

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Sheffield & District Chess Association
The Chess Centre, 329A Coleford Road, Darnall, Sheffield S9 5NF
Tuesday 5th September 2023 at 7.30pm

1. Apologies for absence

Sheffield Deaf, Sheffield University, Mike Smith, and Bill Ward

2. Minutes of the 2022 Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday, 6th September 2022

These had already been circulated by email and were agreed to be a true record of the meeting.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Treasurer's Report

John Mercy produced a set of audited accounts showing an excess of income over expenditure of £388 although this was tempered by a late bill in the sum of £300.

5. Secretaries' Reports

Alan McIntosh had prepared a report for the Summer League and this is now displayed on our website.

6. Election of Officers, Auditors, Archivist & Match Captains

President	Geoff Frost – Geoff went on to say that this would be his last year
General Secretary	Geoff Brown
Treasurer	John Mercy
Auditors	Nigel Carpino and Dave Latham
Webmaster	Steve Mann
Tournament Controller	Geoff Brown
Division 1 Secretary	Daniel Sullivan
Division 2 Secretary	Daniel Sullivan
Division 3 Secretary	Phill Beckett
Division 4 Secretary	Phill Beckett
Richardson/Haystead Controller	Daniel Sullivan
Summer League Secretary	Phill Beckett
Vice-Presidents	all re-elected
Sheffield A team captain	position not filled although first match is a week on Saturday
Sheffield B team captain	Geoff Brown

At this point, the President asked for a minute's silence to remember people we had lost during the year, notably Chris Marley of Ecclesall.

7. Election of members to serve on the Executive

Oliver Brennan, Jonathan Arnott, Jamie Woodhouse and Alan McIntosh

8. Fixing of fees and subscriptions.

Treasurer John Mercy proposed that these should remain the same as last year (although if the proposal for a 6-board Division 1 should go through then the fee for a Division 1 team would then be £6.00 rather than the current £8.00)

9. Proposed amendments to the Constitution & Rules (see below)

10. Approval of Clubs seeking membership to the league

There were no new clubs seeking membership.

11. Organisation of teams into Divisions

There will be 35 teams this coming season. These were sorted into three divisions of eight teams with a 4-player fourth division with eleven teams.

SASCA D, a new team of (mainly) primary school juniors in Division 4, will be seeking to play home matches only but for double points (to avoid late nights and such youngsters playing in pubs).

12. Any Other Business

- (a) Bill Ward had emailed the secretary and president with a proposal (re 3 points for a win) for the AGM in 2024. The president has replied to Bill requesting that he re-submits the proposal at the due time next June.
- (b) Woodseats club have requested that they don't have any fixtures on Monday 9th October as many of their players will be involved, either playing or helping, at the Sheffield Congress over the weekend of 7th-8th October.
As 9th October falls in the week set aside for the first round of the Richardson Cup, a suggestion was made, and agreed, that the cup week should be put back to the week commencing Monday, 16th October.
- (c) Discussion re mobile phones and other electronic devices at matches. Hillsborough Chess Club believe our rule on mobile phones should be the same as FIDE rules and written into S&DCA rules. Namely that "Without the permission of the arbiter a player is forbidden to have a mobile phone or other electronic means of communication in the playing venue, unless they are completely switched off. If any such device produces a sound, the player will lose the game."
(The secretary had suggested that clubs might want to look at FIDE's Article 11.3 [FIDE Handbook E. Miscellaneous / 01. Laws of Chess / FIDE Laws of Chess taking effect from 1 January 2023 /](#) and the ECF's current Tournament Rules, particularly Sections B and D [Tournament-Rules-V2-April-2021.pdf \(englishchess.org.uk\)](#) prior to the AGM).
The meeting agreed that a better wording be placed on the website for our guidance on mobile phones and electronic devices.
Secretary Geoff Brown will draft something based on the ECF's guidance notes and will then send it out with the Fixture Meeting notice so that it can be discussed at that meeting.
- (d) Geoff Brown asked that anybody interested in playing for either of the Sheffield teams in the Yorkshire League on Saturday afternoons should contact him.

The meeting closed at 21.09 hours

Motions accepted under 9 “Proposed amendments”.

a) Proposal (by Hillsborough Chess Club): Hillsborough are proposing that the Davy Trophy is played over six boards.

Our 'A' team have finished second in Div;2 and would like to take promotion but we would struggle to get eight players of suitable strength on a regular basis.

Our 'B' team has finished second in Div;3 and would also like promotion but we couldn't field two teams in Div;2.

I know this proposal has been submitted before but circumstances have changed since the last AGM.

So, in effect, the proposal is for matches in all divisions, apart from the bottom one, should be played over 6 boards.

Delete current section **(d)** of **Rule 14 – ORGANISATION OF THE LEAGUE** and renumber sections **(e)**, **(f)** and **(g)** accordingly.

After discussion, this motion was passed with 12 votes for, 3 against and with 3 abstentions.

b) Proposal (by Mike Smith): That **Rule 20 – CLOCK AND TIME-LIMITS** should be altered to allow an incremental time bonus.

Currently **Rule 20(b)** reads as follows:

20(b) In all team matches, each player shall have 75 minutes in which to complete the game.

Propose to read:

20(b) In all team matches the home team shall choose between two time limits: that each player shall have 75 minutes in which to complete the game; or that each player shall have 70 minutes plus an additional 6 seconds per move in which to complete the game. All games in a match shall be played to the same time limit.

Explanation:

An incremental time limit means that for clearly won games, such as Queen and King v King, they can be won and are not artificially scored as a draw.

Clubs do not need to incur any expense. You can continue with the present time limit for home matches if you wish. Similarly, if you occasionally have two home matches but do not want to incur the cost of that number of suitable clocks, there is no need to do so.

If teams do decide to adopt the incremental time limit option:

Compared with the present 75 minutes to complete the game:

- a 40-move game has 74 minutes
- a 50-move game has 75 minutes
- a 60-move game has 76 minutes
- etc

This motion was defeated with only 1 vote for, 16 against and 1 abstention.

c) Proposal (by Mike Smith): Rule 23 – LEAGUE POINTS, PROMOTION AND RELEGATION

Teams declining promotion creates a problem filling the position in the higher division. This last season both the first and second divisions have run below their intended number of teams. Club representatives at the AGM are placed in a tricky position if they are asked whether one of their club teams will agree to play in a higher division, often their Club AGM has not considered that possibility.

At present a team may win a division and its trophy, decline promotion, and still be eligible to win the same trophy the next year, thus preventing another "deserving team" from winning the trophy. This proposal is intended to address this issue.

Rule 23(b): add new clause 'unless ineligible under **Rule 23(f)** in which case the trophy will be awarded to the highest eligible team.'

Rule to read:

23(b) The team scoring most match points in each division each season shall be declared champions and hold the appropriate trophy until the end of the following season unless ineligible under **Rule 23(f)** in which case the trophy will be awarded to the highest eligible team. The two teams scoring most points in each division, other than the highest, shall be entitled to play in the next higher division in the following season, unless disqualified under Rule15(e).

new **Rule 23(f):** A team that wins its division but declines promotion to the next higher division shall not be eligible to win the same trophy in the immediately following season, except in the following circumstances:

- (i) where a team from the same club is relegated from the immediately higher division and this team takes its place
- (ii) where the club has only one team and the next higher division requires a greater number of boards to be played
- (iii) where the team is prevented from accepting promotion under rule 15 (e)

This motion was defeated after considerable debate about whether, or not, clubs should be allowed to refuse promotion. Voting was 3 for, 12 against and 3 abstentions.

2023 Summer League Report

For the second year running, the summer league attracted a larger than usual number of entrants. Before Covid there would normally be 13 to 15 teams, spread over three divisions. This year 22 teams took part, spread over four divisions. This provided 100 matches and, because many were five or six board matches, there were well over 400 games.

Chesterfield A romped away with the division 1 title. They gained 14 points from 12 matches and finished a clear 5 points above Nomads A. Nomads had however split their forces and were fielding a second team in the same division, otherwise the race for the top spot would have been much closer. But the summer league is not all about winning titles and by entering two first division teams, Nomads B filled a vacant slot in the division.

SASCA A won division 2 with 14 points from 8 matches. They were undefeated and finished 4 points above D&H A. With hindsight, placing SASCA A in division 1 and Rotherham in division 3 would have made the second division a closer affair. However, when compiling the divisions, I didn't realise that SASCA A would be so strong or that Rotherham would find the division such a struggle. Yet, as Chesterfield B drew both their matches against SASCA and Rotherham only lost each of theirs by one game point, it was perhaps closer than it looked.

Woodseats A won division 3 with 14 points from 10 matches. Despite gaining only one point from their first three matches, they slowly and quietly crept up the table. Then, in their very last match, they overtook Nomads C by one point to go top.

Nomads D won division 4 with 13 points from 10 matches. They were looking like comfortable winners until they lost their two penultimate matches and were overtaken by Sheffield Deaf. In their final match they needed a win over Woodseats B, who would also go top, along with Sheffield Deaf, if they won. But Nomads gained a convincing win, to take the title by one point.

Like last year, not only did the summer league prove popular because it provided clubs with the means to maintain interest over the summer, many clubs used it to introduce new players to competitive over the board chess. Consequently, I think, yet again the summer league has made an important and useful contribution to what the S&DCA provides.

Alan McIntosh.