National title.

U150: Yorkshire and went on to win the National title.

U125: Yorkshire

U100: Lancashire

Although the Open and U175 sections were played in a Jamboree which caused some controversy over the start time, it was agreed to try this again next season, but with a start time of 2pm at a venue near Bradford/Leeds in order to encourage Eastern Counties to participate. All sections to participate in the Jamboree. A straw poll was held, with thoughts as follows: Northumberland said they may enter the Open, Durham the U125, Cleveland and Cheshire did not turn up to the meeting, so we don't know, Cumbria U150, Lancashire and Yorkshire in all sections.

The grading limits of course have changed, Open, U180, U160, U140, U120 and U100 - so an extra section is required. The meeting also favoured 16 player teams for the jamboree, if possible. A date in Feb/March needs to be agreed - or if a venue cannot take all sections, 2 jamborees may be held.

ACTION – D Cole to organise a venue.

ACTION – D Cole to ask ChessDirect or Chessmaze to provide sets/boards/clocks etc and bookstall.

ACTION – J Moran to advise on numbers of teams and players.

A issue with the National County finals venue was raised with both Lancashire and Yorkshire reps complaining that the venue was not central, only suited the ECF organizer because it was near Leicester, the room was far too hot, the refreshments were not only poor, but had nearly all gone before the teams arrived and at £3 a head, far too expensive. On top of that, Cyril Johnson demanded the money before they started playing. It was also felt that ECF costs were exorbitant (paying for, amongst other things, too many ECF arbiters).

ACTION – S Woodcock and I Lewyk to provide some notes on their observations to D Cole, who would write a letter of complaint from the NCCU to the ECF.

e) Report of the Club Championship Organiser

Dave Farley sent his apologies, but sent in a report. The winners in 2009:

Open – Heywood

Major – Wallasey

Intermediate – Heywood

Minor – Heywood

This years' competition, although starting late, ran very smoothly with all trophies present at the AGM, with thanks to Bill O'Rourke for bringing the engraving up to date. There were eight teams in each section apart from the Open with only two teams. With such low numbers the entry fees brought in £360, but this was outweighed by the prize money of £750. There were additional costs for the final event held at Heywood, in what as a home match, turned out to be somewhat of a Heywood benefit event! However, this was considered the best venue yet for finals day.

It is the intention to start next years' competition in September/October and if we have enough entries a repechage can be introduced. Prize money remains the same and publicity material is due to be issued very shortly. An action from the meeting was to produce 'flyers' for the County Jamboree and Club competitions so that these could be distributed to all reps, clubs, congresses between now and October.

A discussion ensued about the change in grading limits and there was some concern over the narrowness of the bands and the potential when the new grades come out, for lower teams to be promoted into a section too high. D Cole suggested that when the new grades came out and grading bands for the event are proposed, an analysis of last years' teams be done to see the effect of the changes.

ACTION – Produce flyers and distribute – Jim Moran/Dave Farley liaise with D Cole

ACTION – Working Party (D Farley/John Turnock/D Cole) to establish new grading limits - NCCU reps to agree final position.

f) Report of the Correspondence Chess Organiser

Chris Underhill sent his apologies, but sent a report: The Sinclair Shield, won by Yorkshire last season, has four teams in this year, but without Yorkshire as they did not enter. This competition ran smoothly thanks to County Captains, with no adjudications required.

This years' competition is underway with about half the results in and it looks very close between all teams. Yorkshire reps stated that a change in Captain meant they missed the competition for this year. However the new correspondence captain for Yorkshire is Phil Beckett.

ACTION – I Lewyk to pass on Phil Beckett's details to Chris Underhill/D Cole.

g) Report of the Grading Officer

Dave Cole reported that the County and Club results were sent to the ECF in time – thanks to Jim Moran and Dave Farley.

h) Report of the Membership Secretary

Dave Cole reported that the NCCU MO had 685 members (801 last year) the main loss of members being from Merseyside (83 down) and Lancashire (34 down). £6000 has been sent to the ECF with a residual amount owing. The rebate, which is still expected to be 11% will be discussed with the ECF once the season is over and also a basis for next year.

i) Report of BCF/ECF Delegates

John Turnock thanked George Horne for his speedy report on the January ECF Board meeting. John tabled a report on the April ECF Finance Council Meeting, including the role of the President and the fact that Gerry Walsh is stepping down in October. (It was noted that Jeremy Clarkson had been approached, but declined. Lennox Lewis was mentioned as a possibility.) The Chess for Schools project was reported, along with Strategic Planning and the loss the ECF made at the British Championships. Fees had risen, with Game fee rising to 50p per game, while 'basic' ECF Membership is to rise to £11/£7 from September 2009. The new grading limits for County Matches were noted, as were the new laws of Chess on time limits; although this was greeted with dismay by the meeting and would not be generally enforced at congresses.

5. U18 Jamboree and U16 Pennine Cup

The U18 Jamboree is due to take place in March 2010.

ACTION: D Cole to canvas County Reps for volunteer County.

The U16 Pennine Cup is due to take place in December 2009.

ACTION: D Cole to canvas County Reps for volunteer County.

6. Presentation of Trophies

All trophies were at the meeting and presented to winning County reps. S Woodcock took the Lancashire County trophies and J Tennant-Smith the Heywood trophies plus the Individual trophies and the Major Club trophy to give to Wallasey. I Lewyk took the Yorkshire County trophies. The U150 Walls Trophy is in need of a wooden box.

ACTION – Could Yorkshire Reps get a box made and invoice George Horne?

7. Election of Officers

- President – John Turnock
- General Secretary – Dave Cole
- Treasurer – George Horne
- County Championship Organiser – Jim Moran
- Club Championship Organiser – Dave Farley
- Correspondence Chess Organiser – Chris Underhill
- Grading Officer – Dave Cole
- Trophy Officer – Dave Cole
- Delegates to the ECF – John Turnock
- Vice Presidents to Council – Dave Farley and Bill O'Rourke
- Web Master – Vacant

8. Appointment of Auditor

- Neil Foxcroft

9. NCCU Junior Championships 2009

The question was asked whether this competition is to take place this year.

ACTION – Bill O'Rourke to advise if the NCCU Junior is to take place in Blackpool in August.

10. New NCCU County Junior Rules

A request was made from Lancashire to produce Junior County rules. Dave Cole tabled an amended version of the existing NCCU County Championship Rules incorporating Junior events. The amended rules were accepted but with amendments to include an additional grading section of U100 and a rule waving the FIDE position of zero tolerance about being present at the board when play begins.

ACTION – D Cole to amend and issue new rules.

11. British Championship Qualifying Places 2009-10

ACTION: Cheshire & NW to nominate a congress for Individual Champion qualifier (+ 1 other place).

ACTION - British Championship Qualifying Congress x2 places – Durham Congress, April 2010.

12. NCCU Membership Scheme

Dave Cole said that he was happy to continue with the scheme for next year and would like the Eastern Counties to look at joining. John Turnock stated that Northumberland players were happy to have their own MO.

Dave Cole mentioned that, in light of the ECF upping the membership fee by 50p to £11, Cumbria had reduced the fee by 50p to £10 and would pay the residual amount for the players and recoup this from the rebate, thereby benefiting the members directly.

13. ECF Future Strategy

The email from the new ECF Strategy Planning Officer Andrew Farthing was discussed. The meeting felt that although this was a good idea, the reality was that this was only to satisfy DCMS requirements and that little would come from it. Dave Cole suggested that if the ECF should have more contact with the grass roots and direct contact with the clubs and would be contacting Andrew on this.

14. Time & Date of next meeting

12-4pm, Saturday 5th December 2009 at The Latvian Club, Bradford.

15. Any Other Business

(Post Meeting Actions) Schools Awards

BCET 2009/10 nomination required for December NCCU Meeting – **ACTION - Northumberland**

NCCU Award 2009/10 nomination for December NCCU Meeting required – **ACTION - Cheshire**

As Steve Henderson has stepped down as NCCU Webmaster, this position needs to be filled.

ACTION – NCCU reps to canvas County/Clubs/Players for someone who is willing and able to be NCCU Webmaster. – Contact NCCU Secretary.

ACTION - Yorkshire to nominate 2010-2012 NCCU President at December NCCU meeting.

The meeting closed at approx 3.40pm.

**Dave Cole
General Secretary**