

Notts Chess Association

League Mgt Committee Meeting (virtual meeting via Zoom) Sunday 13 June 2021

Present: Chris Holt (chair), Nick London (secretary), Phil Morgan , Mike Naylor, Simon Scott, Graham Ladds.

Apologies: Andy Robins, Dave Griffiths,

Not present: Chris Budd (no contact)

Notes and Actions

1. Meeting convened in response to need to submit any proposed league rule changes for NCA AGM in the next few days.
2. Survey of clubs' views on league chess post: Covid-19 restrictions had been distributed and most clubs have responded. NL had circulated full replies and summary of majority views etc.
3. Results reviewed. Noted:
 - a. Only Rad/Bingham had definite plans to re-open before September, and several clubs were still uncertain about their venue status.
 - b. Three clubs (WN, NEW & RB) had potential to offer neutral venue for matches if needed.
 - c. Head count of willing players indicated 60-70 – approx. one third of normal participation.
 - d. Clear preference in favour of 4-board teams in the short term.
 - e. Indication of around 20+ teams that would participate (50% of normal)
 - f. Varying views on the preferred format of the league – overall preference for 'as near to normal as possible'. Team entries, start date and winter breaks may dictate league structure.
 - g. Little interest in online league chess alternative at present; partly concerns about potential for cheating. Longer term it may become a viable option for league or county chess.
 - h. Strong preference for standard time limits that can be graded (i.e. not rapid play)
4. Based on review of survey, and dependent on number of teams entered, a provisional league season could be organised as follows:
 - a. 4-board teams for all divisions
 - b. Full home-and-away fixture schedule
 - c. Time limits either standard as before or possibly all adopting division 5 rates (60 minutes + 10 sec increments) to allow ease of organisation, travel etc.
 - d. Probable structure of smaller divisions (e.g. 6) to allow for:
 - easier fixture schedule
 - late entries by clubs with uncertain venue/membership
 - e. Waiving of normal penalties for invalid team/player infringements, and suspension of restrictive requirements on team composition (grade limits etc)
5. Uncertainty remains over lifting of government restrictions, so admin timescale for the 21-22 league is also not certain. Estimated 12 week period starting with distribution of league entry forms and ending with start of league fixtures. Given clubs' current uncertainties, earliest start date for a league season is likely to be October.
6. Modification of standard league rules cannot be confirmed until situation is clarified. Generic proposal to AGM (9/7/21) to be put forward:

*"That LMC be given discretion to modify or suspend existing rules for 2021-22 season as appropriate to accommodate the circumstances of Covid-19 restrictions.
This is to enable standard play league chess to be re-established."*

action: NL to forward to General Sec of NCA

7. Communication to clubs about LMC's plans is key to success. This should be done via new NCA web site as well as emails to club secretaries. Also need a 'statement of intent' regarding the conduct of chess matches in post-pandemic situation, i.e.
 - a. That LMC is not providing advice or instruction on health/medical precautions
 - b. Precautions are a matter for clubs, their venues and individual players – and HM Govt.
 - c. No expectation by LMC of enforcement of PPE or proof of exemption/vaccination
 - d. Vital that team captains contact each other prior to matches to ensure full knowledge of local arrangements

action: NL to draft suitable communication & circulate
8. Confirmed that all present are happy to stand for re-election to LMC for 21-22 season