

Oxfordshire Chess Association AGM

7.30pm on Thursday 15 September 2022

Held at Rose Hill Methodist Church

Present: Nigel Moyse (Cumnor, Chair), James Cole (Cowley), Ian Bush (Cumnor), Sara Sengenberger (Cowley), Will Burt (Cowley), Peter Hemmings (Wantage), Alan Gentry (Witney), Priscilla Morris (Cowley), Kevin Henbest (Oxford University), Mike Truran (Witney), Pete McLeod (Oxford City), Roger Thetford (Didcot).

Abbreviations: OCA = Oxfordshire Chess Association, ECF = English Chess Federation.

1. Apologies for Absence: Gerard O'Reilly, Steve Rumsby, Gary Jackson, Asif Hameed, Andrew Varney, Lawrence Barber, Steve Bennett, George Spalding.

2/3. Minutes of 2021 AGM/Matters Arising: approved by the meeting with no matters arising.

4. Chair's Report (Nigel Moyse)

Nigel reflected on the gradual increase in over the board competition after Covid-19, thanking Mike Truran, Ian Bush and all others who have kept chess going through the pandemic both locally and nationally. He also noted that the Kidlington Congress is returning in 2023.

Nigel thanked league secretary James Cole for running the OCA competitions last season and also Roger Thetford and Ian Bush for helping James and Nigel in their new roles. Mike Truran noted that the Witney congress is going ahead again shortly.

5. Secretary's Report (James Cole)

James reiterated Nigel's thanks, welcoming the return of over the board chess. As expected, this has not reached pre-Covid levels. Twenty teams competed in three divisions last season and Oxford University teams won all three, losing just one match to Cumnor. Although one of the University's Frank Wood Shield teams was knocked out by Wantage, their other team also won this competition.

This season the league will increase to 22 teams but, regrettably, the club at Bicester has been permanently disbanded.

6. Treasurer's Report (Sara Sengenberger)

Finances are essentially unchanged since last year. Retaining £1,000 as contingency leaves about £1,800 which has already been allocated to

developing chess in the county.

Sara mentioned the possible effects of the introduction of rolling membership by the ECF. Mike Truran explained that, as long as a player is a member on 30 June, no game fees will be charged for the preceding season. Membership status can be found in the ECF's rating database and further information will shortly appear on their website and the next edition of ECF newsletter *ChessMoves*. Mike invited Sara to discuss things further with him.

7. Other Officers' Reports

Nigel Moyse has taken over as county captain temporarily from Steve Rumsby, reporting briefly on team recruitment. He also asked if there is anyone who might take over permanently as captain.

Peter Hemmings has put his Grading Officer's report on the OCA website, confirming results from the OCA and Chiltern leagues have been submitted. He mentioned the question of how frequently he submits results, now ratings are published monthly. A change to rating files on the OCA website has made reporting easier. Mike Truran said most leagues report monthly but this is not obligatory—he and James Cole thanked Peter for all his work.

Mike Truran reported on ECF matters, reading its Board's report to Council (shortly to be posted on the ECF website). He said the ECF is in an unexpectedly good situation despite Covid-19. There are two contested board positions to be elected at the AGM and Mike indicated which candidates he preferred to use his OCA vote for: Stephen Woodhouse for Non-Executive Chairman (Tim Wall is also standing) and Stephen Greep for Non-Executive Director (Alan Atkinson, Hok Yin and Stephen Chiu are the other candidates). The meeting approved this and thanked Mike for all his work at the ECF.

Junior Liaison officer Andrew Varney will post his report in due course and asks that clubs give him more up to date information on their facilities for juniors. James Cole will email clubs with this request. Peter Hemmings suggested we send Andrew a greeting from the committee and this was approved.

8. Election of Officers for 2022/23

There were no contested posts. Ian Bush has offered to take over from Gerard O'Reilly as the County Individual Organiser. John Place's three year term in the honorary role of President is ending and Priscilla Morris has been proposed instead. The full list of appointments was proposed by Nigel Moyse, seconded by Roger Thetford and received general assent from the meeting. The full list of officers is therefore:

Chair:	Nigel Moyse (Cumnor)
Secretary:	James Cole (Cowley)
Vice-Chair:	Kevin Henbest (Oxford University)
Treasurer:	Sara Sengenberger (Cowley)
Minutes Secretary:	Will Burt (Cowley)
Fixtures Secretary:	Asif Hameed (Cowley)
Grading Officer:	Peter Hemmings (Wantage)
ECF Representative:	Mike Truran (Witney)
Junior Liaison Officer:	Andrew Varney (Cumnor)
Webmaster:	Roger Thetford (Didcot)
County Individual Organiser:	Ian Bush (Cumnor)
University Representative:	Kevin Henbest (Oxford University)
Online Chess Officer:	Ian Bush (Cumnor)
President:	Priscilla Morris (Cowley)

Priscilla Morris thanked the meeting for the honour of becoming President, noting that several around the table had been in their roles for many years. James Cole noted that Gerard O'Reilly would continue to provide his valuable input to the Guidance for Clubs and Captains document.

9. Treasurer's Recommendations for 2022/23

These were unchanged: maintaining club affiliation fees at £10 per team and allocating £1,800 for development—although the Chair noted that none of this has yet been disbursed. He encouraged people to ask clubs for ideas, noting the raised profile of chess in the wake of the popular drama series *The Queen's Gambit*. He floated the idea of an initiative to teach people the game. James Cole suggested supporting people to take courses to become arbiters. Further discussion ensued and it was noted that we need to tell clubs that these funds are available.

10. Formation of the League for 2022/23

The structure agreed at the May Committee meeting, amended in the light of more recent information from clubs, was as follows:

- Division I: Banbury 1, Cowley 1, Cumnor 1, Oxford City 1, Oxford University 1, Oxford University 2, Witney 1
- Division II: Cowley 2, Didcot 1, Didcot 2, Oxford City 2, Oxford University 3, Wantage 1, Witney 2
- Division III: Abingdon School, Banbury 2, Cowley 3, Cumnor 2, Didcot 3, Oxford City 3, Wantage 2, Witney 3

As there were no further changes required and no objections this was adopted as the formation of the league.

11. Proposals for Changes to the OCA Rules

The only proposal was from League Secretary James Cole. As discussed at the May committee meeting, this would continue the relaxation of rules around starring and player eligibility put in place by an emergency motion at last year's AGM. This was seconded by Nigel Moyse and passed by the meeting.

It was noted that clubs are encouraged to be optimistic about running teams, as it is much easier to remove teams from a league structure than to add new ones.

12. Any Other Business

League secretary James Cole has moved permanently from Oxford and so will be standing down after this season. We need to find someone else for this role, possibly doing some job shadowing during this season.

Ian Bush reported the sad news that Eric Ward, who played for the former Blackbird Leys club and then at MCS/Blackbirds, passed away last week.

Priscilla Morris asked about the status of the association's archives, which prompted some discussion about such matters.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Will Burt (Minutes Secretary)

4 December 2022