



**Draft Minutes of the 2024 NCCU AGM
held on Saturday 20th July 2024
at the West Riding Public House, 38 Wellington St, Leeds. LS1 2DE
starting at 12:30pm**

Those attending were

Tim Wall	President and Northumberland representative
Bryan J Bainbridge	County Controller, Vice-Pres. on Council, Durham representative
Rupert Jones	Secretary (acting) and Yorkshire representative
Stephen Mann	Webmaster and Yorkshire representative
Pat Ridley	Cheshire & North Wales representative
Eggert Früchtenicht	Cumbria representative
Andy McAtear	Cumbria Representative
Donna Chadwick	Manchester Chess Federation representative
David Kilmartin	Manchester Chess Federation representative
Richard Walsh	Lancashire representative

To kick off, people at the meeting in turn introduced themselves to the others, as many would not know each other.

The meeting looked like being inquorate until the Cumbria contingent arrived after driving round Leeds since 11.10 a.m. looking for somewhere to park.

1. **Apologies** for absence had been received from Sanjoy Banerjee (Merseyside), Randy Donahue (Yorkshire), Andrew Wainwright (Yorkshire), Mick Norris (Manchester) and Peter Harker (Cleveland).
2. **Minutes** of the AGM held on 12th August 2023 agreed without change.
3. **Matters Arising** threw up the question of whether the NCCU considered there were any outstanding fees due from Lancashire in respect of past seasons, and it was agreed there should not be. Thus, Lancashire was welcomed back as a member County Chess Association of the NCCU with a financially clean slate.

At this point reference was made to the unfortunate death while in office of Treasurer George Horne who was given affectionate clapping by the meeting.

4. **Correspondence.** There was nothing anyone felt needed to be raised at this point.

5. Reports of Officers.

a. President

Tim Wall gave a verbal report broadly on the theme that chess activity in the North was on the increase and strengthening, especially in the area of inter-county team chess. Aspects of this are alluded to lower down.

b. General Secretary (acting)

Rupert Jones had nothing in particular to report.

c. Treasurer

In view of the passing of George Horne, no accounts for 2023-24 were available. It was agreed that signatories to the account would probably best be the Treasurer, Secretary and President.

d. County Championship Organiser

Bryan Bainbridge had submitted a written report showing NCCU stage results and the fortunes of teams progressing to the ECF stage of the national county team championships. In the **Open**, Northumberland, Yorkshire and Manchester participated. Northumberland and Yorkshire tied on match and game points, so Northumberland won by virtue of their individual match with Yorkshire who thus came second. In the ECF semi-final stage Yorkshire lost to Surrey while Northumberland beat Kent but then lost to Surrey in the final. In the **Under-2050**, Manchester, Cleveland and Yorkshire competed, finished 1st, second and 3rd respectively. In the ECF semi-finals, Manchester narrowly beat Surrey while Cleveland knocked Essex for six (literally, with a 10-6 score-line) so that there was an all-Northern ECF final in which Greater Manchester beat Cleveland.

In the Under-1850, Manchester, Yorkshire, Merseyside and Cumbria participated, finishing 1st to 4th respectively. In the ECF stage a preliminary round was necessary in which Yorkshire beat Staffordshire. Manchester and Yorkshire then beat Middlesex and Hampshire respectively in the quarter-finals. In the semi-finals Manchester beat Lincolnshire but Yorkshire lost to Hertfordshire. In the final, Manchester drew with Hertfordshire on game points but won the title on tie-break by board count.

In the Under-1650, Yorkshire, Manchester and Northumberland participated, finishing 1st to 3rd respectively. In the ECF stage Manchester beat Kent in the quarter-final while Yorkshire received a bye. In the semi-finals Yorkshire beat Surrey and Manchester beat Lincolnshire, leading to a second all-Northern ECF final in which Yorkshire beat Manchester.

In the Under-1450 only Yorkshire and Manchester participated. Their match was a 6-6 tie which Yorkshire won on board-count. In the ECF stage, both Yorkshire and Manchester lost in the quarter-finals to Kent and Essex respectively.

At this point a county-by-county review was made aimed mainly at seeing what teams would be likely to enter the NCCU County Team Championships for 2024-25 and how extra ones might be drawn in. Anticipated entries, with some comments:

County CA	Open	U-2050	U-1850	U-1650	U-1450
Cheshire & NW	Pat Ridley explained that Cheshire & NW, who did not participate last season, were concentrating on junior chess, so it was suggested Cheshire & NW might enter a junior team in a lower section (and terrify the adults therein).				
Cleveland	Cleveland was not represented at the meeting as Peter Harker had had to back out of the meeting at the last minute. Cleveland has its own local league competitions but seemingly the only enthusiasm in Cleveland for inter-county chess reportedly is found in Peter. Cleveland U-2050 team performed well in 2023-24 (as at 5d above) so Tim Wall or whoever might persuade Peter to rustle up another Cleveland team such as an U-1650 one.				
Cumbria			1		
	Cumbria has yet to hold its AGM, so Andy McAtear thought there was some possibility of another Cumbrian team entering. Andy note <i>en passant</i> that Cumbria liked Barnard Castle as a venue. (It's west of Darlington and north of the Durham/N. Yorks border).				
Durham	Given that Durham did not currently field any teams, Tim Wall tentatively broached the idea of Northumberland and Durham being allowed to field combined teams, so potentially drawing in Durham players. To encourage Cleveland, the idea of reserving for Cleveland players from Cleveland clubs participating in Durham events was also suggested.				
Greater Manchester	1	1	1	1	1
Lancashire			?		
	Richard Walsh is on the job, with some vigour. There is an event on 1st September at which it is hoped possible team captains and hence team entries can be identified.				
Merseyside	1 *		1		1 *
	As Sanjoy Banerjee had been unable to get to the meeting, information was limited. They entered the U-1850 last season. * Post-Meeting: Sanjoy advises volunteers found to captain both an Open and an U-1450 team as well as U-1850, aiming to confirm ASAP (23/7)				
Northumberland	1	plus 1 other, most probably U-1450			
Yorkshire	1	1	1	1	1

Ideas to squeeze matches into the tight calendar, were mentioned. A Jamboree is one theoretical option, option, but past experience has put people off and it is not favoured by the controller. More feasible seemed the idea of four teams meeting at a single venue and playing 2 matches each on the one day: A v B and C v D followed by B v C and D v A. Bryan Bainbridge envisaged Zoom meeting with captains in September, with team entries to be in by the end of September.

Available dates of fixtures are to some extent limited by 4NCL dates (just recently published) and Yorkshire League dates (being finalised).

e. Club Championship Organiser

Nothing to report as it had not been held in 2023-24.

Tim Wall mooted a Club Championship Jamboree run as a one-day Rapidplay at Bradford

Latvian Club with 4 players per team. It was pointed out that previously there were multiple sections, so the idea of Open, then U-1800 and U-1500 average rating sections. (This of course is not the NCCU Club Championships of the past, for which the rules can be found on the NCCU website.) Ideas on this will doubtless evolve in time.

f. Rating Officer

It had been intended to abolish this post. It was noted that Mick Norris had been entering data on LMS for which he was thanked. (See later under election of Officers.)

g. Trophy Officer

Track of the whereabouts of trophies seems to have been largely lost due to the intervention of Covid. **Dave Kilmartin** reported that he had located the whereabouts of half the trophies. Dave was asked to present a completed report on things to the NCCU winter meeting, at which point possible purchase of new trophies would be considered. (Some trophies were originally for old-style grade-limited competitions then put into service for the new-style rating-limited competitions, so new ones might make some sense anyway.)

h. Webmaster

Steve Mann had submitted a written report in which he alluded to his personal mission to advertised centrally and accessibly as much information of (non-local) chess events in the North of England. He was asked to take various steps to ensure as wide a knowledge as possible among Northern counties and the ECF of the website.

i. ECF Delegate

Tim Wall referred to the merger of Silver and Gold categories, and this flushed out concerns that congresses were being invoiced for “pay to play” very late so that resultant upgrades in membership category were not going through as promptly as might reasonably be expected. He also enlarged on the ECF’s scheme for support for Grassroots Chess Development to which Richard Walsh contributed as the appointed NW Region coordinator.

Richard asked all NCCU members to circulate details of the funding scheme to their clubs and any other wider contacts. The prospectus and application form can be found at the following link - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/ecf-grassroots-support/>.

The NW region comprises Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Cumbria and Cheshire. Richard is setting up a panel to consider and score applications and each of these counties should nominate one person to be on that panel. **Action – Counties to send Richard names and e-mail addresses of their nominees by 28 July.** Applications for funding via the ECF link will go to ECF HQ and those in the NW region will be passed to Richard. He will then send these to panel members for scoring and comment. After that he will collate the results with his own thoughts with a view to either recommending or not that funding goes ahead. These recommendations will be passed to the ECF for final decision. The ECF panel who makes that decision comprises Mike Truran, Stephen Greep and Nigel Towers. He needs to make his first submission to the ECF by 1 September. The total fund for NW is £10,000 and any money left over post 1 September will be available to bid for in the next (submission by coordinator 1 December) and subsequent rounds. A similar process will apply in NE and Yorkshire (including Humberside) regions. Impact, outcomes and sustainability are some of the key criteria and funding for each application funding will normally be expected to be £1,000 or less. NCCU agreed that this was a very welcome development and, if successful and additional government funding were to become

available, should be repeated.

The question arose as to whether there might be any appropriate application for funding for an NCCU-based project (which would fall into the cross-region category rather than a regional one) though none was mooted at that point. Applications for cross-regional support will be funded through a separate pot held by the ECF and will be for them to decide upon.

(j) Pennine Cup

Though not an official report as such, a written report on the Pennine Cup event held on 14/01/2024 had been placed on the table, as the effort put in by Damien McElvenny seemed to deserve recognition.

6. Proposals (e. g. for changes to the Constitution and/or Rules)

There were none.

7. NCCU Individuals and British Qualifying Congress

It was confirmed that the Northumbria Masters to be held on 22-26 August 2024 at Dolphin Centre, Darlington would serve for the three NCCU Individual Championships for 2024 and for the NCCU-nominated qualifier for the 2025 British Championship. (Neither the NCCU nor the MCCU had made any nomination for 2024 British Championship.)

8. U16 Pennine Cup 2024

David Kilmartin reported that Andrew Wainwright of Yorkshire, who had won the 14/01/2024 event, had undertaken to run the event for 2025, which was accepted by the meeting. (It might be noted that the 2024 event was run for Under-18 teams as opposed to the “correct” Under-16 teams, but as there is no longer an NCCU Under-18 team jamboree, this adjustment seems not unreasonable, albeit unnoticed.)

9. School Awards 2023-24 (outcomes from last season)

BCET Award 2024 – Yorkshire had had the opportunity to present in December a nomination for the NCCU (if approved) to forward to BCET by 01/05/2024 as their recommendation for a 2024 BCET Award, but this had evidently not been progressed in any way and so was lost due to there being no 2023 December meeting.

NCCU Award 2024 – Similarly, Cumbria had had the opportunity to present in December a nomination for the NCCU School Award 2024. Mindful that nothing had been done, Steve Mann has contacted Dave Cole to check whether there was anything jammed in the pipeline, and the result was a nomination from John Lydon (Cumbria Junior Chess Organiser) of Long Marton Community School.

10. School Awards 2024-25 (invitations for coming season)

BCET Award 2025 -

It is the turn of **Cheshire & NW** to put forward at the winter meeting a nomination for a school to be forwarded (if approved) by the NCCU as their recommendation for a 2025 BCET Award. (The deadline gives the chance for another county to take up the opportunity if Cheshire & NW “passes”. The Invitation from BCET to NCCU is expected in early 2025, and the deadline for receipt by BCET will probably be 31st May 2025.)

NCCU Award 2025 -

It is the turn of **Durham** to put forward at the winter meeting a nomination for a school to be awarded the NCCU School Award for 2025. (The deadline gives the chance for another county to take up opportunity if Durham “passes”).

11. Election of Officers (not actually taken in the following agenda order)

President	Tim Wall (entering 1st year of 2-year stint)
General Secretary	Tim Wall, Steve Mann and Bryan Bainbridge are to split the work for 2024-25, but, importantly, Donna Chadwick is considering putting herself forward for the post at the 2025 but has asked to “shadow” people in the next 12 months. Bryan Bainbridge will limit himself to the pre-meeting secretarial work he undertook for this meeting. Steve Mann is writing these minutes, and aims to keep an eye of things throughout the season, and make sure Donna is kept informed and advised of what she would need to know in the hope she will take over at the 2025 AGM! (See seems more than capable.)
Treasurer	Steve Mann
County Championship Organiser	Bryan Bainbridge
Club Championship Organiser	Tim Wall
Rating Officer	It had been intended to abolish this post. However, as Mick Norris has been helping Bryan Bainbridge with the ECF’s League Management System, the President thought it perhaps appropriate to recognise Mick’s input by inviting him to accept appointment as “Rating Officer”, which will be for after the meeting.
Trophy Officer	Dave Kilmartin
Webmaster	Steve Mann
ECF Delegate(s)	Tim Wall
Vice-Presidents to serve on Council	Two Vice-Presidents can be elected to serve on Council. Traditionally, the two most recently serving past Presidents are appointed, but it was pointed out that there is no point in so electing to Council a Vice-President who is already on Council due to holding office, something Bryan Bainbridge appreciated). It was suggested therefore that Dave Cole (who is a Vice-President) would be appropriate as he has just retired from 16 years as secretary and therefore has the knowledge and experience which these appointees to Council are intended to bring. Steve Mann had already sounded out Dave Cole on this. So, Dave Cole was appointed one of the two V-Ps to serve on Council, and the other place was to be offered after the meeting in turn (until one accepts)

	to Bill O'Rourke, then Bill Metcalfe and then Rupert Jones.
No new Vice-Presidents were appointed.	
No auditor was appointed/re-appointed, but that perhaps ties in with sorting out the bank and transference of relevant material to the new Treasurer.	

12. 2024/2025 NCCU Presidential Nomination – Northumberland (Tim Wall)

Tim is at the start of a 2-year period of tenure (2024-2026). The matter of a Presidential nomination arises only once every two years and this agenda item was not appropriate to this meeting. On the 2025 AFM agenda there should appear something like the following:

2026/2028 NCCU Presidential Nomination – Cheshire & NW

So, Cheshire & NW (next on the alphabetic rota, Yorkshire having nominated Tim Wall when their turn came) will need to be thinking about a nominee to assume office at the 2026 AGM. This will necessitate a nomination at the Dec-2025/Jan-2026 winter NCCU Council meeting. The deadline gives the chance for another county to take up the right if Cheshire “passes”. That is all for a year hence.

13. Affiliation Fees 2024-25

It was decided to keep the county affiliation fee set at £75.

14. Time & Date of Next Council Meeting

It was decided that this would be held by Zoom, and that it would probably be held in January.

15. Any Other Business

None.

The meeting was closed at 16.10 p.m.