

Minutes of the
Annual General Meeting of the Bury Area Chess League
Held on Friday 21st June 2013, at Moreton Hall Community Centre, Bury St Edmunds

1. Welcome

Present:

Paul Kemp – PK (Outgoing Chairman / Incoming Treasurer, Linton)
Charles Richmond – CRi (Ex-officio, Newmarket)
Bob Jones – BJ (Congress Organiser, Bury St Edmunds)
Fraser Jones – FJ (Newmarket)
Vicky Allen – VA (Stowmarket)
Thelma Merry – TM (Outgoing Treasurer, No Affiliation)
Zac Vane – ZV (Bury St Edmunds)
Dave Wood – DWd (Bury St Edmunds)
Derek Wootley – DWt (Bury St Edmunds)
John Dawson – JDn (Linton)
Jeff Dahmer – JDa (Linton)
Mark Szymanski – MS (Ely)
Patrick Ribbands – PR (Cambridge)
Ole Bay-Petersen – OB (Outgoing Vice-Chairman/Incoming Chairman, Cambridge)
Steve Lovell – SL (Admin Secretary, Bury St Edmunds)
(15 Members)

Club representation and Votes:

Bury St Edmunds – 5, Cambridge City – 2, Ely Beet – 1, Linton – 3, Newmarket – 2, Stowmarket – 1
(These are all within AGM club voting allocations.)

Apologies:

Jon Crowe – JC (Match Secretary)
Colin Roberts – CRo (Press Secretary)
Scott Taylor – ST (Grader)
Tim Davison – TD (Internet Officer)
Norman Hutchinson – NH (Incoming Vice-Chairman)
Stephen Pride

Note from the Admin Secretary: With relatively few members present, and nothing proving to be controversial, no formal votes were required.

2. Minutes of the AGM 18th June 2012, and Matters Arising

The minutes were agreed as a true record of the previous meeting. With no matters arising from those minutes we moved on to the main agenda.

3. Officers' Reports

(i) Chairman – Paul Kemp

PK noted that there had been lots of business at the previous AGM and that the changes introduced seemed to have bedded in well over the season. Indeed, it was another good season for the league, with all running very smoothly. For that smooth running, PK thanked the league officers for all their efforts over the year. PK saved further comment for later in the meeting when he would be stepping down from the role of chairman.

(ii) Match Secretary – Jon Crowe (in absentia)

Presenting on behalf of JC, PK noted the winners of the various league competitions. These were

Division 1	Linton A
Division 2	Bury Cobras
Division 3	Newmarket

PK also noted that there had been three disputes during the year, only one of which was serious enough to warrant referral to an external ECF arbiter. The arbiter upheld the decision of BJ. In any future disputes, the executive has encouraged JC to deal exclusively with team captains as far possible.

Results of the games of the season were yet to be confirmed at the time of the AGM.

Note from the Admin Secretary: The winners have since been confirmed as Kevin Clark (Div 1), Bob Jones (Div 2) and Anita Somton (Div 3)

(iii) Treasurer – Thelma Merry

TM summarised our financial position.

- The year saw another marginal surplus for the League (£125.30).
- The congress also saw a small surplus (£7.10).
- This means we continue to have over £1500 in hand.
- Some charges for rated games played by non-ECF-members have been levied on clubs. The figures invoiced may not exactly agree with those from the ECF when their invoice arrives. Any discrepancy will be rolled forward into next season.
- Given the stability of the finances, TM recommended that BAFL club fees remain unchanged.

VA queried last year's fee increase in relation to trophy maintenance and replacement. Although very little had been spent in this regard last year, some repairs were undertaken, and a change of practice (giving smaller "memento" trophies to individual winners) meant that one trophy in particularly bad repair didn't need to be replaced at all. However, some of the trophies will need replacing over the coming years and we believe that last year's fee increase is roughly commensurate with the long-term costs here.

PK also noted that while we could perhaps lower fees this season, it would be a shame to do that only to find it necessary to increase them again in the near future. The aim will be to hold those fees at the same level for as long as we reasonably can.

The accounts and the proposal of "no change," were approved.

PK led the group in vote of thanks to TM for her excellent work as treasurer over the last four years.

(iv) Press Officer – Colin Roberts (in absentia)

In the absence of CR, SL read from the minutes of the executive:

- CR summarised what had been another discouraging year. Despite submitting his short articles well ahead of deadlines, the Bury Free Press have not included many of them, and CR reported given this state of affairs he did not continue to submit reports throughout the season.
- CR proposed that these reports could be delivered online via the Bury Area League website and the Suffolk Chess website. This met with approval from the group, including TD and BJ (the latter runs the Suffolk Chess website in addition to his BACL duties). **Action: CRo to liaise with TD and BJ to take this forward.**

(v) Grader – Scott Taylor (in absentia)

In the absence of ST, SL announced the winners of the Player of the Year competitions. These were

Division 1	Paul Kemp (Linton)
Division 2	Rob Cope (Bury St Edmunds)
Division 3	Charles Richmond (Newmarket)

(vi) Internet Officer – Tim Davison (in absentia)

In the absence of TD, SL noted two particular points from TD's written report.

- First, the introduction of the new "Honours List" showing competition winners from previous seasons. (PK thanked SL for his contribution to this, who in turn thanked BJ for his assistance.)
- Second, we noted that the results of several games from last season are yet to be confirmed. Confirmation of results is not a new requirement, and has previously been done by email, and before that by post. The online system makes things much less onerous. To encourage captains' cooperation, there is a new section on the main page of the website indicating games with results requiring confirmation. **Action: club secretaries to chase captains on this.**

(vii) Roger Goldsmith Organiser – Mark Szymanski

MS announced the winners of these competitions (see below), and noted that the event seemed to have gone very smoothly, with only two issues, one in relation to an estimated grade, the other in relation to the date of the final.

BJ noted that the revised two division format seemed to have the desired effect, in that more players were involved in Goldsmith matches than in previous seasons.

Goldsmith Division 1	Cambridge Students
Goldsmith Division 2	Linton Lions

The traditional bottles of champagne were presented at the close of the meeting.

(viii) Rapidplay Organiser – Patrick Ribbands

PR reported that 30 players were involved in the first leg at Cambridge on Wednesday (19th June), and summarised the standings.

- The second leg will take place at Bury on 27th June.
- SL reminded those present that players needn't have attended the first leg to play in the second.
- BJ praised the pairing system, which ensures that players get well matched opponents

(ix) Congress Organiser – Bob Jones

BJ presented his report on another successful year for the congress.

- Although entries were down (134 vs 151), the congress still managed to just break even, and this despite having to raise an additional £400 to cover VAT on venue hire which had not been payable in previous years.
- The website developed by TD was appreciated, especially with the facility to pay online via PayPal. This made BJs life much easier, though there were of course commission charges to PayPal as a result.
- There was lots of unsolicited positive feedback, and some excellent press coverage, including a nice piece on the “game of the century” with an 83 year age gap between John Dawson and his young opponent.
- PK congratulated BJ on another superb congress.

4. Proposal from the Executive

PK summarised the proposal to change BACL Rapidplay Rule 2c, to bring the wording into line with that of FIDE by removing references to “sufficient material” and “insufficient material” in favour of wording involving the possibility (or impossibility) of arriving, from the final position, at mate by some series of legal moves. The suggested wording is:

To win a game on time, a player must claim such a win and the position must be such that it is possible to checkmate the opponent’s king by some series of legal moves. The game will be declared a draw if the position is such that the player whose flag has not fallen cannot checkmate the opponent’s king by any possible series of legal moves. The game will be declared a draw if both flags have fallen and it is not possible to ascertain which flag fell first.

The meeting approved this change. **Action: New wording to be incorporated in the fixture booklet.**

5. Election of Officers

With PK having served 3 years as president, and TM having indicated that she wished to step down, several changes were informally voted upon here. PK will move from his position as Chairman to take a new role as Treasurer. OB was elected his successor, with NH taking the Vice-Chairmanship that OB was vacating. Other officers all remain in post by agreement of those present. The Executive is therefore now as follows:

Position	Name	Club
<i>Chairman</i>	Ole Bay-Petersen	Cambridge City
<i>Vice Chairman</i>	Norman Hutchinson	Linton
<i>Match Secretary</i>	Jon Crowe	Linton
<i>Admin Secretary</i>	Steve Lovell	Bury St Edmunds
<i>Treasurer</i>	Paul Kemp	Linton
<i>Internet Officer</i>	Tim Davison	Cambridge City
<i>Congress Organiser</i>	Bob Jones	Bury St Edmunds
<i>Rapidplay Organiser</i>	Patrick Ribbands	Cambridge City
<i>Roger Goldsmith Organiser</i>	Mark Szymanski	Ely Beet
<i>Press Officer</i>	Colin Roberts	Bury St Edmunds
<i>Grader</i>	Scott Taylor	Bury St Edmunds
<i>Ex-Officio</i>	Charles Richmond	Newmarket

It was also noted that the role of the Grader has become less clear over recent years due to the introduction of new online systems. However, the Executive feels the role is still required, and now relates almost exclusively to the assessment of “estimated grades”. The Executive therefore encouraged ST’s proactive engagement with the assessment and monitoring of estimated grades in relation to all known relevant information including recent performance. **Action: Club secretaries are therefore encouraged to communicate to ST and TD the details of any new players without established, current ECF grades.**

Noting that Stowmarket are not represented on the Executive, BJ floated the option of adding a second Ex-Officio role to the group. VA commented that while she appreciated the offer, she was happy with the current arrangements. VA will, however, discuss the matter with the club and report back if they feel differently. **Action: VA to put the suggestion to the Stowmarket membership.**

Outgoing Chairman’s Comments

PK commented that he’s enjoyed his 6 years on the Executive (3 as Vice-Chairman under BJ), and was grateful to the league for allowing him to be so involved. He hopes he has made a positive impact on the running of the league, especially in his busy “middle year” where we

- Re-formulated many of the rules
- Changed the Rapidplay format
- Changed the Roger Goldsmith format
- Incorporated the new ECF membership scheme

PK noted with pleasure that the league is in excellent financial health, and thanks to BJ has what may be the finest weekend congress in the country.

PK went on to remark that when first taking the role of Chairman he had commented that he was particularly concerned for the fate of smaller clubs such as Linton, Ely, Newmarket and Stowmarket. This remains one of PK’s primary concerns, and he hopes that the league will continue to support the smaller clubs.

VA thanked PK for his consideration of smaller clubs, noting that (perhaps mainly due to a new website), Stowmarket has more members than in recent years.

At this point we took a ten minute break.

Incoming Chairman’s Comments

OB expressed appreciation to PK for his leadership, and led the group in a warm round of applause. OB commented that he is Danish by descent, and went on to summarise the history of Anglo-Danish relations, noting especially the death of the East Anglian King Edmund at the hands of the Vikings. OB offered his apologies for these events, and assured the meeting that he was seeking more peaceable relations, and would not be insisting on the adoption of the Danish opening or the Scandinavian Defence.

OB finished by commenting that he had felt great reluctance to take on the role of Vice-Chairman, and now felt trepidation in succeeding PK as chair. He hopes to be a facilitator and sustain the excellent running of the league to which we are all so accustomed. OB therefore welcomes any comments or suggestions on the running of the league.

6. League and RGT Entries

Here OB canvassed club representatives for their entries into various league competitions. The table below summarises the responses

Club	League			Roger Goldsmith	
	Div 1	Div 2	Div 3	Div 1	Div 2
Bury St Edmunds	3	1	3	2	1
Cambridge City	2	4*	1*	3	1
Ely Beet	1	0	0	0	0
Stowmarket	0	0	1	0	1
Newmarket	0	1	1	0	0
Linton	1	1**	1	0	1
Total	7	7*	7*	5	4

* Cambridge were particularly unsure of the distribution of these teams, and would like to avoid having four teams in Div 2 if possible. However with an additional team from Newmarket, we would want to arrange things so that the each division has 7 teams as in the distribution shown above.

** Linton representatives explained their requirement that fixtures for their Div 2 not clash with fixtures for their Div 1 or Div 3 sides. If possible Linton Div 2 fixtures should not occur on the same week as other Linton fixtures. Entry of teams to the various competitions will be at risk if these conditions cannot be met.

Club secretaries are reminded that they are expected to confirm league entries JC (Match Secretary) by 5th June, and RGT entries to MS (Goldsmith Organiser) by two weeks from the publication of the summer ECF grading list (normally available around the end of July or beginning of August). **Action: SL to remind secretaries**

7. Upcoming Events

A number of events were highlighted ...

BACL Rapidplay (2nd Leg) Thursday 27th June at Bury

BACL Jamboree Thursday 19th September at Bury

Bury Congress Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th October at the Apex in Bury
Entries encouraged. Look for the updated website coming soon.

Cambridgeshire Rapidplay Sunday 20th October (Contact PK for further details)

8. Any other business

Congress Succession Planning

The Executive encouraged BJ to share his intention to step down after then 2014 Bury Congress, when he will have organised the competition for 16 of the 32 years for which it will have run. **Action: Anyone interested in helping the league to continue BJ's excellent work should contact BJ and/or OB.**

Fischer Timing

SL shared the Executive's intention to encourage the use of the Fischer timing system (as allowed by rule 4.4). The various advantages of the Fischer timing system were discussed, notably the avoidance of the 2 minute rule, and any confusion about if and when the additional 15 minutes are added on the various clocks. While we acknowledged that a game could theoretically last indefinitely under this system, in practice a game would have to last for 90 moves to even reach the 3 hour mark, which is sufficiently rare that this possibility may be safely ignored.

Presentation of Champagne to the Goldsmith Winners

PR received the bottle of Champagne on behalf of Division 1 winners Cambridge Students.
JDn received the bottle of Champagne on behalf of Division 2 winners Linton Lions.

Close of meeting: 9:20pm