**East Cheshire Chess Club**

**Minutes of the 76th Annual General Meeting**

The 76th AGM was held on Wednesday 31st May 2023 at Cheadle Hulme Institute commencing at 7.30pm

Nine members were present: David Taylor, Steve Kelly, Keith Hodgson, Steve Tatlock, Tom Jones, Tudor Rickards, Keven Holton, Steve McCall, Harvey Cheater.

1. **Introduction by the Chairman:**
David Taylor welcomed everyone attending the meeting
2. **Obituaries**:
 The meeting remembered Geoff Clarke who served the club admirably for many years and who sadly passed away in November 2022
3. **Apologies for absence**:
 Jim McKie, Lucas Cleary, Edwin Cooke, Paul Bamford, David Harris, John Reed, Steve Tranter, Geoff Smith
4. **Minutes of 75th AGM dated 1st June 2022:**The minutes of the 2022 AGM, which had been circulated to members prior to the meeting were agreed and signed by the chairman
5. **Matters arising from the minutes**
 a) Access to the building: - a stairlift is now installed to assist those who have difficulty negotiating the steps leading down to the hall.
 b) Joining the Manchester League: Efforts were made to join the MCF but despite there being initial support from the membership to enter a team in the Manchester League it proved not possible to do so due to player availability issues arising. The Manchester Chess Federation will keep the club informed of any future tournaments which they may organise with an open invitation for us to take part. Also, the club details have been retained in their directory.
 c) Cost of running Club Website: The club website content is reasonably up to date and no charge will be made to the Club for the website domain cost. Edwin who is instrumental in creating the website has kindly offered to contribute towards the funding of the site domain. It was noted that technically Edwin owns the website, and there could be an issue if at some point in the future he were to part company with the club. However, it was felt this issue could be dealt with if it ever arises. This is based on a response from Steve Kelly – the treasurer, to a question from Tudor.
6. **Treasurer Report**

The Treasurer’s statement of accounts duly audited had been circulated to all the members in advance of the AGM and were considered and approved by the meeting

Steve Kelly (treasurer) stated that whilst the accounts are at present showing a very healthy balance of £1321,26 as of 31st March 2023 notice has since been received from the trustees of the institute that with soaring energy costs rising fourfold it will be necessary to increase the hire cost of the premises from the present rent of £15 per session to £20 and possibly £25 per session next season. Steve recommended to the meeting therefore that the membership subscription be increased for next season from £20 to £40.

This recommendation was approved unanimously by the meeting and will be adopted.

1. **Secretary Report (appended at the end of the minutes)**The report having been circulated to all the members in advance of the meeting was read and accepted. The Chairman thanked Keith for all his efforts during the particularly difficult and stressful period early in the season when he had to deal with much uncertainty regarding the future of the Club post-pandemic.
2. **Team Captain Reports (appended at the end of the minutes)**The reports had been circulated to all members in advance of the meeting. Each report showed how well the teams had played throughout the season. All three teams, that is the A and B Teams and Limit League Team, showed consistency in their performance with each team coming 2nd to top in their divisions.

A great achievement after such a long break.
Tom – captain of the A Team made special mention of how well Keven Holton performed. Of the 6 games Keven played over the season, he won 5 showing him with an 83.33% result success against tough opposition.

1. **Publicity Officer Report**Positive progress has been made this season in promoting the club to the outside world. Posters in the form of flyers have been printed and circulated for display in local shops, libraries etc. How successful this publicity initiative will be is yet to be tested but early signs have been positive with one or two members of the public making initial enquiries. Hopefully a much clearer picture as to the success of this publicity initiative will be seen when the new season in September commences.
Tudor mentioned in his report to the meeting, that the poster displayed on the outside wall of the institute advertising the Club needs to be redesigned and made larger.
 Concluding his report he sought the agreement of the meeting to allow him to proceed with producing a newly designed poster and arrange to have the newly designed poster replace the old one on the outside wall area of the Institute.
The meeting unanimously agreed that Tudor proceeds unhindered with arranging a newly designed poster to replace the existing poster on the outside wall area of the Institute
2. **Presentation of Trophies**a) Match play cup winner – Steve McCall
 Runner up - Tom Jones
b) Kellett Trophy - No competition held
3. **Election of Officers**The following were duly elected unopposed

a) Chairman - David Taylor
b) Secretary - Keith Hodgson
c) Treasurer - Steve Kelly
d) Auditor - Jim McKie
e) Publicity Officer - Tudor Rickards
(It was decided the title of Website Manager was no longer required. The secretary mentioned he has had a conversation with Geoff Brindle, who previously filled this role. Geoff indicated he is happy to help in a consultancy capacity on an informal footing if help is needed)

1. **Child Protection Policy**
After some discussion over the wording of the policy, it was proposed that the policy, with the present wording, should be adopted as an interim measure, and the exact wording of the policy would be reviewed at next year’s AGM
The meeting agreed with this proposal
2. **In-house Club Competition Review**

a) Matchplay Trophy: Because the Stockport League match fixtures started late in the season a reduced number of league matches were scheduled to be played. This has highlighted a slight weakness when applying the present rules regarding the qualifying minimum number of matches (7) a member must play to qualify as a contender for the match trophy award. Whilst recognising it was a particularly unusual season with only half the usual number of matches played it did mean less opportunity for every member to play at least 7 matches. It is perhaps timely therefore to review the present rules applied for the future. The meeting agreed that the Committee will review the present rules following the outcome of the forthcoming League AGM. A clearer picture will then emerge as to how many teams throughout the league will be entered to compete for next season and hopefully home and away matches will resume, meaning a lot more match opportunities for all members to play.
 b) Kellett Trophy: The competition did not get off the ground this season due to very few members attending normal club nights when not involved in league matches. It is clear this situation is unlikely to change next season given there will probably be many more league matches scheduled. Ideally therefore a more flexible approach in playing this competitionis needed to encourage more of the members to take part. Introducing an additional option in the competition rules to include allowing the matches to also be played on-line through the Lichess website is considered a positive way forward given its flexibility. Members who find it difficult to attend club nights will therefore be able to arrange with their opponent to play their match on any day and time suitable to them. A volunteer to organise and run this competition would be required.

 The meeting supported this proposal, and the secretary will circulate an email to all members and request for a member to volunteer running this competition. The secretary will attach to the email the contact list of all the club members who are known to be registered and already on the Lichess website. It will serve also to encourage members shown on the list to challenge each other to a game of online chess during the summer recess

1. **Stockport and District Chess League 2023/24** The club will enter three teams
2. **Election of Team Captain**A Team – Tom Jones
B Team – Steve McCall
Limit League – David Harris The meeting unanimously agreed they continue in their roles
3. **SDCL and MCF summer season chess tournaments**It was agreed the club will close for the summer season and will not enter any tournaments during this period
4. **Fixing dates of club events for 2023/24 season** a) Starting date of new season: - 06/09/23
 b) First Social night of season: - 27/09/23
 c )Next AGM will take place either last week in April or first week in May 2024
 d) The Club will close for the summer on 22/05/24
5. **Any other business**The secretary mentioned some proposed rule changes will be considered at the forthcoming SDCL AGM in reference to Rule 16c (mobile phones) and Rules 17A (rate of play)

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.00pm

Signed by Chairman -------------------------------------------------------------- Dated----------------------------

*Addendum to minutes – Reports below*

Secretary Report

A particularly busy and fruitful year for the Club

My first task as newly appointed secretary was to action the decision unanimously agreed by members present at the AGM, that I approach the Manchester Chess Federation with a view to us joining and enter a team to play in their league. The reason for taking this action was that with no news forthcoming as to which way the Stockport League would be going following the covid pandemic, concern had been expressed as to the club’s future.

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The MCF were very happy to welcome us into the Federation. However, it soon became clear that despite over 50% of the membership expressing interest in taking part, lack of player availability issues arose. It quickly became apparent it would not be possible for the club to consistently field an effectively strong team in whatever division we would be placed in their league without repeatedly defaulting a board(s) in many of the fixtures. Regrettably there was no other option but to withdraw, much to the disappointment of the MCF. I can report however the MCF has kindly agreed to keep me informed of any future tournaments they may organise which may be of interest to the Club.

 Fortunately, the Stockport League had by this time now “woken up” and near normal service was resumed albeit late into the season.

The future of the club is assured!

With the delay in the Stockport League starting, the match fixtures in each division were effectively halved in the number of games to be played for this season only. The three teams we entered, one in each division, showed very encouraging results for the club when competing against other clubs in the league after such a long break, and was well supported by those taking part.

No doubt everything will be back to normal next season when it is hoped home and away matches against each club will be resumed. This will mean many more league match game opportunities for everyone.

Stairlift

Many of you who have attended the club recently will have noticed a stair lift is now installed. This now allows improved ease of access to the hall for anyone who has difficulty negotiating the steps. I am grateful to the trustees of the Institute for their help in making this happen.

Training

It is encouraging to see some new members joining the club this season and I hope they are settling in well. The special training sessions recently given by John Reed has been very informative, helpful and most popular for both old and new members.

Publicity

Tudor our publicity officer has made great strides in promoting the club to the “outside world”. You may have seen evidence of this in the form of a publicity notice displayed in your local library, noticeboard in the club venue, shop windows etc. I am hopeful this will inspire more new members to join us next season.

Website

The club website has been updated – worth exploring for those who may not have looked at it for some time. Please look on the history page - well worth a read.

 Special thanks to Geoff Brindle for his input and for his help in showing me how to update existing info, so necessary in my role as secretary.

Club Social

Our social night of rapid play, convivial conversation and refreshment continues its successful run although the most recent one I feel was not as well attended as previously. It’s a great event, very well organised by our chairman and treasurer – please continue giving your support in future events

Final reflections to my year as secretary

As your newly appointed secretary I now have a much clearer insight in the workings of the club, and I sense there is a good positive vibrancy emerging within it. I am encouraged by the interest shown, particularly with our newest members who have been helped in recent training initiatives provided to them by some of our highest graded players. A great investment for the future of our club – long may it continue.

I would in closing encourage all members when they are not playing in a league match on club night to come along to the club. At present there are very few members who attend on a regular basis which means the in- house club competition for the Kellet Trophy has not been played this season due to lack of support.

With much needed membership support required for any in- house club competition to take place and be successful, I would encourage all of you, the members, to fully embrace the facilities the club can offer. Playing competitive chess in match play conditions will serve to improve and strengthen individual playing ability throughout the membership. It would provide for many of the members the opportunity of playing much stronger graded players within the membership of the club. This could be viewed as an extension to the training initiative already mentioned in my report and serve to strengthen future teams selected to play league matches.

And Finally

 The end of the season is now fast approaching, and it has been at times a very challenging experience for me in my role as secretary. However, I am prepared to continue for one more year if I am invited to do so at the AGM

K. Hodgson Dated 1st May 2023

Teams A, B and Limit League Captain Reports for 2022/23 season

**A team**



Chorlton lost narrowly to Stockport in their penultimate game to ensure that East Cheshire A  finished second in the league. An unofficial glance at club grades indicates that beating Stockport A (the eventual winners) would always have been tall order for any team in the league, however based on grading alone EC would likely have been seeded third, so beating Chorlton in both the home and the away fixture was a brilliant result and is the reason for our eventual placing of 2nd. At the other end of the spectrum, we slipped to draws against Northenden (their only point of the season!) and Macclesfield where we were only able to field 5 players, indicative of how tight it has often been to get a full complement out. In the cup, we were narrowly defeated by Urmston in the semi-final a match that could have gone either way.

 I would like to thank all those who played any game for the first team for your efforts this year, as well as those who volunteered their services but weren’t called upon on this season, the vast majority of calls for players have only yielded six or seven volunteers this season so whilst we have usually been able to field a team, it has been tight on several occasions. All the more reason then for members of the club to volunteer whatever their grade.

Special thanks this year goes to John Reed, who not only captained the team during my absence in November/December but also played in a full 8 games in the A league. Without John we would have struggled for numbers at many points this season and people might have had to watch my boring games instead of his swashbuckling sacrifices! John has played some enterprising, attacking and entertaining chess this year and has come off second best in more close games than his play has deserved. In addition, he has shown that he can not only play chess well, but he can teach chess well. I only managed to attend one of John’s lectures, but it was a brilliant and informative evening and hopefully we can have more of the same next season. Thank you, John!

Another special mention goes to Keven Holton who finished the season with an impressive 5/6, giving a performance grade 200 points higher than his registered grade and winning several excellent games in the process, the quick victory in Macclesfield in a Scotch game was particularly memorable with his opponent resigning before an inevitable, very pretty checkmate – barely out of the opening!

All in all, I think that it has been a successful season for East Cheshire A and one that I’m sure we will build on next year.

Tom Jones – Team Captain - 16th May 2023

Teams A, B and Limit League Captain Reports for 2022/23 season cont’d

**B team**

**Division 2**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Team** | **Matches Played** | **Matches Won** | **Matches Drawn** | **Matches Lost** | **Games For** | **Games Against** | **Points** |
| Urmston | 6 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 21½ | 8½ | **12** |
| Marple | 6 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 17½ | 11½ | **8** |
| East Cheshire B | 6 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 17½ | 12½ | **8** |
| Wilmslow | 6 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 13 | 16 | **5** |
| Macclesfield B | 6 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 12½ | 17½ | **4** |
| Denton | 6 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 11½ | 18½ | **3** |
| Stockport B | 6 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 10½ | 19½ | **2** |

Well, I would like to say what a great season.

That's what I would like to say

But the reality is

We finished joint 2nd in the league with 8 points

Won 4 matches lost 2

Urmston won the league with 12

Players who had 💯 % in wins

James Scorer 3 games

Paul Bamford 1 game

And Francis Moan with a guest appearance

I won 6 out of 8 games this season

Who cares I hear you say. Only me

It took Steve Tatlock to steady the ship with 4 draws

Went out to Marple in the President Cup on board count

Highlights of the season: -

Not getting frozen to death at Urmston

And not dying on the Urmston roundabout

But seriously Well Done All

We had a blast

Steve Mccall - Team Captain 19th May 2023

Teams A, B and Limit League Captain Reports for 2022/23 season cont’d

**Limit League team**

**Limit League**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Team** | **Matches Played** | **Matches Won** | **Matches Drawn** | **Matches Lost** | **Games For** | **Games Against** | **Points** |
| Ashton | 6 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 20 | 4 | **11** |
| East Cheshire | 6 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 14 | 10 | **7** |
| Chorlton | 6 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 13½ | 10½ | **7** |
| Denton | 6 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 9 | 15 | **6** |
| Wilmslow | 6 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 10 | 14 | **4** |
| Stockport | 6 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 10 | 14 | **4** |
| Marple | 6 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 7½ | 16½ | **3** |

The 2022/23 Limit League season comprised the following seven teams: Ashton, Chorlton, Denton, East Cheshire, Marple, Stockport and Wilmslow. The teams played each other only once, so the teams played six matches.

East Cheshire had a very good season, coming joint second (with Chorlton) with 7 points, 4 points behind the winners, Ashton. The following ten members played games for the Limit League: Paul Bamford, Harvey Cheater (2 games), Edwin Cooke (2 games), Dave Harris (captain) (5 games), Keith Hodgson (4 games), Steve Kelly (4 games), Steve McCall (2 games), James Scorer, Geoff Smith and Steve Tatlock (2 games).

We won matches against Marple (3 – 1) and Denton (4-0), drew matches against Ashton, Chorlton and Stockport and lost only to Wilmslow (1 – 3).

I would like to thank all the members who played, both for being so reliable and for playing so well! I would particularly like to commend Keith Hodgson for winning 4 games out of 4 and Steve Kelly for winning 3 games out of 4. The wooden spoon goes to the captain whose results were so poor I’m not even going to tell you what they were …

David Harris – Team Captain - 23rd May 2023