

**Minutes of the
Annual General Meeting of the Bury Area Chess League
Held on 13th July 2011, at the George and Dragon, Snailwell**

1. Present and Apologies for Absence

Present:

Paul Kemp – PK (Chairman + Linton)
Ole Bay-Peterson – OB (Vice Chairman + Cambridge City)
Stephen Pride – SP (Match Secretary + Cambridge City)
Charles Richmond – CR (Outgoing Admin Secretary + Newmarket)
Steve Lovell – SL (Incoming Admin Secretary + Bury St Edmunds)
Thelma Merry – TM (Treasurer)
Scott Taylor – ST (Grader and Junior Officer + Bury St Edmunds)
Tim Davison – TD (Internet Officer + Cambridge City)
Mike Angel – MA (Roger Goldsmith Organiser + Ely Beet)
Vicky Allen – VA (Stowmarket)
Patrick Ribbands – PR (Cambridge)
David Barnicoat – DB (Linton)
(12 members)

Club representation and Votes:

Bury St Edmunds – 2, Cambridge City – 4, Ely Beet – 1, Linton – 2, Newmarket – 1, Stowmarket – 1
(These are all within AGM club voting allocations).

Apologies:

Colin Roberts – CRo (Press Officer and Rapidplay), Bob Jones – BJ (Congress Organiser), Hugo Smith, Abdulla Mufti, Eugene Husband, Alan Paris

Note from the Admin Secretary: since the numbers present were relatively low, on many matters a formal vote was not necessary.

2. Appointment of new Admin Secretary

This agenda item was taken out of order to allow the meeting to proceed more smoothly. Following the standing down of CR, PK proposed, and VA seconded, that SL should be appointed as the new Admin Secretary. Carried unanimously.

3. Minutes of the AGM 17th June 2011

These were agreed as a true record of the previous meeting.

4. Matters arising from the minutes

It had been agreed that the Roy Adams trophy would be put to a new use, and awarded (at the Bury Congress) to the highest scorer from the Bury and Suffolk leagues. VA queried whether this had happened if so to whom the trophy was awarded. The AGM agreed that it was awarded, but couldn't recall to whom. **Action: SL to follow up with BJ on his return to allow the trophy to be awarded again for the season just completed.**

5. Officers' Annual Reports

(i) Chairman – Paul Kemp

- The congress was a great success and indeed the best congress that PK has ever attended. Warm thanks and congratulations were extended to the congress organiser Bob Jones.
- Honours were very evenly shared across the clubs this season, indicating a healthy and competitive league.
- Events seemed to run smoothly with no problems sufficiently large to have reached the chairman's ears.
- The re-instituted Rapidplay ran well.
- Finances in very good order, for which Thelma Merry and the congress were recognised.

(ii) Treasurer – Thelma Merry

- There had been some confusion over ECF fees in the previous season, but this was now all resolved and accounted for.
- With sponsorship for the congress reduced, the entry fee had to be raised. This seemed not to deter entries, and a record intake even allowed more generous prizes. After repayment of £275 to the league (for loan made prior to 2009 congress), the congress made a surplus of £128.46 and now carries an accumulated surplus of £317.43.
- The league accounts showed a surplus of £310.05 for the season, resulting in an accumulated surplus of £1082.98. TM's predecessor had advised her to try to have a surplus of £1000 at all times, so she was pleased to report the balance had reached this healthy level, and indeed that including congress accounts gave an accumulated surplus in excess of £1500.
- Given the above, TM proposed that the league fees should remain as they are, but suggested that the charge for fixture booklets (on which the league has been making a small loss) should be increased from £2.00 to £2.50 per booklet. This was agreed.

Action: SP to circulate a request for team/players/booklet numbers

The £66 hotel expenses in the congress accounts were confirmed as relating to ECF president C.J. de Mooji who attended on the Sunday and presented the prizes. Assurances were sought and given that the "excess" balance (over the £1000 target) would not be seen as money to be spent freely. It was suggested that as the congress grows its failure would be increasingly costly and therefore that perhaps a larger cushion was in order. TM assured the AGM that the strategy continues to be to make a small surplus on both accounts year on year, and that increasing the congress balance was a particular objective. It was also noted that sponsorship of the congress seems to be problematic again this year.

The AGM accepted the accounts following proposal by CR and seconding by VA. PK offered his thanks to TM for her excellent handling of the finances.

(iii) Match Secretary – Stephen Pride

SP noted a disappointing increase in defaults, especially from the larger clubs. Connected with this he related that he had received a request for postponing a fixture, which he was forced to decline since it there was no provision for this in the league rules. SP therefore proposed that such provision should be made, allowing postponement by agreement between the opposing captains (if no agreement can be reached the original date will stand), where that agreement, including a new date for the fixture, must occur at least the day prior to the original date. Concerns were raised that this might allow games to be postponed for poor reasons, and that undue pressure might be placed on the opposing captain to acquiesce. Despite these misgivings, the proposal was accepted. **Action: SP to draft a new rule allowing postponement by agreement, for inclusion in the fixture booklet.**

Entries for the league competition were confirmed as unchanged.

SP brought to our attention a request from Ely to remain in division 1 despite finishing last and a related request from Cambridge Academicals to remain in division 2 despite finishing first. It was noted that these could be treated separately; division 2 has space for an extra team so that Ely could be relegated without requiring the promotion of the Cambridge side. There followed a long discussion about the merits and demerits of these proposals. These included the following: (a) there were fears that the Ely club would suffer for this relegation, perhaps losing a number of its stronger players; (b) the promotion of Cambridge Academicals would see a very imbalanced division 1 including four Cambridge sides; (c) promotion and relegation are part of the normal life cycle of a league and its teams, and are among the things a team plays to achieve and avoid, not enforcing them makes the league structure seem merely notional. The AGM voted that the Ely and Cambridge sides could remain in Division 1 and 2 respectively.

PK noted that this should be regarded as an exceptional case, and that the league would need very good reasons to repeat the same decision next year.

SP said he would soon begin working on the fixture list for the 2011-12 season, and said he would attempt to accommodate any specific requests (dates already known to be difficult for any reason), but that these had to be with him as soon as possible.

(iv) Congress Organiser

In the absence of Bob Jones, no further report was made. PK confirmed the dates of the 2011 congress will be 29th – 30th October with arrangements to be confirmed after Bob's return.

(v) Press Officer

In the absence of Colin Roberts, no report was made.

(vi) Games of the Season

In the absence of Jon Crowe, PK confirmed the winners were as follows:

Division 1: Ashley Stewart's win against Ed Player

Division 2: No entries

Division 3: John Dawson's win against Francis Allen

Amongst an especially good entry for the division one competition, another of Ashley Stewart's wins was placed 2nd. Cheques for £25 were given to club representatives to pass on to each of the winners.

(vii) Roger Goldsmith – Mike Angel

Fixtures were all on the website and organised by the captains. In the final this season Cambridge Masters played Bury A team. On the boards the result was 2-2, but Bury had fielded an ineligible player (who had played for another Bury team in the same competition), so the formal result was 3-1 to Cambridge Masters. Even at 2-2 the title would have gone to Cambridge due to having the lower grading total. TM presented the customary bottle of champagne to SP who captained the winning team.

Entries for next season's Roger Goldsmith competition were confirmed as follows:

Club	Teams
Cambridge City	2
Bury St Edmunds	2
Linton	1
Ely / Stowmarket / Newmarket	0

Based on these entries, the tournament will be an all play all league followed by a final between the two highest placed teams. There followed some discussion about the appropriateness of deciding results by total grade. The AGM approved the following methods (applied in order), to decide a winner in the event of a tie.

1st Tiebreak – Higher position in the league stage

2nd Tiebreak – Original result in the league stage

3rd Tiebreak – Board count in the final

4th Tiebreak – Board elimination in the final

Action: SP to redraft rules in consultation with MA for inclusion in the fixture booklet

(viii) Rapidplay

In the absence of Colin Roberts, no report was made. It was noted that we would return to the topic of the Rapidplay competition later.

(ix) Internet Officer – Tim Davison

TD confirmed that the congress has its own site, to which you can navigate from the league site. Plans to allow captains to log results directly on the site (rather than by email) met with general approval.

SL commented that the league positions for Division 3 were reported incorrectly on the site, and that according to the league rules Bury F should be placed above Newmarket (a points tie, but Bury having fewer bonus points). **Action: TD to amend the site to order such cases correctly.**

(x) Grader & Player of the Year – Scott Taylor

ST commented that some results have been submitted late or incorrectly, making his job more difficult. Players of the year were confirmed (see table in the honours section below).

6. Proposals from Clubs

Here we considered the proposal from Bury to amend the PotY rules so that where a player competes for two teams within a division, those games are considered as separate entries to the PotY competitions. Arguments on both sides were rehearsed and the proposal was rejected.

7. Honours

The Chairman noted the trophy winners for 2010/11 as follows:

Competition	Winner(s)	Trophy with secretary
Division 1	Cambridge Choristers	Yes
Division 2	Cambridge Academicals	Yes
Division 3	Linton Blacks	Yes
Roger Goldsmith	Cambridge Masters	No (with Linton)
Jamboree	Ely	(Is there a trophy?)
Division 1 PotY	Ed Kernohan (Cambridge City)	Yes
Division 2 PotY	Rob Cope (Bury St Edmunds)	Yes
Division 3 PotY	Dick Myhill (Bury St Edmunds)	Yes
Roy Adams Trophy	TBC	No

8. Matters arising from the executive and a related proposal

- (i) PK shared his thoughts on the ECFs plan to publish new grades twice yearly rather than only over the summer. Since it is proposed that the grades will consider all games unto and including December, PK estimated that the new grades will probably appear in February which, allowing a period of grace, would mean they could only be in operation for around the last month of the season ... making the work involved seem disproportionate to any gain. All agreed that the new grades should be used for players previously ungraded, but several proposed that they should also be used in other cases for example where a grade has significantly changed. VA proposed that we should defer a final decision on our use of these grades until the next AGM (when we would know both when the grades are released and how many players grades are significantly different), using PKs proposal (to use only for previously ungraded players) in the interim. This proposal was carried. **Action: SL to include in next AGM agenda.**
- (ii) PK drafted a set of rules to govern the re-instituted Rapidplay competition, mostly just codifying what actually happened this season. (He subsequently found that rules had already existed.) Again, it was agreed that mid-year Rapidplay grades should only be used for previously ungraded players.
- (iii) A number of members had noticed that many of the Rapidplay fixtures were very one sided affairs and to combat this CR brought a proposal based on a suggestion of TD. The proposal was to (a) separate the Rapidplay into two separate competitions, an Open section, and a section with a grading ceiling, and (b) have teams of just two players. TM assured us that costs of entering two player teams would be half those of entering a four player team. After some discussion of the practicalities, the proposal was accepted. **Action: PK to amend the Rapidplay rules and seek entrants for this from the clubs, following which CRo as Rapidplay Organiser will determine the exact format.**

9. Election of Officers

With the new admin secretary in place, with one exception the remaining officers had all agreed that they were happy to continue in post. The exception was ST as junior officer. He commented that provision for juniors has been through the clubs, and that at the league level the role seemed redundant. Those present agreed that this office could safely be removed. With unanimous approval, the holders the various offices and other positions were confirmed as follows:

Position	Name	Club
<i>Chairman</i>	Paul Kemp	Linton
<i>Vice Chairman</i>	Ole Bay-Petersen	Cambridge City
<i>Match Secretary</i>	Stephen Pride	Cambridge City
<i>Admin Secretary</i>	Steve Lovell	Bury St Edmunds
<i>Treasurer</i>	Thelma Merry	No affiliation
<i>Congress Organiser</i>	Bob Jones	Bury St Edmunds
<i>Press Officer and Rapidplay</i>	Colin Roberts	Bury St Edmunds
<i>Grader</i>	Scott Taylor	Bury St Edmunds
<i>Internet Officer</i>	Tim Davison	Cambridge City
<i>Games of the Season</i>	Jon Crowe	Linton
<i>Roger Goldsmith Organiser</i>	Mike Angel	Ely Beet
<i>Ex-Officio</i>	John Dawson	Linton

10. Bury Congress

The 2011 congress will be 29th – 30th October with arrangements to be confirmed after Bob's return.

11. Other Business

- (i) Jamboree date confirmed as Monday 12 September. 7:15pm start for prize giving, chess from 7:30pm. Entries will be sought on Bob's return.
- (ii) Following some pre-AGM discussion we agreed that in the Rules for Quickplay Finishes, rule 2b should be amended to read "If a claim made under Rule 2a cannot be resolved between the teams concerned, an agreed score of the game and the final position shall be submitted to the Match Secretary. He will arrange for an independent arbiter to decide the claim, at the expense of the team claiming the draw if the claim is turned down, or of the other team if it is upheld." **Action: SP to amend the statement of rules in the Fixture Booklet ahead of the coming season.**
- (iii) PK drew our attention to the upcoming Cambridgeshire Rapidplay tournament, Sunday 9th October at Whittlesford Memorial Hall (CB22 4NE). Club representatives were given leaflets.
- (iv) VA raised a concern about the deadline for proposals from clubs being very late, and allowed little chance for discussion before the AGM. PK, looking in the direction of SL, said we'd endeavour to correct this for next year. **Action: SL to consider AGM arrangements and associated deadlines.**

- (v) PK noted that the league does not have a formal constitution. Our statement of rules therefore covers both the playing rules and the operation of the league. For clarity it was felt that these should be separated and a formal constitution produced. PK offered to do this. **Action: PK to draft a constitution for the BACL, SL to bring this to next AGM.**

- (vi) TD raised concerns about the publication of names, especially names of junior players, on the league website. He suggested that the fixture booklet should include a statement to the effect that unless the relevant parties are notified, league members would be assumed to have given their permission for the publication of their name against their results. **Action: SP to liaise with TD, and include statement in the fixture booklet.**

Close of meeting: 9:50 pm