

Minutes of a meeting on Thursday 2 October 2025

Present: N Graham (chair), N London, J Swain, D Flynn

Apologies: Stuart Humphreys

1. Minutes of previous meeting 24/07/25).
Draft version **accepted** as a true record.
2. Matters arising (not on agenda):
 - a. Nottingham zonal for UK Blitz championship took place on 7/9/25 at Nottingham High School with 37 entries. Won by IM Aarav Balaji (14/15), Best Notts performance Jonah Willow (13.5), best local junior Benji Humphreys (8). Organisationally it worked well, but fees for arbiters and organisers was left unresolved by ECF. Ed Jones is pursuing this.
Also, post-ECF officer elections, Alex Holowczak to be asked to communicate via normal NCA channels. **Action: NL.**
 - b. Noted that league fixtures are now well under way, and that a new fixture-generating application has been used by the League Sec. Minor league fixtures still to be arranged.
Action: NL
 - c. ECF proposal for a local GM tournament: no more detail forthcoming on costs.
Action: NL to write again after ECF elections.
3. Financial Matters
Stu H had circulated a report prior to the meeting in his absence.
 - a. Principal costs in first 4 months of the year were from County Championship and annual insurance premium. Current loss would be resolved after receipt of league affiliation fees (to be issued in October).
 - b. Stuart thanked and commended for his report.
 - c. Noted that the County championship for this year and 2024-25 ran at a loss of nearly £500, for an event for only 24 people, which does not represent a good use of NCA funds. Some radical changes may be needed to make the competition more attractive.
Action NG/Ashfield CC.
4. Vacancies:
 - a. LMC: NG had received nomination from 3 clubs not currently represented on LMC, and proposed they be appointed:
Peter Ackley (Mansfield CC);
Chris Fraser (Nottm Central CC);
Chris Sargeant (Beeston CC);
Appointed to serve as members of LMC (unanimous).
 - b. University also to be approached for a nomination.
Action: NG
 - c. Exec Committee. No action yet, or volunteers to fill 2 posts.
Action: NG to write to clubs seeking nominations.
5. Tournaments
 - a. County Blitz took place 11 August at Radcliffe & Bingham CC, organised by Drag Sudar. Highly successful (57 entries), won by Chris Cantrill (Mansfield CC). Appreciation and thanks are due to Drag and to Simon Scott as arbiter/controller.
Proposed that Drag is asked if he is willing to be appointed formally as Blitz organiser.
Action: NL to write to DS
 - b. Noted that Dominico Napolitano is arranging a rapidplay tournament in November in Nottingham (15/11/15). NL had corresponded with him about avoiding clashes with other local which he seems happy to do. On this basis NCA can help to promote the event.

- c. NCA Rapidplay confirmed for 1 February 2026; weekend congress 18-19 April 2026.

6. Publicity & Marketing:

- a. Generic flyer has now been printed. Initial distribution should include
NCA & NPSCA events (action relevant organisers)
Libraries (action NL)
Nottm Trent University (action JS → Gambit CC members)
Club Secretaries to be asked to take responsibility for local distribution to supermarkets, cafes, pubs, community outlets, receptive employers etc. Record of distribution to be kept
Action: NL, club secs.
- b. Email distribution list: NG has supplied NL with his list – need to be merged/deduplicated. Some form of email mgt application is needed – ‘Mailchimp’ suggested.
Action: NL to investigate further.
- c. Chessfest 2.0 – plans abandoned for now – lack of access/use of indoor space at intended venue. Revisit in 2026.
Possible use of Midland Railway Station to be pursued.
Action: NG
- d. Chess ‘mobbing’ – low key gathering in a pub as a start with 4-5 people hoping to attract casual interest.
Action: DF to decide on a pub venue and date and invite those interested.
- e. Social media: uncertainty as to what platforms to use; may be useful to post adverts on ‘Meet Up’, ‘What’s on in Nottingham’ etc. Ele Hawkins (flyer design) may be able to offer advice/services on social media.
Action: NL

7. Communications for EC:

- a. Suggestion that a ‘document store’ could be used for papers, docs, minutes etc as a central repository of NCA records. Google Drive suggested as a low cost solution.
Action: NL to investigate further and assess the benefits.
- b. Discord – application that could be used for exchange of ideas and comments via email prior to meetings.
Action: DF to send demo email

8. County Teams:

NG reported some progress on this:

- a. U-2050 – no other Midlands entries so we can enter at the national level, reducing the burden of captaincy.
- b. U-1850 – NG had an expression of interest, to be confirmed. Two MCCU matches to be arranged for 12 boards
- c. U-1650 – 5 matches within MCCU but no captain, so not running.
- d. U-1450 – Tim Walker considering running as a junior team

9. Junior Activity:

NL summarised the range of junior activities happening in Nottingham and other areas. Organised by NPSCA and NCA Junior Cte (Saturday coaching; Schools team league in West Nottm, South Notts, Newark area; ‘Grand Prix’ tournament 18/10/25; secondary schools team event in December). Less well known other than those directly involved and no formal link or liaison between NPSCA and NCA - although personnel overlap.

A formal written agreement may not be necessary, but Ed Jones to be asked what NCA can do to support and enhance NPSCA work.

NCA Junior Committee also to be asked what it defines as its role/remit esp. regarding age ranges

Action: NL

10. ECF AGM:

Noted that this occurs 25 October, and that papers and submission have just been published. EC members to review papers and circulate by email any points or directives that should be

conveyed to Chris Holt as our rep.

11. MCCU:

Nothing to report since the inquorate meeting of some months ago. No communications.

12. Any Other Business

- a. Best game and Best Swindle prizes still outstanding. Mike Naylor-Eade to be asked for a progress update

Action: JS

- b. NL noted that the new flyer has brief reference to Worksop CC, even though not featured on NCA website.

Action: NL to arrange for link on website

Action: NL/SH - Worksop CC to be approached to revive payment of affiliation fee to NCA

13. Date of next meeting Thursday 20 November, 7:30 pm.