



YCA AGM 24/06/2023

13:00

West Riding, Leeds, LS1 2DE, West Yorkshire

Present: Jim Burnett (Sheffield), Stephen Burton (West Leeds), Dale Cullum (Rose Forgrove), Randy Donahue (Leeds), Chris Matthews (HDCA), John Holliday (Saltaire), Rupert Jones (Leeds), Stephen Mann (York), David Mills (HDCA), Aaron Rich (York), Ben Rich (York), Peter Shaw (Wakefield), Jacob Smith (Ilkley), Andrew Wainwright (Ilkley), Nick Waite (Saltaire), Simon Watson (Bradford), Stephen Westmoreland (Holmfirth), Andrew Zigmond (Harrogate). **Total:** 18.

1. Apologies

John Hipshon (Alwoodley), Douglas Vleeshouwer (HDCA), Paul Townsend (York), Charlie Woodbridge (Settle), Robin Browne (Leeds), Bernie Hare (Leeds).

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Agreed.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

Dale Cullum, Secretary, raised that in the previous meeting it was agreed to abolish the officer positions of Registration Secretary and Grader and also the appointment of a Yearbook Editor. Prior to the AGM Stephen Mann had noted that the abolition of these positions had not been official. Dale proposed a vote to abolish these positions, which was agreed and passed.

4. Officials Report

a) President – Andrew Wainwright reported that chess in Yorkshire is thriving, in part due to the uptake and enthusiasm for chess in the post-Covid era. In particular he noted that:

- there is now a Yorkshire Under 18s league, in its first season this had fourteen teams competing across the counties.
- that 2022/23 saw new entrants in the league, including Settle and the return of Dewsbury and York D.
- the congress scene remains strong with Scarborough, Hull, Harrogate and Doncaster continuing. This season these congresses were joined by the 1st Ilkley Chess Festival, British Rapidplay (Bradford) and the 2nd Ilkley Chess Festival. Next season there will be further additions with the Sheffield Congress, Yorkshire Rapidplay and British Teams Championship-Hull.
- Yorkshire county teams continue to do well, with four teams making it to the semi-final this season.
- junior chess is ever increasing. The YCA is fortunate to have the YJCA continuing to run the Yorkshire Grand Prix and UKCC events throughout the year, all of which are sold out.

Andrew finished by thanking all captains, coaches, organisers and volunteers across the county for their time and effort over the last twelve months.

b) Secretary – no report.

c) Treasurer – Stephen Burton noted:

- that the treasurer's report has been changed to just income and expenditure.
- that all clubs are paid and up to date and none are outstanding. This was a first in a while.
- that he will come out with ECF non-membership fees soon.

The committee also noted that they are currently in the process of updating signatures on the YCA bank account as only one of these is currently on the Committee.

d) Competitions Controller – Andrew Zigmund noted that there were no disputes and everything went well.

e) Controller for Correspondence Chess – no report.

f) County Match Captains

Before this, there was an update about the Northern Counties Chess Union (NCCU), Steve Westmoreland and Andrew Wainwright, with support from Tim Wall, were able to persuade the NCCU that Greater Manchester should be part of the NCCU again. The first stages of the county matches were more competitive seeing teams from Greater Manchester, Cleveland, Merseyside and Northumberland take part.

Andrew Wainwright, captain of the Under 2050s, reported that:

- at the time of the AGM, four teams made it past the NCCU stages and two teams were going through to the county finals.
- the Open team sadly went out at the NCCU stage. We need more of our top players volunteering at all stages.
- Manchester have been very accommodating.

Steve Westmoreland, captain of the Under 1450s noted that:

- there was excellent hosting from Greater Manchester in Swindon.
- more juniors are expected to move up from the Under 1450s next season and team is proving to be a strong development team into the others. The Under 1450s are expecting to lose Shri Ganti to the Under 1850s, then Awen Gitay, Nathan Madzia and perhaps Jacob Westmoreland to the Under 1650s next season. The Under 1450s are now feeding the higher teams with players, solving a problem we have had with Under 1650s selections in the past.
- this is the type of strong movement of players upwards that we want to see.

Jacob Smith, captain of the Under 1650s, noted his team's successes and that it has been a positive season.

Rupert Jones, captain of the Under 1850s, reported that:

- he has had feedback about incorporating players from across the counties. Looking for drivers and train strikes have made this challenging.
- he would like Hull to host a county game however this can also be challenging depending on the other team.

Andrew Wainwright had to pick up the responsibility of captaining the Open because Mathew Webb moved to Dubai. Andrew stressed that he will not do this again and that if no one volunteers to captain the Open team then there will not be an Open team.

York offered to support with a venue when possible.

David Mills raised concern that some players had been overlooked this season. Steve Westmoreland noted that he had written to every club and every captain at the start of the season. Andrew Wainwright added that if players are interested in playing in the county teams then they should make themselves known to the captains, if they have not already been contacted.

g) NCCU Delegates – see start of County Match Captains reports.

h) ECF Delegates – Andrew Wainwright reported that there are no major updates. He attended two meetings. ECF have moved to annual fees, which is better. YCA's relation with ECF remains good and we're lucky to have Stephen Greep sitting on the ECF board.

i) Website Controller – a new controller has not been elected. Steve Mann continues to run his website. The Committee asked for their contact details to be removed from Mann's website due to phishing emails. There is now a Yorkshirechess website, this functions as a "front door" for information. The Committee is grateful for Mann's website and the NCCU too, which they feel run well alongside the Yorkshirechess website.

Jim Burnett observed that there were some mistakes on the current Yorkshirechess website. Andrew Wainwright said he would take this away.

j) Secretary for Junior Chess – John Hipshon, who sent his apologies, wrote a report with the following key points:

- all three junior Grand Prix events have been sold out well in advance. Eighty-nine took part in Hull, seventy-nine in York and eighty have entered for Holmfirth, which was been postponed until July due to snow.
- due to calendar pressures, there was not a championship as planned. John hopes to implement this at some point.
- the megafinal in York was sold out and one-hundred-and-eighteen participants took part.
- the Yorkshire Junior League has eighty-four players taking part, representing fourteen teams. This was won by Hull & East Riding A in a close finish with York Assassins in second.
- a number of youngsters have represented Yorkshire in county games and we entered the EPSCA U11 competition for the first time, coming 6th in the national final in Nottingham.
- junior clubs across the county appear to be thriving e.g. Leeds Junior Chess Club has a waiting listed of one-hundred-and-six.
- looking forward to next season we would hope to continue with all of these events, build numbers and raise the standards. There is a need to address the lack of girls – currently only 15% of Grand prix entries. We had an excellent training day with Loren de Costa just before Christmas sponsored by She Plays to Win and YJCA and YCA. There is perhaps a need to look at more girl events to stimulate more interest.
- we have secured Bradford Grammar School as a reasonably priced venue for a Grand prix event, but there is a shortage of good venues across the county. John hopes to the run the other two events at Fishergate in York and at Hymers in Hull.
- there is a need for more volunteers, we are still short at Grand Prix events of board supervisors.

After the officials' reports the attendees observed a minute's silence for Sue Jones, Women's International Master, and wife of Gawain Jones.

5. Presentation of Trophies

- a) Woodhouse Cup: Sheffield A, accepted by Jim Burnett.
- b) IM Brown Shield: Huddersfield, accepted by Steve Westmoreland.
- c) Silver Rook: York D, accepted by Aaron Rich.
- d) Hardcastle Shield: Andrew Zigmund.
- e) Individual Champions – this was not contested this year.

6. Election of Officers

- a) President: Andrew Wainwright – passed without objection (PWO).
- b) Deputy President: Steve Westmoreland – PWO.
- c) Secretary: Dale Cullum – PWO.
- d) Minutes Secretary: Dale Cullum – PWO.
- e) Treasurer: Stephen Burton – PWO.

- f) Competitions controller: Andrew Zigmond – PWO.
- g) Correspondence Chess Controller: Phil Beckett – PWO.
- h) Secretary for Junior Chess: John Hipshon – PWO.

7. Election of County Captains

- a) Open: In absence of a nomination, Andrew Wainwright set a deadline for 1st September or there would be no Open team. (Note, after the AGM meeting had concluded, Randy Donahue spoke with Andrew Wainwright and volunteered to be the Open Captain, which was accepted).
- b) Under 2050: Andrew Wainwright – PWO.
- c) Under 1850: Rupert Jones – PWO.
- d) Under 1650: Jacob Smith – PWO.
- e) Under 1450: Steve Westmoreland – PWO. (This is subject to Jacob Westmoreland's grade remaining below 1450.)

8. Other Appointments

- a) Delegates to NCCU (2): Rupert Jones and John Holiday – PWO.
- b) Delegate to ECF: Andrew Wainwright – PWO.
- c) Website manager: Andrew Wainwright – PWO.
- d) Auditor: Simon Watson – PWO.
- e) Honorary life members: no nominations this year.

9. Fees and Subscriptions

£20 per club for eight board teams, £10 per club for six board teams. £1 per member, based on players from previous season.

Andrew Wainwright raised that the current structure was overly complicated. There was some discussion among the AGM about alternative methods of managing fees and subscriptions. In particular Andrew Wainwright suggested £20 for six board teams and £30 for eight board team, moving away from the additional £1 per member.

It was decided that a proposal for alternative methods will be distributed among the YCA clubs significantly in advance of the next AGM, to give county clubs time to discuss.

10. Proposed Amendments

Douglas Vleeshouwer (HDCA), who sent his apologies, proposed the following change to A15:

A15 All matches shall commence at 1.30 p.m. other than by mutual agreement.

Wording at time of AGM:

A15 All matches shall commence at 2.30 p.m. other than by mutual agreement.

Not passed.

It was noted that the current A15 does include the words 'mutual agreement' so clubs are not held by a 2.30 p.m. start if they agree an alternative time.

Although not a formal proposal, Douglas Vleeshouwer had expressed interest in the Woodhouse league exchanging scoresheets early in the morning of a match day because some players, particularly in the Woodhouse, like to prepare for their opponents. Andrew Zigmond said this is not in the rules; however, he will email the captains and let them know, that if they choose, they can do this in an informal matter.

11. Format of the Yorkshire League

Andrew Wainwright noted that the under YCA 18s league ran with fourteen teams, hoping for sixteen plus next season.. The hope is to run on the same format of three/four weekends again for next season. The venues are being discussed, Leeds will be the first one. The league table is currently wrong and this will be addressed.

YCA League - Andrew Zigmond updated on the following:

- Proposed dates have been issued and there have been difficulties avoiding clashes with other chess events.
- We had a 10/10/8 structure for 22/23, for the Silver Rook, both Dewsbury and Settle declined promotion, therefore, Harrogate B will not be demoted.
- There are currently four new entries to the league structure: Doncaster (returning), Saltaire, York and Meltham. This gives the league 10/10/12.

Rupert Jones expressed that Leeds may enter another team. This would create 10/10/13. The AGM voted on how it would manage both a 10/10/12 and 10/10/13 structure.

10/10/12 league structure proposals:

1. 10/10/12 all play once – which would mean two extra weekends for division three.
2. Four divisions 12/12/6/6
3. Four divisions; however, the bottom two divisions would be split into a 3a and 3b, with the top teams playing for promotion into the IM Brown.

The AGM voted in favour of option 3.

10/10/13 league structure proposals:

1. Split division three with a jamboree.
2. To have four divisions with a 10/10/7/6 split.

The AGM voted in favour of option 2.

Andrew Zigmond expressed that although he was not necessarily in favour of the voting outcomes, he will do his best to make things work.

12. Congress to host Yorkshire Congress

It was agreed that the Hull Congress, which runs in September, will host the Yorkshire Congress.

13. Any Other Business

- Andrew Wainwright raised the following:
 - it is positive that Yorkshire now has two chess centres. The first in Ilkley, which has been open for three years, and now a second in Sheffield. Yorkshire has two centres dedicated to chess.
 - the British Rapidplay will be rebranded as the Yorkshire Rapidplay.
 - the NCCU are seeking a Secretary. The YCA want to support the NCCU and it will be great to see someone take on this role.
- Rupert Jones raised the following:
 - the Leeds Chess Association (LCA) is celebrating its two-hundred year anniversary, from when its first game of chess was recorded. The LCA are currently organising an event with

Merseyside – the first recorded LCA game was against someone from Merseyside. There may also be a congress. Rupert asked for a financial contribution of £200 from the YCA to help support this. This was passed by vote.

- there has been lots of positive discussion about juniors. Leeds Chess Club has over 60 members in their twenties. This age group is also very important.
- junior chess was strong between 2003 and 2007. Yorkshire had the strongest chess teams at this time. By 2008-09 the energy had ran out. It is important to keep this energy going.
- we have a trophy for the annual match against Essex and Cumbria.
- Randy Donoghue noted the Junior Secretary's concerns about recruiting more women and girls and proposed that there could be a women's champion and also a trophy named after a prominent female figure in Yorkshire chess.

There was a vote on whether there should be a trophy for a top performing female in a nominated congress in the future. This was passed by vote. The YCA agreed to take this away and consider names for a trophy.

- David Mills highlighted his history with YCA and volunteering as an officer, team captain, coach and organiser of refreshments. David was notably not happy with the outcome of the previous AGM elections and asked that those who actively chose to reject his service reflect on those decisions. David read a written statement on these matters, following which the YCA committee thanked David for his volunteering over the years and noted his feelings on the matter. Note – David Mills spoke on his own behalf and not on behalf of Hull and District Chess Association.

Meeting closed.