

EC meeting 29th March 2023, 7:30 pm by zoom

1. **Present:** Andrew Walker, Graham Neil, Maurice Hill, Nick London, Steve Burke, John Swain(non-EC)

Apologies

Tim Walker (non-EC)

2. Minutes of last meeting

Issues arising out of the minutes:-

1. County Championship was held in November 2022 – report on website.
2. LMC came up with structure for this year's league.
3. League Secretary can amend website.
4. AGM held. No RRM held. AGM held in August due to heat, having been adjourned.
5. Facebook site now deleted.
6. Best Game competition happened see AGM minutes.

3. Co-opting of further EC members

John Swain co-opted onto EC.

4. Updates/ Discussions on NCA tournaments 22/23 including

- i. Report on Rapidplay/County Championship:-
 - a. Happened and report on website for both.
 - b. CC took place at Bramcote in November. Centenary Rapidplay doubled up with CC, as per votes at AGM. It broke even financially by using remainder of Congress contribution by Marcel with agreement of NCF. Shabir Okhai won (retained) CC. 12 participated in Open. Nick London won challenger event and U13 event ran as well. Challengers trophy up to date with inscriptions.
 - c. Rapidplay report on website. 156 entries. Charitable donations for Ukraine from the Coffee Stall. Profit about £900, similar to last year.
- ii. Update on Congress:

Entries being taken for the 15th/16th April 2023 event – around 99 at time of meeting. Underwritten by NCF, with breakeven point 120 – 130 entries. Entry fees for the congress put up a bit this year. Enquiries from 2 prominent GM`s but neither have taken it up. NCF not wishing to underwrite significant increase in prizes.

Discussed whether Congress had the lowest prize money? Not considered to be the case and is held at a good venue.

- iii. Funding entries for juniors and/or Ukrainians for Congress?
Has been a query as to whether there should be funding available for juniors who could not play due to financial constraints. No enquiries from Ukrainians as yet.
Debate as to how you would decide? What would the criteria be? Possible criteria discussed including whether they get free school meals. Could Junior Committee be given responsibility? Stated this had been raised but JC said they wouldn't want to get involved. WB could make application to NCF re their juniors.
Consensus? Encourage clubs to put forward bids to NCF if they have juniors needing funding. GN to write to club secretaries suggesting NCF application.

iv. **Arbiter training fees reimbursement**

Would NCA pay for fee of someone willing to train? Yes, so long as support of Tournament Committee. One person has trained recently.

Discussed whether there could be a training course in Nottingham? Considered would be a good idea if sufficient numbers. Considered NCF may be willing to help funding.

5. **Updates/Discussions on League 22/23, League format 23/24.**

There are 5 divisions of 7 teams this year (35 teams) with an informal minor league alongside – only 4 teams entered. These teams get at least 2 games an evening (half hour games). LMC will gather opinions as to whether to continue next year.

LMC currently taking a flexible interpretation of league rules.

There have been quite a lot of postponements since Christmas.

Do not know how many teams will enter for next year. People seem to want stricter rules. Standard rules could return – unless clubs put forward an alternative proposal. 5 players per team? May be less teams involved. NL to send email suggesting proposals.

RRM end of May?

GN to send email out re: RRM shortly.

6. **NCA Centenary Working Group Report/Discussion**

NL has prepared report (see below minutes) and put forward two further suggestions.

Rapidplay and Simultaneous have taken place.

- a. GM Norm tournament? £4500 – NCF application. Possible applications for Friends for Chess, JR Trust for funds. Negotiations could take place. Parallel Junior Stars Tournament? Benefit locally for it. Publicity/commentary. Next step to start discussing financial support. Upfront: deposit for venue/hotel rooms.
- b. ChessFest? Discussed with Malcolm Pein. Aim to raise awareness of chess activity. Promotion of chess in Nottinghamshire. Probably cost substantially more (£6500)

Funding for GM event? There are various options. NCA to contribute something. NL to make application to NCF and others.

Organising? Others such as Tim Wall could become involved.

Approval for proposal? Approved by EC subject to finance being raised.

NL report to be published with minutes. Invite comment prior to RRM.

Setting up separate bank account? Any possibility for online banking? Considered easier to do than previously. Will look to create a tournament account.

Consideration of ChessFest funding? LA/NCF. Some form of educational benefit – outside sponsorship may be a possibility.

EC in favour, subject to finance being raised and volunteers found.

7. NCA equipment:-

- i. It was raised whether NCA equipment could be used for Derbyshire congress on 23rd/24th September at Trent college (Long Eaton). Organiser would like to borrow NCA equipment. What do we have? 40 clocks, sets and boards. Noted Derbyshire equipment stored at Rolls Royce club. Rolls Royce may assist. NCA kit not labelled. Debate as to whether it would be covered by insurance. EC not keen on offering clocks and equipment for use.

- ii. Purchase of further equipment to use for NCA competitions, and possibly hire out was discussed.
There are 40 clocks in storage at West Nottingham.
EPSCA/WN clocks used for congress/Rapidplay.
Leap clocks are as good as DGT. Possible purchase of 50 clocks costing around £1300. SB prefers AGM decision? Set/boards – PSA boards/sets can be used.
Storage? West Nottingham’s venue price is increasing, which raises question of what would happen if they chose to relocate. Is there any central storage facility? Insurance increase as well?
Contribution to WN? MH to talk to WN.
 - iii. Email from Drag Sudar on behalf of Gambit regarding clocks.
Ones given for prizes were bought separately. DGT clock deal in 2017. Bulk Order in 2018. EC considers that NCA should not have to replace them. GN to respond.
8. **Ukrainian Culture Centre** – appeal for support on chess coaching for juniors - NCF had an email. NCF meeting next week. GN to update EC next week.
9. **Commissioning of PR/Social Media agency to work on NCA media profile generally and specifically centenary events.**

NL: greater use of media/PR for Centenary events would of course be necessary.

Facebook page abandoned.

Would need more junior members of association. Appeal at a general meeting? Probably end up at same result as before as this request has been made previously.

New generation? There are some at clubs. We need to “tap” into them.

Club Secretaries to talk about development of social media with club members.

Need people before setting up/committing to anything.

GN to email secretaries.

10.Club contact details on website

SB states anonymous email addresses could be set up for club contacts (like we have for officers) and requested this option be offered to clubs when asking for league entries.

11.Safeguarding Officer

Discussed whether there was a need to find someone else. Considered not at this point, but keep under review.

12.Dates for RRM and AGM

GN to talk to WB.

End of May for RRM. (22nd May)

AGM in June/July before school holidays

13. Any other business

3 clubs still to pay fees - Nomads, University and Ashfield.

14. Next meeting. Set for 16th June 2023

See below for CWG report to EC

Report to NCA Executive Committee of Centenary Working Group

Members: Nick London, John Swain, Gavin Dow, Simon Scott, Mike Naylor-Eade

The NCA AGM of July 2022 commissioned a working group to investigate options for events and actions to commemorate the centenary of the founding of the NCA in 1922-23. This paper is to report back on progress and ideas that have been developed and to seek EC's support for further work to bring the plans to fruition.

Centenary County Rapid-play

This was held on 13 November 2022 as a celebratory event, organised by NCA tournaments committee. It combined the County Championship with a popular rapid-play format, held at Bramcote village hall. There were 63 entries in the three sections, a much larger field than has been seen for the Championship in recent years. A full report is published on the NCA website.0-

Simultaneous display by International Master Jonah Willow

Jonah was asked to perform a simultaneous and was happy to do so in recognition of the support he has received, both financially and in kind, from the Notts chess community. The premises of The Dice Cup games shop (Mansfield Road, Nottingham) and playing arena were obtained for the event, which took place on Saturday 10 December 2022. Players were invited to take part from NCA clubs and beyond and were charged a modest fee to cover premises expenses. 18 players took part, with Jonah scoring 14 wins, 3 draws and only 1 loss.

The event was deemed a success by all who were present, and the playing venue was very suitable. The management of the Dice Cup were accommodating and tolerant when we overran our allotted time, and the event engaged the interest of passers-by and shop customers. None of the wider publicity contacts made proved fruitful however (press, local television).

GM-norm Tournament

This event aims to provide opportunities for aspiring talented players to gain valid GM and IM norms by means of a special format used successfully in other similar tournaments (the Schiller system). The intention is to invite 3 x GMs to compete against groups of IMs, FMs and other players in a 9-round event running over the course of a week.

Because such an event requires some extensive planning, the WG has taken various actions already to put in place the necessary arrangements on a provisional basis, as follows:

Date: 30 October – 3 November.

This is during the half term period which will encourage those involved in full time education to take part, and is at a time when relatively fewer similar tournament are thought to be occurring.

Venue: Nottingham Mechanics Institute (Shakespeare Suite)

This was found to be the best (only) option for a city centre venue at a reasonable cost. Members of the WG have visited the premises and met the manager, and are confident that the room identified will work well. The dates have been provisionally booked, pending a deposit payment.

Tournaments management: Tim Wall

Tim is an experienced organiser and FIDE qualified arbiter which has run similar events on the same

model in Newcastle. He has very helpfully provided the Schiller model and an outline idea of budget costs. He has been provisionally invited to act as tournament director. Provision of 'live board' equipment to allow for online commentary) and accommodation for visiting GMs is also being investigated.

Local Benefits:

The event would present opportunities for local talented players to obtain IM or GM norms and would hopefully offer a wider range of East Midlands chess 'stars' the chance to compete locally. The WG is also developing the idea of a junior side-tournament, probably for 6 of the best local players, to compete at the same venue and alongside the GMs and IMs.

Finance: see separate draft budget

The proposal depends largely on funding or sponsorship from outside organisations, and primarily from charitable chess agencies. A bid to NCF is anticipated, but national chess charities are known to support such events. EC is invited to consider financial support for this event.

Successful Outcomes:

One or more participant gains an IM/GM norm; junior players gain valuable experience of playing alongside established masters; reputation of chess as a high-level venue is enhanced; success leads to repeat events in future years.

Nottingham 'Chessfest'

This idea is inspired by the highly successful (and much larger scale) Chessfest event organised by Chess in Schools and Communities, which has taken place in Trafalgar Square for several years. 2022 saw parallel events taking place in Liverpool and Hull, and the aim is for Nottingham to add itself to this list.

The aim is to organise a one-day, open air, high profile event that attracts the public's attention to chess and provides an opportunity to take part in various chess-related activities. This could include friendly games, tuition, giant chess sets, simuls, blind chess displays, commentaries, online challenge matches against other cities etc.

Date: Saturday 15 July 2023

This date fits in between other key local chess events and the London Chessfest in Trafalgar Square – thought to be important in allowing CSC to help support our event. Any later and school holidays (or bad weather) impede.

Venue: Trinity Square, Nottingham

Contact has been made with the City Council and costs identified. A provisional booking has been made, pending formal commitment.

Event Organisation:

Costs are being identified for various equipment as listed in the draft budget. This may include a visiting IM/GM to act as MC, announcer etc. This kind of event also essentially needs active support on the day from the chess community to provide explanation, opposition, coaching, meet & greet etc. It will only succeed if volunteers step forward.

Finance: See the separate draft budget.

A bid to NCF is anticipated, but the costs of such an event requires an attempt to gain commercial sponsorship. A list of local options to contact is being compiled. Contact is also being made with relevant Nottingham city councillors in the hope of support in kind and raising awareness of the

chess community. EC /NCA is invited to support this event financially. Although it should be noted that an early decision is required if NCA funding is essential to going ahead. The proposed date is not flexible so consideration at the NCA AGM is not an option.

Successful Outcomes:

High volume contact with the general public on the day; collection of contact details for those interested in pursuing chess at a club; raised awareness of chess activity in the area and existence of NCA in particular; media coverage and publicity driving an uptake in organised chess.