**East Cheshire Chess Club**

**Minutes of the 77th Annual General Meeting**

The **77th** AGM was held on Wednesday **1st** May **2024** at Cheadle Hulme Institute commencing at 7.30pm

11 members were present**:** David Taylor, Steve Kelly, Keith Hodgson, Tom Jones, Tudor Rickards, Steve McCall,, John Reed, Geoff Brindle, Jim McKie, Dave Harris, Tee Ung

1. **Introduction by the Chairman:**
David Taylor welcomed everyone attending the meeting. He remarked how things generally throughout the season have improved in the club. The increased numbers of members attending regularly on club nights is encouraging. The club venue has also recently undergone a refurbishment with a new heating system installed.
2. **Apologies for absence**:
 Steve Tatlock, Edwin Cooke and Geoff Smith
3. **Minutes of 76th AGM dated 31stMay 2023:**The minutes, which had been circulated to members prior to the meeting were agreed and signed by the chairman
4. **Matters arising from the minutes**
There were no matters arising save those issues which feature later as agenda items for discussion.
5. **Treasurer Report**

The Treasurer’s statement of accounts duly audited had been circulated to all the members in advance of the AGM and were considered and approved by the meeting

Steve Kelly (treasurer) mentioned that the rent rise forecasted for this year was thankfully not as high as was anticipated– room hire cost actually rose by £2 per session to £22 and not as was feared £25.

With the bank account still showing a healthy balance Steve recommended that the subscription rate for the following season 2024/25 be reduced from £40 to £32 for adults and from £20 to £16 for junior members. In addition, he proposed that members in full time education up to the age of 25 pay the junior rate of £16. It was suggested also that for any member or potential new member wishing to join/rejoin but who finds difficulty affording to pay the full adult members subscription - this will be dealt with sympathetically and with the utmost discretion by the committee.

The above recommendations were approved unanimously by the meeting and will be adopted.

1. **Secretary Report (appended at the end of the minutes)**The Secretary report (as appended) having been circulated to all the members in advance of the meeting was read and accepted. The Chairman thanked Keith for all his efforts during the past year.
2. **Team Captain Reports (appended at the end of the minutes)**Each report showed how the teams progressed throughout the season. All three teams, that is the A and B Teams and Limit League Team may appear to have fallen short of achieving the success of the previous season. It does however reflect that the playing strength throughout the league is becoming much more challenging for everyone taking part. Nevertheless, congratulations to Steve McCall who led his team of players to a great victory against a very strong Wilmslow team in the final of the Presidents Cup – winning score 3 -2
3. **Publicity Officer Report (appended at the end of the minutes)**Positive progress continues to be made in promoting this club and the new poster replacing the original one is now in place on the outside of the building proudly advertising the Club to the outside world. Tudor continues to explore other means to publicise and promote the club.
4. **Child Protection Policy**A question arose at the last AGM regarding the wording of the policy document and the committee had been requested to review whether the use of the word “child” should be replaced with “junior” The committee has now carried out the review and decided the policy document will remain unchanged in its wording.
5. **Data Protection ref: the communicating of member contact details**Mindful of the data protection act and the importance of maintaining a degree of confidentiality when dealing with members contact details, the secretary highlighted the difficulty in ensuring members email addresses are not displayed for other members to see when circulating an email to all members either from the club secretary or the team captains.
After much discussion it was proposed by Geoff Brindle and seconded by the Secretary that email addresses be allowed to be displayed when issuing emails circulated to all members in a “block” email. This proposal was unanimously agreed by the members present and duly passed by the meeting
6. **Presentation of Trophies**Following the direction given by the members present at the last AGM the rules regarding the Matchplay Cup be reviewed by the committee with a recommendation that the qualifying minimum number of matches be reduced when determining the winner of this trophy. The Committee has now reviewed the rules and decided that the minimum number be reduced from 7 matches played to 5

 a) Match play Cup winner – Dave Harris
 Joint Runners up – John Reed and Steve Kelly
b) Kellett Trophy - No competition held
7. **Election of Officers**The following were duly elected unopposed

a) Chairman - David Taylor (Sadly this will be his last year as chairman as he has indicated his intention to stand down after next season)
b) Secretary - Keith Hodgson
c) Treasurer - Steve Kelly
d) Auditor - Jim McKie
e) Publicity Officer - Tudor Rickards

1. **In-house Club Competition Review**

 Kellett Trophy:

This in house club competition which has not taken place over recent times is once again on the agenda for discussion. Since the last AGM Edwin had volunteered to organise the Kellett Cup competition but not in its original format but instead, in a “world cup style” format. All members were written to at the beginning of the season outlining the new format and were given the option to agree or object to this change. One objection to the changed format was received and the competition therefore did not take place.

A proposal from Tudor in his Publicity Officer Report appended to these minutes, suggested a new tournament, separate from the Kellett Competition on club night as a means of giving realistic match play preparation for inexperienced members, and that all games be played at the official league clock times with increments. He suggested it would be particularly useful for the junior members playing against experienced players and also provide additional match play experience for all club members. The structure of the tournament may appear to have similarities to that of the original Kellett competition format but will be operated on the principle of a “ladder tournament” with added improvements built in as described above. This will help to encourage more members to participate. A full discussion took place to decide the best way forward. The meeting recommended that just this one competition be run next season as the “new Kellett Trophy”, and that the proposal put forward by Tudor should be adopted. With a few adjustments to clock times etc put in place it will, with members support, hopefully prove to be successful. It is aimed to benefit all members including those selected to play for the team in the league.

1. **Stockport and District Chess League 2024/5**a) To agree the number of teams the club will enter The Captain of the limit league Dave Harris in his report raised the question – would the club be able to add a 4th team in the Stockport league? This was discussed in depth by the meeting which concluded that it would be very difficult to do so given the difficulties the A and B division team captains had at times encountered during the season regarding player availability. The meeting agreed therefore to enter 3 teams in the SDCL for next season.
b) Appointment of Team Captains
Tom Jones (A Team) is standing down from his role as Team Captain due to family commitments and John Reed has offered to be the A team captain in his place
Steve McCall (B Team) is standing down as he will be moving to Wales.
The chairman thanked them both for all their long-standing support and service as team captain
The meeting unanimously agreed the following be appointed for the 2024/25 seasonA Team – John Reed
B Team – Vacant
C Limit League – David Harris
2. **SDCL and MCF summer season chess tournaments**It has not yet been announced whether the SDCL will be running a summer league. The club secretary will inform the members when it is known if one is taking place
3. **Fixing dates of club events for 2023/24 season** a) Starting date of new season: - 04/09/24
 d) The Club will close for the summer on 21/05/25
 c) The club social evenings dates will be announced during the season
4. **Any other business**House Rules - Room layout when club night finishes

A request has been made to the secretary by the Institute Trustee, for the room to be left in a tidy manner at the end of a club night as it has been noted on occasions re-usable bottles or flasks have been left and at times too many chairs have been left out and not put away in the storage area..

For information to all members – this is how the room should be left at the end of a club night:

3 chairs alongside wall on the left when entering the room
3 chairs on each side of the table on the wall opposite with 1 chair behind table.

Re-usable bottles and/or flasks to be placed in “lost property” white shelf by cabinets in the storage area

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.10 pm

Signed by Chairman -------------------------------------------------------------- Dated----------------------------

*Addendum to minutes – Reports below*

 **Secretary Report**

I am happy to report the chess season for the club this past year has run quite smoothly.

Membership

7 new members have joined this season, and the overall membership has now increased to 26

League Matches

The Stockport League match fixtures have been well supported with full team attendance for most matches which had been scheduled – a great credit to each of the team captains representing this club for their efforts and team members for their continued support...

Club Social

The periodic club social evenings continue to be popular amongst the members although I have noticed perhaps only about 50+% of the membership usually attend. This is a great event, very well organised and run by the chairman and treasurer – please give your continued support in future events.

In house competitions

The lack of any in - house chess tournaments still remains an issue of concern and will be once again discussed at the AGM as an agenda item.

And finally – I am prepared to continue as club secretary for a further year if invited to do so at the AGM. However, I am willing to step down if any member wishes to volunteer to take on this role.

K. Hodgson Dated 15th April 2024

Captain Report

A team

2023/24

This year Northenden dropped down to Division two and Eccles and Urmston join Division 1. This switch of teams was always going to be a challenge, with Eccles having 7 registered players rated over 2000 and Urmston not far behind them. A quick glance at the rating table suggests East Cheshire A are the second lowest rated team in the league - would we find ourselves in a relegation battle?

The league finishes very late this year so both the overall winners and losers are not known at the time of writing.

Our season started brightly with a victory over Macclesfield although we were then bought back down to earth with a comprehensive defeat to Chorlton. In our third game, at the end of November we managed a memorable victory against last year's champions - bolstered by our new signing Alex on board. Sadly this was probably the highlight of the season as we then went a full 4 months without a win.

Over winter we had a combination of tough fixtures and regular players being unavailable. We were unable to field a full team for 3 fixtures (including our loss to Urmston in the cup) with regulars out for various reasons and a lack of enthusiasm from the rest of the club to play in the away games despite my increasingly desperate e-mails. As I wrote last year, even if you don't usually play in Division 1 it is always helpful to the captain to have options and I'm grateful to those who did reach out, or sub in at the last minute. We lost one of the games 2 ½ - 3 ½ and a draw on the final board may end up being the difference between relegation and survival.

Nonetheless, after some very dark, very rainy months we started Spring with our return fixture against Macclesfield who were also struggling for points in the league. We managed to draw this game keeping our slender lead over our relegation rivals.

Next up was Urmston, fielding a slightly weaker team than they did at home (where I played against an IM for the first time). As it was a home game we were able to field our best team with Alex on board 1 which gave us a chance. In the end it came down to Geoff's game with the match tied at 2 ½ each. Geoff's was defending solidly but his opponent was pressing so hard for the victory that he forgot about his clock and lost on time. It was a strange way to win but gave us our third win of the season and lifted our spirits.

We lost narrowly to Eccles a week later, in fact of 9 games played 5 have been decisive by the narrowest margin (2 ½ - 3 ½ ) with East Cheshire A losing 3 and winning 2, margins have been tight!

As I write this, the league table looks as below, with Stockport, Chorlton and Eccles still in contention for the win. At the other end of the table Macclesfield need a win and a draw in their end of season double-header against Eccles to remain in the league (relegating East Cheshire A). As Eccles are chasing the title it is hard to believe that they will do Macclesfield any favours but we will have to wait to see.



Despite finishing towards the bottom of the table there have been strong performances from all the team, with John's, Geoff's, Jim's and my performance ratings all higher than their actual grade indicating that the quality of opposition has indeed been high this year.

Well done all,

On to next year!

Tom Jones 30th April 2024

 Captain Report

B team

2023/24

This season proved to be extremely competitive against very strong opposition in the Division and sadly it resulted in East Cheshire winning just 2 matches out of 8 matches scheduled. With only 4 points it meant we ended the season at the bottom of Division 2.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Team** | **Matches Played** | **Matches Won** | **Matches Drawn** | **Matches Lost** | **Games For** | **Games Against** | **Points** |
| Ashton | 8 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 30½ | 9½ | **14** |
| Northenden | 8 | 5 | 0 | 3 | 26 | 14 | **10** |
| Wilmslow | 8 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 22 | 18 | **10** |
| Altrincham | 8 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 22 | 18 | **10** |
| Stockport B | 8 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 18½ | 21½ | **7** |
| Macclesfield B | 8 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 15 | 25 | **7** |
| Urmston B | 8 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 19 | 21 | **5** |
| Marple | 8 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 15½ | 24½ | **5** |
| East Cheshire B | 8 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 11½ | 28½ | **4** |

There were difficulties at times arranging a full team to play each match but happily for 7 of the 8 matches scheduled, no boards were defaulted. However, it was not possible to get a team to play against Urmston away, and unfortunately the match was claimed by Urmston (as a default).

Despite this set back, on a brighter note we got a bye into the semi-final of the President’s Cup and played against Marple. A very tight match ended in a draw, and we got through to the final by “lower board elimination”

So, the last game of the season we found ourselves competing for the President’s Cup against Wilmslow away. During the match, we found we were losing having lost the first 2 games. I thought it was all over – I’ve heard that somewhere before! Paul Bamford, who has had a big struggle to play this season, and playing his only game for the Club this season, was victorious. Steve Kelly recovering from a foot injury hobbled to victory. I kept my A game for this match and led the team to victory. A great ending to a disappointing season – we are the Winners of the President Cup!!

Sadly I will not be standing as your captain next season as I will shortly be moving to Wales.

I would like to thank all the team members who have participated in playing throughout the season for their support – thankyou.

Steve McCall - 1st May 2024

Captain Report
Limit League
2023/24

Limit League Annual Report for East Cheshire Chess Club

The Limit League comprised 9 teams this season, Ashton, Chorlton 1, Chorlton 2, East Cheshire, Glossop, Marple, Northenden, Stockport and Wilmslow.

Teams played each other only once, so we had 8 matches – 4 at home and 4 away.

We won 3 matches (Glossop, Northenden and Chorlton 1) and lost 5 (Marple, Wilmslow, Ashton, Stockport and Chorlton 2).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Wed | 2023-11-01 | East Cheshire | Marple | 1 | 3 |
| Mon | 2023-11-06 | Wilmslow | East Cheshire | 2½ | 1½ |
| Mon | 2023-12-04 | Glossop | East Cheshire | 1 | 3 |
| Mon | 2023-12-11 | Northenden | East Cheshire | 1½ | 2½ |
| Tue | 2024-02-13 | Chorlton 1 | East Cheshire | 1½ | 2½ |
| Wed | 2024-02-21 | East Cheshire | Ashton | ½ | 3½ |
| Wed | 2024-02-28 | East Cheshire | Stockport | 1 | 3 |
| Wed | 2024-04-17 | East Cheshire | Chorlton 2 | 1½ | 2½ |

8 members played for the Limit League this season.

3 obtained a win ratio of 50% or more: me (60% in 5 games), Steve Kelly (50% in 3 games) and Keith Hodgson (50% in 7 games).

Some related matters:

1. I now realise the desirability to assign reasonably accurate gradings to ungraded players for use with the SDCL. This season I didn’t participate in this process, so for next season I volunteer to help (and put it in writing here to prevent me claiming to be too busy next season!).
2. I wonder whether the club can support a 4th team in the SDCL. This would enable medium- and lower-graded and junior members to have access to more match games. It would probably need to be in Division 2 (as opposed to the Limit League) to maximise the number of players that can be called upon to play (in February we had some difficulty in filling the top boards due to members with appropriate grades being temporarily unavailable). If the Club wants me to, I am willing to do some research into this and write a feasibility report to help the officers decide.

Dave Harris

29th April 2024

**Publicity Officer’s Report**

**2023/24**

Since our last AGM, the most visible tangible sign of publicity for the club has been the eventual erection of our new club sign in its blue and yellow colours outside the club premises. I want to thank Keith for his diligence and persistence in the project, and in liaising with the Hall’s administrative office.

We also arranged fliers to reach local libraries and shops.

Whether these efforts contributed or not, the numbers of members have grown and new members have contributed to our activities including participation by new members in all three Stockport leagues.

Looking ahead, I would like to suggest we continue making club night as valuable as possible for club members. The support given to new members, particularly the junior has been exceptional.

Both Tom and John are now returned to action and have agreed in principle to offer talks to interested members.

Continuing this theme of encouraging support to the members I note the AGM agenda item 13 – “in house club competitions review” gives members the opportunity for open discussion regarding in house club competitions.

 I propose that we should consider introducing a new tournament on club nights as a means of giving realistic match play preparation for inexperienced members, and that the games be played at the official league clock times with increments.

This will be particularly useful for our junior contingent and to those members who seek additional match play experience. This would be an additional tournament to that of the Kellett Trophy which has seen a decline in support over recent times.

I recognise running a completely new tournament which I am proposing, requires a volunteer and support network to organise and run it successfully and I hope a volunteer etc will be forthcoming from the membership

Tudor Rickards April 2024