

**NORTHERN COUNTIES CHESS UNION  
FOUNDED 1899**

**Minutes of the NCCU Annual General Meeting 2019**

Held on Saturday June 29<sup>th</sup> 2019, at the Latvian Club, 5 Clifton Villas,  
Manningham Lane, Bradford, BD8 7BY Tel: 01274 546235

**PRESENT**

Bill O'Rourke (President and Lancashire representative)  
Dave Cole (General Secretary and Cumbria representative)  
George Horne (Treasurer and Cumbria representative)  
Mike Barrett (Merseyside representative)  
Rupert Jones (Yorkshire representative)  
David Mills (Yorkshire Representative)  
Bryan Bainbridge (Durham representative)  
Keith Smith (Durham representative)  
Paul Bielby (Northumberland representative)  
Tim Wall (Northumberland representative and ECF delegate)  
Steve Mann (Yorkshire)

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Gareth Ellis, Dave Almond and Jim Moran

**2. Minutes of the 2018 NCCU Council Meeting**

The minutes were accepted as a true and correct record, with one minor amendment that a report from the Secretary was circulated before the December meeting.

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

No issues were raised.

**4. Officers Reports**

a) Report of the President

The President mentioned the ECF membership vote at the April Council meeting going against the NCCU proposal to be discussed later in the meeting and that it was wrongly portrayed (not for the first time) as a Bill O'Rourke proposal rather than coming from the NCCU.

He remarked that the National County situation is in rapid decline and unless things change Lancashire as an example would only be putting three teams in rather than the six covering all sections. The President thanked the Secretary and the Treasurer for their services to the NCCU.

b) Report of the General Secretary

The Secretary reported on an ECF consultation on monthly grading and it was commented that this had resulted in a favourable reaction to this grading schedule, with a predominance of the younger chess population being in favour. A straw poll at the meeting found nobody against the ECF adopting monthly grading even though the average age of those at the meeting was on the elderly side!

There was a debate on the date of the NCCU AGM and after discussion it was agreed to hold the meeting at the end of the summer and the Secretary would put out some dates for next year in September to avoid clashes. **Action: Secretary to produce meeting date options**

c) Report of the Treasurer

George Horne reported that the NCCU had a balance at year end of £2328.27 in the bank.  
8 Chess clocks were also being held for Club Championship prizes.

The surplus of £268.76 is due in part to the Schools award not being claimed and there being no room hire nor refreshment expenses for the last two meetings in the Grove at Leeds. The Affiliation fee for the NCCU was agreed to stay at £75 per county. The audited accounts as of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018 were presented.

d) Report of the County Championship Organiser

At the NCCU stage the following Counties won their sections:

Open: Yorkshire  
U180: Lancashire  
U160: Lancashire (Yorkshire v Cumbria not played)  
U140: Lancashire  
U120: Yorkshire  
U100: Lancashire

There was no report, but Rupert Jones and Bill O'Rourke gave an update of the National Stages.

Open: Yorkshire v Surrey Final  
U180: Lancashire v Essex Final  
U160: Lancashire and Yorkshire both lost in early stages  
U140: Yorkshire v Worcestershire Final  
U120: Yorkshire v Essex Final  
U100: Lancashire lost in the semi-final

Discussions on County issues ensued with a consensus view to having the National Finals day north of Birmingham at some time in the future. NCCU County dates were also discussed with a plea to have some matches played before Christmas and to look at 4NCL date clashes. Tim Wall suggested a one day jamboree as a possibility to negate these date clashes and also put this forward as an idea for the National Finals.

Dave Mills reported on the troubles created by the ECF in changing National fixture dates, the lack of arbiters, the use of increments and the difficulty in setting clocks.

It was also agreed that the grading bands were still too close and posed difficulties in getting teams out. It was proposed that the ECF revert to an Open/U175/U150/U125/U100 bands and that the lower bands have the option to play 12 players rather than 16.

It was thought an approach to other Unions to discuss National County issues was the way forward to present a joint approach in discussions with the ECF. (It was stated that an ECF working party was being set up at the end of 2019 to establish the way forward for the County Championships.

**Actions:**

- i. **Ask the ECF, Dave Clayton and Alex McFarlane on providing a set of rules/guidelines/you tube video on how to use DGT clocks (especially on how to add two minutes) - DC**
- ii. **Contact Mark Murell on County Grading Bands - WOR**
- iii. **Consult with other Unions on County and membership issues – WOR**
- iv. **For County games against Yorkshire liaise with Andrew Zigmond ([andrewzig@btinternet.com](mailto:andrewzig@btinternet.com)) – ALL**
- v. **Explore Jamboree day for all County matches – TW**

e) Report of the Club Championship Organiser

The Club Championship organiser reported that the competition did better than last season with three sections being competed; the Open, Minor and Seniors, with Forest Hall, Heywood and South Shields being winners respectively. Thanks to Bill O'Rourke and Heywood for entering all sections and to Harrogate club for hosting the finals day. It was asked that some photos and a flyer to promote finals day be produced for the website.

**Action: Dave Mills to provide report to Keith Smith on the Club Finals day**

**Action: All reps to encourage clubs to enter NCCU Club competition.**

f) Report of the Grading Officer

No Report

**Action: Is Chris Goodall able to do the grading for NCCU games? – TW to ask him and relay reply to DC**

g) Report of Trophy Officer

Thanks mainly to Steve Mann and Bill O'Rourke, nine NCCU Trophies were present at the meeting. These were the County Open/U160/U120, the Club Open/Major/Minor and the Individual trophies Wahltech/Spencer/Littlewood. (Photographs of the trophies were taken). Outstanding trophies are the County U180 and U100 Shields. The County U140 Pennine shield could be with Lancashire, as it has not been used for number of years. The Intermediate Club trophy has been located in Lancashire and is the new Seniors Club trophy. Tim Wall took the Junior Individual trophy for Yichen Han. Bill O'Rourke kept the Wahltech and Littlewood trophies and will pass on to Mick Riding in Durham before May 2020.

**Actions:**

- i. Lancashire to review Seniors Club trophy and bring up to date if possible**
- ii. Look at who holds trophies that did not appear at the AGM (County U180 and U100 Shields – could be in Latvian club cupboard/U140 County?) - ALL**

h) Report of the Webmaster

Keith Smith asked that more chess results and articles be submitted to put on the NCCU website.

**Action: Congress organisers to submit results – ALL to KS**

He also asked that the account holder details for the website to be changed.

**Action: Secretary to liaise with Keith over changing the name.**

i) Report of ECF Delegate

Tim Wall had previously produced a written report on the ECF April Council meeting and spoke on the issues raised.

The NCCU Proposal on membership fees was defeated as was the £30k cap proposed for the International budget. The proposal to reward female participation at National County level matches was also defeated.

The ECF Chess Trust was discussed with issues raised as to its transparency and governance. It was agreed that further information was needed to explore how the Trust(s) were run and how the money is spent. Steve Mann and Dave Cole offered to provide further information.

It was a widespread opinion that given the economic climate, the amount of money the ECF has and the declining club membership numbers, it was wrong to take more from ordinary members in membership fees for very little return. It was felt that fees linked to a service was not understood at ECF Board level. The ECF block voting system at meetings also came in for criticism, with the Board holding many of the votes. Tim offered to find out who actually held these votes.

Tim Wall offered to host a meeting at the British Championships as to how chess is run in England and how we could improve with an informal Q&A, perhaps in a public house close to the Championship venue.

**Actions:**

- i. Arrange meeting at British Championships on ECF and general chess matters – TW to arrange and chair**
- ii. Who holds all the votes at ECF Council and AGM – TW**
- iii. Look into on-line chess surveys for congresses – using chess monkey? – TW to investigate**

## **5. Proposal of changes to the NCCU County Championship Rules**

Steve Mann from Yorkshire submitted a proposal to amend the current County Championship rules. After discussion it was agreed to remove the words 'ignoring the offending county's results' from Rule 3d. Clarifications to Rule 8 on the August grading date and Rule 10 on playing strength were also proposed. **Action: The Secretary to amend and circulate the County Rules for agreement**

**6. NCCU Individual Rules**

A draft set of rules outlining a new Rota for holding the Individuals event was presented and after discussion was agreed. **Action: The Secretary to publish and circulate the new Rules.**

**7. U16 Pennine Cup 2019/20**

**Action: The Secretary to contact Peter Cloudsdale to see if Ackworth School could host.**  
(Post meeting - Peter Cloudsdale has agreed and is arranging a fixture date)

**8. Schools Awards 2018/19**

BCET Award: Ackworth School Pontefract nominated

NCCU Award: No nomination was forthcoming, but a BCET nomination from St Mary's School in Newcastle was accepted and given the NCCU Award.

**Action: The Secretary to arrange the Award to be delivered.**

**9. Schools Awards 2019/20 (nominations required at December meeting)**

BCET Award: Cheshire & NW

NCCU Award: Lancashire

**10. Presentation of Trophies**

The County Open, U160 and U120 were presented. The Club Open and Minor were also presented.

**11. Election of Officers**

President: Bill O'Rourke

General Secretary: Dave Cole

Treasurer: George Horne

County Championship Organiser: Bryan Bainbridge

Club Championship Organiser: Keith Smith

Grading Officer: TBD

Trophy Officer: Dave Cole

NCCU Webmaster: Keith Smith

ECF Delegate(s): Tim Wall

Vice Presidents to Council: Bryan Bainbridge/George Horne

**12. Appointment of Auditor**

Neil Foxcroft (from Ulverston club, Cumbria)

**13. 2019/20 Qualifying Congress to host NCCU Individuals**

(as British Championship qualifier) – Durham Congress 8-10<sup>th</sup> May 2020

**Action: The Secretary to let Mick Riding know.**

**14. Time and Date of next meeting: December 7<sup>th</sup> 2019 (with refreshments!)**

**Action: Arrange refreshments and room at Latvian Club – DC to contact Ihor and Club early as no refreshments were available for the third meeting running!!**

**15. Any other Business**

Tim Wall asked that reps promote the Northumbria Masters congress 23-27<sup>th</sup> August 2019 to their players

**Dave Cole  
General Secretary**