

Minutes of the
Annual General Meeting of the Bury Area Chess League
Held on Monday 23rd June 2014, at Moreton Hall Community Centre, Bury St Edmunds

1. Welcome

Present:

Vicky Allen – VA (Stowmarket)
Ole Bay-Petersen – OB (Chairman, Cambridge)
Tim Davison – TD (Internet Officer, Cambridge)
Richard Donaghay – RD (Ely)
George Evangelini – GE (Linton)
Norman Hutchinson – NH (Vice-Chairman, Linton)
Bob Jones – BJ (Outgoing Congress Organiser / Incoming Grader, Bury St Edmunds)
Paul Kemp – PK (Treasurer, Linton)
Steve Lovell – SL (Admin Secretary, Bury St Edmunds)
Patrick Ribbands – PR (Rapidplay Organiser, Linton)
Charles Richmond – CRi (Ex-Officio, Newmarket)
Colin Roberts – CRo (Press Officer, Bury St Edmunds)
Mark Szymanski – MS (Roger Goldsmith Organiser, Ely)
Scott Taylor – ST (Outgoing Grader, Bury St Edmunds)
Dave Wood – DW (Bury St Edmunds)
(15 Members)

Club Representation and Votes:

Bury St Edmunds – 5, Cambridge City – 2, Ely Beet – 2, Linton – 4, Newmarket – 1, Stowmarket – 1
(These are all within AGM club voting allocations.)

Apologies:

Mike Angel
John Dawson
David Green
Eugene Husband
Fraser Jones
Stephen Pride
Chas Szentmihaly

2. Minutes of the AGM 21st June 2013, 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 – Ole Bay-Petersen

OB noted it had been another good and trouble free season, and gave his thanks to players and the executive for making that possible. The small number of minor disputes were quickly resolved and both the league and congress made surpluses. In sum, the league continues to be in good health.

(ii) Match Secretary and Games of the Season – Jon Crowe (JC)

No report was available in the absence of JC. The group expressed some concern and PK agreed to contact JC.

Note from the Admin Secretary: Since the meeting JC has confirmed that he is happy to continue in the role for another year. JC received a small number of entries for the Games of the Season competition and these have now been sent off for judging.

(iii) Treasurer – Paul Kemp

- PK noted that his statement of the BACL accounts now incorporated the Congress accounts as a single line entry. This reflects the fact that the Congress is a BACL venture but that we have always sought to ensure that it was financially viable in its own right.
- PK drew the attention of the meeting to the league's small surplus for the year, £2.53 in comparison with a figure of £125.30 in the previous year. Most of the income and expenditure was in line with the previous year, with the main variations relating to best game prizes (only one of the possible three £25 prizes was awarded in the previous year) and the purchase of trophies (again little spent in the previous year). As of 1 May 2014 the balances for the BACL and Congress accounts were £1503.13 and £866.34 respectively.
- On the basis of these figures, PK proposed leaving subscription fees at their current level. The meeting agreed.
- OB queried whether the costs for the champagne given as a prize for the Goldsmith would continue to rise. PK observed that his predecessor Thelma Merry had found significant discounts on these items in previous years and that he hadn't been able to match them. Therefore next year's accounts will show a further increase in this expenditure.
- OB also commented on the fact that the Fixture Booklet had made a loss in the 2013/14 season. This was largely due to cut backs at Cambridge due to tighter finances. OB outlined his plans to address this by offering the members the option to purchase a booklet, which had previously been included as part of their membership (and still is for team captains).

(iv) Press Officer – Colin Roberts

- CRo apologised for his lack of activity this season which was due to an unprecedented level of professional business.
- However, he also noted that the league has now been in existence for 40 years and that he has begun writing a commemorative booklet about it. Having completed his work on the history of Division 1 he intends to extend this to cover Divisions 2 and 3 as well as the Roger Goldsmith tournament.
- The Division 1 section is currently with BJ for publication on the Suffolk Chess Website.
- While willing to continue in post, due to his lack of activity over the season, CRo offered his resignation to the Executive. The group would consider this later in the meeting.

(v) Grading Officer – Scott Taylor

- ST commented on how the excellent websites of TD and Dave Wild has made his role less significant. The Executive had reconsidered the Grader role in their latest meeting and agreed that the role continued to be necessary and now mostly related to estimated grades.
- MS described a situation that had arisen in the Goldsmith wherein an estimate grade had been wildly inaccurate and that this had a significant impact not only due to issues of board order but also the overall grading limits which apply in that competition.
- Some discussion followed about the powers of the Grader and how the role should be carried out. OB quoted an excerpt from BACL rule 5.3:

... Should the grader consider the estimate to be significantly different to the player's performance (either when first submitted or during the course of the season) he will notify the Match Secretary and the club secretary, and the grader's estimate should be used thereafter.

- SL referenced the role outline that he had recently produced at the request of the Executive (included as an appendix to these minutes).

(vi) Internet Officer – Tim Davison

- TD remarked that results entry continues in general to be very prompt, with most results entered and confirmed within a day or two. There were exceptions to this which we would be seeking to address later in the meeting.
- To help address issues relating to the registration of players, TD plans to introduce the facility for players to be registered directly on the website rather than over email. Details of new ungraded players could then be automatically communicated to the Grader.
- TD also mentioned a problem that had arisen this season when two opposing captains attempted to enter results at the same time. Under certain circumstances it was possible for duplicate results to appear. TD has fixed this.
- VA led the group in offering thanks to TD for his work on the website.

(vii) Roger Goldsmith Organiser – Mark Szymanski

- MS reported that Bury had made a clean sweep winning both the Division 1 and Division 2 competitions.
- The competitions ran smoothly, though there had been the one grading issue mentioned previously and the setting of fixtures was somewhat problematic due to late deadline we had set for the entry of teams. MS hoped this could be brought forwards.
- CRo thanked MS for his work, and went on to observe that the two tier structure for the Goldsmith had now been in place for a few years, and opined that it might now be time to review whether the format was working. Several interesting alternative formats were immediately forthcoming from the group.
- PK reminded the group that the AGM brought in a raft of significant changes a few years ago under his chairmanship and that the two tier Goldsmith was an attempt to reinvigorate the competition. He agreed that it was important to assess whether this revision had achieved this objective, and invited MS to lead an assessment of Goldsmith to be reported at the next AGM. In the meantime clubs should also provide MS with feedback.

Action: Club Secretaries to give feedback to MS on the status of the RGT, and possible alternative formats should the current format need amending. MS to bring this to the next AGM.

(viii) Rapidplay Organiser – Patrick Ribbands

- PR reported the results. The individual winner was Kevin Clark (Linton), and Linton also won the team prize. Modesty prevented PR reporting that he won the grading prize.
- Fischer timing (15m+10s) had been used throughout. Players were given the option of insisting on non-Fischer timing (25m), but none did.
- The only disappointment was the small number of entries, just 20 across the two nights.

(ix) Congress Organiser – Bob Jones

- As per the circulated accounts, the 2013 congress had made a surplus of £235 from its 143 entrants. Cross tables of the results are also available.
- CRo led the group in congratulating BJ on another excellent event. The future of the congress would be returned to later in the meeting.

4. Election of Officers

In the light of previous discussions about how the role of the grader has changed ST explained that he wished to step down. VA led the group in thanking ST for his contribution over the years. BJ and CRi offered themselves as possible successors in the role of Grader. The group voted in favour of BJ. With all other officers willing to continue in post, the remaining officers, including the Press Officer, were re-elected en-bloc. 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	Linton
<i>Roger Goldsmith Organiser</i>	Mark Szymanski	Ely Beet
<i>Press Officer</i>	Colin Roberts	Bury St Edmunds
<i>Grader</i>	Bob Jones	Bury St Edmunds
<i>Ex-Officio</i>	Charles Richmond	Newmarket

5. Honours

OB reported the winners of the various BAFL competitions. These are summarised below.

Competition	Winners	Player of the Year
Division 1	Cambridge Examiners	David Redman (Cambridge)
Division 2	Cambridge Oddfellows	Richard Newman (Cambridge)
Division 3	Newmarket Thoroughbreds	Adam Harvey (Bury St Edmunds)
Roger Goldsmith – Div 1	Bury Abbey	N/A
Roger Goldsmith – Div 2	Bury Cathedral	N/A

Trophies will be presented at the Jamboree. The customary bottles of champagne for the Goldsmith competition were presented to BJ and DW who captained the winning teams.

At this point we took a 10 minute break.

6. Proposals from Clubs and the Executive

(i) FIDE Changes

OB outlined the executive proposals in relation to the forthcoming new FIDE laws of chess (July 2014). In summary:

- To adopt the FIDE rule: a player making a second illegal move loses
- To opt-out of the FIDE rule: mobile phones are not permitted in the venue
- To opt-out of the FIDE rule: a player making an illegal move in Rapidplay loses
- To opt-out of the FIDE rule: quickplay finish allowing a switch to use increments

SL explained that ECF has yet to make a formal response to the FIDE rules. Informal discussion with the ECF Director of Home Chess and the ECF Grading Manager, suggest we should be fine, but it isn't certain that we would be able to make the above described changes without making our games ineligible for ECF grading. The meeting approved the Executive proposals, subject to their being compatible with games being ECF graded.

Action: SL to report to the Executive and Club Secretaries the outcome of the eventual ECF statement. Revisions to be included in the 2014/15 Handbook (Fixture Booklet).

(ii) Miscellaneous Rule Revisions

Playing for Multiple Clubs

It came as a surprise to many of us this season to find that the BAACL rules do not prevent a person playing for multiple clubs in the same division. To rectify this, the Executive brought a proposal to introduce a new rule 3.6

A player may play for different clubs if the teams he represents are in different divisions. A player may not play for different clubs in the same division of the league unless he has genuinely changed clubs, does not play again for his former club that season, and has the permission of the Match Secretary to do so.

This met with approval of the majority of the meeting, and will therefore be adopted.

Action: Rule 3.6 to be included in the 2014/15 Handbook.

Playing for Multiple Teams

The group went on to consider a further rule limiting the number of occasions a person may play for a multiple teams in the same division. The wording brought to the meeting by SL proved inadequate, but the principle was approved. The idea is that a person may play more than three games for only one team in any division. Up to three games may be played for each of several teams.

Action: SL to organise an email discussion aimed at deciding the wording to be used for this rule. Other parties to the discussion will be OB, CRo, PK and BJ.

Confirmation of Results

To encourage prompt result entry, the Executive proposed to strengthen rule 6.8 as follows:

Captains of both teams should enter or confirm the match result on the League's website. Where possible this should be done within two days of the fixture, and in any case within a week. On request the Internet Officer may grant other club officials permission to enter and confirm results on behalf of team captains.

This change was approved by the meeting. **Action: this amendment to be included in the Handbook.**

Promotion and Relegation

The Executive sought to give the AGM greater freedom in deciding how promotion and relegation should be handled at the end of each season. To this end they brought a proposal for a minor change to rule 2.2:

At the end of the season the bottom team in division 1 will normally change places with the top team in division 2, and if there is a third division the bottom team in division 2 will normally change places with the top team in division 3. However the AGM may, exceptionally, vary this arrangement at the request of the clubs affected.

The change here is that the original closing words "both clubs affected" have been replaced by "the clubs affected". This change was approved by the meeting. **Action: this amendment to be included in the Handbook.**

(iii) Fischer Timing

BJ outlined the Bury Proposal to change the Fischer timing option from 75m+10s to 70m+15s. This has the advantage over the current arrangement that one can tell by looking at the clock whether it is set for Fischer or non-Fischer timing, since under the current arrangement both begin with 75m on the clock. Some players also seem to think that 10 seconds is simply not a sufficient increment.

With one vote against, this proposal was accepted by the meeting. Rule 4.4 therefore becomes

Play must take place in accordance with one of the following two time controls:

- (i) Fischer: each player has an initial stock of 70 minutes with an additional 15 seconds added per move from the first move. Quickplay finish rules do not apply.
- (ii) Non-Fischer: each player must make 30 moves in 75 minutes, after which a further 15 minutes are added to each player's clock for the remainder of the game. Quickplay finish rules apply.

Action: This amendment to be included in the Handbook.

BJ outlined a second Bury Proposal that Fischer timing should be made the default option in Division 1. This would be a new rule 4.5.

In division 1, games shall use Fischer-timing unless both players agree to use the non-Fischer option. In other divisions, games shall use Non-Fischer timing unless both players agree to use the Fischer option.

This also met with the approval of the meeting. **Action: new rule 4.5 to be included in the Handbook.**

Having previously skipped ahead, we returned to consider a proposal from the Executive

Clocks may be initially set to use Fischer timing, but clubs must accommodate any player requesting to use the non-Fischer system described in rule 4.4.

Since we had agreed to make Fischer the default, this rule would need to be redrafted so that clubs need only accommodate the request in Division 2 and 3. This rule would allow us to further encourage the take-up of Fischer timing since when clocks are initially set to use Fischer, mere inertia will likely prevent either player objecting in many cases.

This met with the approval of the meeting. **Action: SL to draw up a rule to encompass this decision, to circulate for checking and subsequent inclusion in the Handbook.**

(iv) Other Proposals

Bury Cobras

Bury brought a request for Bury Cobras to remain in Division 1 despite finishing bottom. Cambridge Oddfellows came top of Division 2 and as represented by OB were amenable to the arrangement. There followed a spirited discussion on whether this was appropriate, since most previous exceptions in this area had been permitted to protect the interests of smaller clubs. Ultimately, however, a majority of those voting agreed that Bury Cobras should be allowed to remain in Division 1.

Newmarket

CRi withdrew the earlier request from Newmarket in relation to their promotion and relegation situation. He noted that one of the Newmarket teams would be dissolved, but might possibly be replaced by a team sourcing players from both Ely and Newmarket.

Penalties for Non-Confirmation of Results

Following on from earlier discussion about the confirmation of results, PR brought a proposal that the meeting should consider the introduction of penalties for failure to enter or confirm results promptly and for failure to register players.

PK outlined his and the Executive's position that such penalties should be a last resort. We had already amended the rules, making it clear when we expect results to be confirmed. PK agreed that the introduction of penalties should be considered again at the next AGM should the revision to 6.8 prove ineffective. The meeting agreed with PK's position, and therefore rejected the proposal to introduce penalties of any kind. PR responded to say that despite the outcome, he believed that just by having the matter on the agenda, the issue has been given a higher profile and that he understood an apology had already been offered by the main offender.

7. 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	3	1	2	1
Ely Beet	1	0	0	0	0
Stowmarket	0	0	1	0	0
Newmarket	0	1*	0	1*	
Linton	1	1	1	0	1
Total	7	*	6	*	*

Several figures are to be confirmed. Bury may be able to support a second team in RGT Div 2. Newmarket will enter the RGT but are not sure in which Division. They may collaborate with Ely to fill the "space" that would otherwise appear in Div 2 of the league. Cambridge have one fewer team, which is why Div 3 has only six teams.

Clubs will be required to confirm league entries to JC in the near future, and RFT entries to MS shortly thereafter.

Action: JC and MS to seek responses. Club secretaries to respond confirming or amending the entries in the table above.

8. Upcoming Events

A number of events were highlighted ...

BACL Jamboree: Thursday 11 September
7:15pm
Moreton Hall Community Centre (the Bury Venue)

BJ was persuaded to organise the event for us again this year. **Action: BJ to circulate details and ask for entrants.**

Cambridgeshire Rapidplay: Sunday 28th September
Whittlesford Memorial Hall

Bury Congress: Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 October
The Apex, Bury St Edmunds

This will be BJ's 16th and final year running the event. He is hoping to reach the venue capacity with 172 entrants. TD is already working on the website.

OB asked what progress there had been finding a successor. BJ explained that with the backing of a sub-committee he had separated his role into a number of smaller roles, and that several of these have already been filled. However, someone will need to take overall ownership and that role, along with several others, remains unfilled. The separation into multiple roles, and therefore the establishment of a team, should make the job less onerous.

Should no successor to BJ be found, the event may fold. However, RD said that in that event we might want to consider "outsourcing" to a group such as e2e4 who run a number of congresses around the country. The group welcomed the suggestion but hoped it would not come to that and so went on to discuss how we should go about filling these roles.

CRo mooted the possibility of calling an Extraordinary Meeting (EGM) to address the matter, but the group felt this was liable to be poorly attended and opted instead to raise the matter at the Jamboree when a larger group would be gathered. To facilitate this, we agreed to speed up proceedings by using Fischer timing at the Jamboree (15m+10s as in the Rapidplay).

Close of meeting: 10:15pm

Role Outline
BACL Grading Officer
Summer 2014

The primary responsibilities of the Grader relate to ungraded players.
According to BACL rule 5.3 (as per the 2013-14 Handbook):

Where a player is ungraded the club secretary will provide the Match Secretary with an estimated grade, which should be used for the purposes of these rules. The estimate should be based on all known data, including old grades from a previous list and games held by the grader. Should the grader consider the estimate to be significantly different to the player's performance (either when first submitted or during the course of the season) he will notify the Match Secretary and club secretary, and the grader's estimate should be used thereafter.

- Disputes about estimated grades within BACL competitions should be handled by the BACL Grader with support from the BACL Executive in the case of any appeal against the Grader's decision.
- The BACL Grader will hold a list of all players for whom no current official ECF grade exists along with an estimated grade to be used for each of these players.
- The Grader will check this list for accuracy and completeness at the beginning of each season and at regular intervals thereafter. Minimally, it will be checked on each release of new ECF grades and for individual players upon request by any league official or club secretary.
- It is the responsibility of clubs (secretaries and/or captains) to make the Grader aware of ungraded players and to communicate names, estimated grades and the basis for those grades to the Grader and/or Internet Officer.
- The Grader and Internet Officer will communicate to one another the details of any new ungraded players of whom they become aware.
- It is the responsibility of the Grader to check the accuracy of these grades against all available data, and make revisions as necessary.
- Data may be gathered from any of the sources listed below. This list is not intended to be exhaustive.
 - Current or previous ECF/BCF grading lists for both Standard and Rapidplay
 - FIDE rating lists
 - Performance in games played to date
 - Ratings from online chess servers (e.g. ICC / FICS)
 - Informal assessment by peers
- Any revision to the estimated grades should be communicated to:
 - The Player (where possible)
 - The secretary of the club to which the player belongs
 - The Internet Officer
 - The Match Secretary
 - The Roger Goldsmith Organiser
 - The secretaries of all other BACL clubs

Outcomes from the BACL Rules Working Group

Revised Rule 4.4

Play must take place in accordance with one of the following two time controls:

- (i) Fischer: each player has an initial stock of 70 minutes with an additional 15 seconds added per move from the first move. Quickplay finish rules do not apply.
- (ii) Traditional: each player must make 30 moves in 75 minutes, after which a further 15 minutes are added to each player's clock for the remainder of the game. Quickplay finish rules apply.

If only analogue clocks are available, or an analogue clock is selected under rule 4.3, games will use the Traditional-timing option.

Note to rule 4.4:

The Quickplay finish rules, which are stated separately, include the "2 minute rule" which therefore may not be used to claim a draw when using Fischer timing.

New Rule 4.5 (existing 4.5 becomes 4.6)

If suitable clocks are available, games in division 1 will use Fischer-timing system described in rule 4.4 unless both players agree to use Traditional-timing. In other divisions clocks, may initially be set to use either timing system, but clubs must accommodate any player requesting to use Traditional-timing.

New Rule 3.7

Once a player has played four times for one team in a division, he cannot play more than three times for any other team in that division.

Revised Rule 6.4

A player may bring a mobile phone into the playing venue, but it must be switched off or silenced during play. If a player's phone rings, or a player uses the phone in response to a vibration without leaving the room, he will forfeit the game.

N.B.

We were considering making this last rule include a ban on the use of mobile phones for cheating. But this is in fact already prohibited under the FIDE laws (<http://bit.ly/fide2014>), Article 11.3a, which reads:

During play the players are forbidden to use any notes, sources of information or advice, or analyse any game on another chessboard.