

SUFFOLK COUNTY CHESS ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Suffolk County Chess Association held on Tuesday 12 July 2022 at the Ipswich Institute (home of Ipswich Chess Club) 7:30 pm.

1. In Attendance (13):

S Lewis (Stowmarket)
D Green (Stowmarket)
S Gaffney (Saxmundham)
R Sanders (Sudbury)
B Jones (Bury)
S Lovell (Bury)
A Paez (Ipswich)
K Lunn (Ipswich)
E Kirkham (Felixstowe)
H Brown (Saxmundham)
S Wilks (Saxmundham)
J Feavyour (Saxmundham)
D Such (Woodbridge)

Unrepresented: Manningtree, Clacton, Woodbridge School

2. Apologies for absence.

Deborah Dann (Saxmundham)
Steve Ruthen (Ipswich)
Jim Buis (Manningtree)
John McAllister (Manningtree)
Tim Lunn (Ipswich)
John Lambert (Clacton)
Melvin Steele (Clacton)
Andrew Last (Sudbury)

3. Minutes of the SCCA EGM meetings held on 17th August 2021 and 21st February 2022.

Minutes of recent meetings were accepted as a true record without correction or comment.

4. Matters Arising.

None.

5. Officers' reports.

5.1 President (Stephen Lewis)

Thank you all for attending. I will keep my report short as I hope this AGM will be - to the point and no longer than it need be.

From my perspective, the 2021-2022 season was a success. All planned competitions went ahead and were completed - and given the uncertainty at the beginning of the season I consider this a fair achievement.

My thanks go to the SCCA committee for their pragmatism in agreeing guidelines that put the health of chess players first, and their willingness to review and revise those guidelines as the season went on.

We do have some rule change proposals to cover tonight on topics which have in the past led to some contention. These were discussed at length by the management committee, and I hope that we can reach our conclusions tonight civilly and in a timely manner.

5.2 Vice-President (Post vacant)

5.3 Admin Secretary (John McAllister)

As each individual gets a vote at the AGM, and as club secretaries change, and do not always forward correspondence to everyone in their club, notifications do not always get seen by everyone in the County. So if anyone would like to receive all mailings direct from me in future, send me an email to that effect and I will add you to the list.

5.4 Treasurer (David Green)

Please refer to appendix at the end of these minutes.

Following David Green's report, it was suggested that before old accounts were destroyed he consult with Kevin Greenacre and John McAllister who have interest in historical documents of local chess.

5.5 Competitions Secretary (Sam Gaffney)

Our return from Covid was successful, and except for Woodbridge School and Ipswich Junior Club, every club entered at least one team, giving 16 league teams and 4 in each of the rating limited competitions. Although some players were put off by the mask wearing rules, this was not as divisive as might have been thought and the contingency at end of season not needed.

This was our first season using the ECF LMS system instead of C4, and while there were numerous concerns at the start of the season, the system worked really well.

In the league there was a very tight finish in division one with Manningtree A winning by half a point. In division two, Woodbridge led for most of the season finishing 2½ points clear of Saxmundham A. In division three, with a

reasonably strong squad to draw on, a very strong Manningtree B won by 2 points.

In the rating limited cups Clacton won the U1650 while Woodbridge won the U1800. Both competitions were marred with a 4-0 default win, although it is very unlikely either would have affected the final outcomes.

The Suffolk section of the Norfolk and Suffolk Cup was played between just Bury and Ipswich, with Bury taking the honours.

Areas where improvements could be made;

- Communication around the scheduling of the U1650 Cup and rapid play cups.
- Avoiding spill over of matches into May.
- Encourage more entries into Norfolk – Suffolk Cup.
- Schedule Norfolk/Suffolk Cup and Rapidplay Cup finals nights in advance.
- Make better use of the ECF LMS contact details functions in preference to lists of contacts.

5.6 Divisional Rapid Play Organiser (Rob Sanders)

The Divisional Rapidplay Cup went very smoothly this season and has established itself as the premier cup competition. Almost everyone took part, all the finals were competitive and it was great to see different teams winning the trophies. In the Division 1 Cup Ipswich A beat Felixstowe A 3.5-2.5, in the Division 2 Cup Saxmundham A edged Sudbury 3.5-2.5 and in the Division 3 Cup Manningtree B beat Ipswich C 5.5-2.5.

Hopefully next season the competition will continue to thrive. I intend to have all three finals on the same night at the same venue.

5.7 First Team Captain (Steve Ruthen)

My team completed six local matches without default. Despite a strong start we were overhauled by Norfolk and Cambridgeshire, to finish 3rd out of 4. We were missing the historic strong representation from the Ipswich club, which I hope will return if we are to be a force at county level.

5.8 U1850 Captain (Bob Jones)

The final EACU table after six matches was as follows:

1	Norfolk	6	3	2	1	38	8
2	Suffolk	6	3	1	2	37½	7
3	Cambridgeshire	6	3	0	3	35½	6
4	Hertfordshire	6	1	1	4	33	3

As can be seen, Suffolk finished second to Norfolk. The final match between Norfolk and Suffolk finished as a 6-6 draw, but if Suffolk had secured just an extra half a point in that match, we would have finished in first place. As it was, Norfolk went on to the National rounds where they were convincingly beaten by Yorkshire. As runners-up, Suffolk competed in a Preliminary Round, where we faced Middlesex (who had beaten us narrowly in the

National Final in 2019). Forced to field 16 players instead of the 12 in the EACU matches, we fielded five 'new' players and again lost by the narrowest possible margin (7½-8½). Middlesex went on to win the National title.

A total of 24 players represented Suffolk over the season, with the following results:

Haroon Majeed (Bury St Edmunds)	6/7 (all on top board)
Laurie Pott (Bury St Edmunds)	4½/7
Bob Jones (Bury St Edmunds)	4/6
Steve Ruthen (Bury St Edmunds)	3½/5
Alan Watkins (Bury St Edmunds)	3½/7
Bob Stephens (Manningtree)	3/5
Ed Kirkham (Felixstowe)	3/7
Nathan Barnes (Clacton)	2½/5 + 1 def
Oliver Ferris (Bury Knights)	2/3
James Irwin (Stowmarket)	2/6
Rowan Kent (Bury St Edmunds)	1½/2
Mike Usher (Saxmundham)	1½/4
Harry Hartshorn (Bury Knights)	1½/5
Simon Riley (Ipswich)	1/1
Laureano Garcia (Bury St Edmunds)	1/2
Andrew Donnelly (Sudbury/Bury St Eds)	1/4
Alonso Paez (Ipswich)	½/1
Steve Lovell (Bury St Edmunds)	½/2
Tim Wesson (Woodbridge)	½/2
Martyn Colebrook (Ipswich)	0/1
Graeme Jones (Manningtree)	0/1
George Robinson (Bury St Edmunds)	0/1
John McAllister (Manningtree)	0/2
Raf Calumpiano (Bury St Edmunds)	0/0 + 1 def

Of the 86 games played it was disappointing that Ipswich Chess Club was only able to contribute three of these, all in the National Preliminary round. But on a more positive note, it was good to see that the list includes four juniors: Oliver Ferris, Rowan Kent, Harry Hartshorn and Raf Calumpiano. I'm sure we will be seeing more of them in the years to come.

5.9 Internet Officer (Steve Lovell)

The current website for the league was set up since Covid, and has become a useful repository for the league rules, the constitution and minutes of meetings. Club details, fixture lists and league tables are also available on the site. The main difficulty is keeping content fresh, and we have only a handful of contributors. I write the occasional piece and post news items on request, and the main other contributor of late has been Andy Lewis, who mostly reports on the adventures of the Anglian Avengers in 4ncl competitions (online and OTB). Contributions from others would be very welcome.

In addition to the main site, the Suffolk League website also hosts two "sub-sites", which are the websites of the Saxmundham Chess Club and the Stowmarket Chess Club. This allows those clubs to have a low cost online

presence, and also enables the league to recover some of its web-hosting costs. Other clubs would be welcome to do the same.

6. Election of Officers.

All incumbent officers were re-elected unanimously.

It was noted that S Ruthen had expressed a desire to stand down as First Team Captain, and that some succession planning was required.

Simon Wilks put himself forward as a candidate for the post of Vice-President, and was elected unanimously.

7. Proposals for Changes to the Competition Rules.

The SCCA Committee has proposed the following amendments to the Competition Rules:

6.1 Rule 4.1

Delete all after “throughout the season”. Add “Board order and substitution will be determined by players’ current monthly ratings.”

The use of January ratings harks back to when mid-season grades were introduced. Now that ratings are revised on 1st of every month, there is no need or logic to using January ratings.

Passed 10-3.

6.2 Rule 4.2

Add, at end, “If a player who is unrated at the start of a season subsequently acquires a current ECF rating, then this should be used instead of his estimated rating.”

An estimated rating is just that – estimated. As soon as a ‘real’ rating is known, that must take precedence as it will be much more accurate. In the case of rating-limited competitions, we will need to decide if a player’s first proper rating should apply, or the current one.

Passed 13-0, with the proviso that the current ECF rating must be at least a ‘K rating’.

6.3 Rule 5.3

Insert the word “currently” for the rule to read: “Within a team, a player must not be currently rated more than 80 points above anyone on a higher board.”

The word ‘currently’ has been added. Without this it could be argued that start of season or January ratings should apply.

Passed 13-0.

6.4 Rule 5.4(f)

The current rule to be replaced with, "The rating of a substitute player must not exceed 80 points more than the nominated player for whom he is substituting." As a consequence Rule 6.1(a) will be deleted with rules 6.1(b) to 6.1(d) renumber accordingly.

This would bring SCCA rules into line with BACL rules.

Some discussion took place, with concern shown that an 80 point tolerance for substitutions was a lot and may not be fair. In support of the proposal as written, it was noted that as monthly grades will be used this year there will be fluctuations which captains will have to manage and this will give flexibility, as well as the point that we should be promoting chess as much as possible and not restricting who can and cannot play.

An amendment was put forward to revise the proposal from 80 points to 40 points. This vote finished 6-6 (one abstention) so was not successful. 6.4 as proposed was put to vote.

Passed 9-3.

6.5 Appendix 1 – DIVISIONAL RAPIDPLAY CUP Rule A1.4

The first sentence: to be replaced with "Each match will comprise two rounds of Rapldplay games, where each team member plays the same opponent twice, with White and Black."

This makes more sense than "... will comprise two Rapidplay games". It also confirms that both games are played between the same opponents (which has always been the case in practice).

Some discussion took place around whether the definition was required or whether retaining some flexibility was preferable.

Passed 8-3.

6.6 Appendix 1 – DIVISIONAL RAPIDPLAY CUP Rule 1.4

Change the increment from 5 seconds to 10 seconds.

The DGT2010 clocks have this pre-programmed into them (No 16) and therefore negates the need to adjust program 18, which is used for regular league matches. This would increase a 60 move game by a maximum of ten minutes, from a maximum of 1 hour, to 1 hour 10 minutes.

Passed 9-0.

8. Proposals for Change to the Constitution.

The SCCA Committee has proposed the following amendments to the SCCA Constitution.

7.1 Change to clause 4.1 of the Constitution.

Delete the words “County Team Captains, Suffolk Junior Chess representative, Women’s Chess representative, Correspondence Chess captain, County Results Officer” and insert the word “and” between “Treasurer” and “Competitions Secretary”. Delete the existing sentence after “Competitions Secretary” and replace it with, “Occupants of all other roles of the SCCA will be invited to join the committee at the AGM”.

The purpose of this change is to enable any new posts created by the League (such as Internet Officer) to be automatically invited onto the committee without the need to change the Constitution. It also removes roles that are no longer filled.

Passed 13-0.

7.2 Change to clause 4.8 of the Constitution.

Change “The Secretary shall give members 21 days' notice of the date of each meeting, together with an Agenda and the Minutes of the previous Committee Meeting.”

To “The Secretary shall give members an agenda, along with minutes of the previous Committee Meeting, plus any other necessary documentation, at least 21 days before the date of each meeting.”

The purpose of this change is to remove the anomaly that exists whereby a secretary can give just 21 days “notice” for a meeting, when members must submit any items for inclusion on the agenda for that meeting at least 28 days in advance.

Passed 13-0.

7.3 Change 8.2 of the SCCA Constitution.

In the second paragraph delete the words “in January each year”.

The purpose of this change is to allow the treasurer to raise invoices for such fees at the end of the season, after the SCCA has been invoiced by the ECF.

Passed 13-0.

7.4 Change 8.3 of the SCCA Constitution.

Change “A Current Account will be maintained by the Treasurer to receive income and make payments on behalf of the SCCA. All withdrawals will require two signatories drawn from the President, Secretary and Treasurer. A Deposit account may also be held to hold extra funds. Withdrawals from this account will be paid into the current account and only one signatory is required for this purpose.”

To “A Current Account with online facilities will be maintained by the Treasurer to receive income and make payments on behalf of the SCCA. The Treasurer and the President and/or the Secretary will hold the access codes and passwords for the on-line current account with the Treasurer authorised to make BACS payments that do not require a signature. A Deposit Account may also be held for extra funds. Withdrawals from this

account will be paid into the current account and two signatories drawn from the President, Treasurer and Secretary are required for this purpose.”

The purpose of this change is to enable the use of internet banking and electronic money transfers. Currently the SCCA finances rely solely on paper-based transactions such as cheques and paying in slips. There is a current account that requires two signatures on each cheque and a deposit account that holds about 70% of the SCCA’s cash and requires just one signature to make a withdrawal. It is proposed that the Deposit Account be unchanged except that two signatures should be needed in future to make any withdrawal.

Passed 13-0.

7.5 New emergency clause in the Constitution

Add the following new “Clause 12” to the SCCA Constitution

“12. Suspension to the Constitution or Competition Rules.

In the event of an emergency the committee has the power to suspend normal SCCA protocols.

This addition to the constitution will enable the committee to act constitutionally during such events as have occurred this past two years.

Passed 13-0.

9. Presentation of Trophies:

Division 1 – Manningtree A (Manningtree not present, the Trophy held by Bob Jones).

Division 2 – Woodbridge (Trophy currently missing)

Division 3 – Manningtree B (Trophy currently missing)

Division 1 POTY – Panagiotis Kanellopoulos (Manningtree)

Panagiotis was not present, the Trophy remained with Bob Jones.

Division 2 POTY – Simon Wilks (Saxmundham)

Division 3 POTY – Sam Gaffney (Saxmundham)

U1800 Cup – Woodbridge (Trophy currently missing)

U1450 Cup – Clacton (Trophy currently missing)

Division 1 Rapidplay Cup – Ipswich A (received by Stephen Lewis)

Division 2 Rapidplay Cup – Saxmundham A (received by John Feavour)

Division 3 Rapidplay Cup – Manningtree B (Manningtree not present, the Trophy held by Bob Jones).

Norfolk and Suffolk Cup – Bury St Edmunds (received by Bob Jones).

10. Teams for next season

A discussion on the composition of the 2022-2023 league structure took place. There are some complications with the relegation and promotions that would be suggested from last season’s standings, especially with some

players who play for multiple clubs across different divisions possibly finding those teams in the same division. It was agreed that the competition secretary would try to better establish the playing strength of the teams in the league, and will use the discretion given to him in the rules to balance the teams as best possible.

11. Any other business:

David Green repeated his concerns from his treasurer's report about running at a deficit. With the number of expected team entrants for 2022-2023 now known, a rough calculation showed that we would be dipping into reserves with our current income and outgoings (with the support of EACU teams specifically mentioned as a cost). It was agreed that with no formal proposal presented to the AGM to change either income or outgoings, we would run at a deficit for the 2022-2023 season using the reserves to support SCCA, and that any proposed changes could be put forward to the next AGM.

David Green shared that Mike McNaughton, former SCCA Competition Secretary, is living in Kesgrave and despite suffering with dementia is keen for chess. Anyone willing to play Mike should contact David, and David's contact details will be added to a note on the Suffolk website.

Sam Gaffney asked if, following the success of the rapidplay cup, there was appetite for a rapidplay league to compliment the cup. This was the first time the idea had been raised, and no clubs seemed in a position to know whether they would have interest to enter. It was suggested this could be investigated in the season with the possibility that a new competition be proposed at next year's AGM.

Alonso Paez, the newly elected Chairman of Ipswich Chess Club, noted that the Ipswich club had a new management committee after very nearly folding. He apologised for last year saying that the club was in a bad way, but he was hopeful for the future and asked for patience and flexibility in the coming year. Stephen Lewis spoke on behalf of the whole committee to express relief that the Ipswich club remained open and to thank those who stepped forward to keep the club running.

Steve Lovell suggested the tiebreaker rules for the rapidplay cup could be amended to avoid the board count tiebreaker. There was general agreement that a blitz round would be a preferable solution, and that this should be considered.

Ed Kirkham indicated that the Felixstowe club venue was likely to return to the Seafarers, but that the Club would continue to meet at the Dooley Inn.

Meeting closed 9:02pm.

APPENDIX

Treasurer's report to the AGM 2021/ 2022

This is my first Treasurer's report to a full AGM and I apologise if it is a bit long.

Our auditor has agreed to go through the accounts with me so that I know what is the very minimum of information he needs to see. We have records going back to 2005/6 when even a limited company only needs 7 years of accounts. Does anyone want the archive before I destroy the elderly records?

No accounts were prepared for 2020/2021 as the SCCA was shut down completely during the COVID pandemic. Our auditor has agreed that no audit was required for this inactive year. Everything is otherwise ready for audit.

The expenditure agreed at the committee meeting held on 30/5/22 is not shown in the summary of the 2021/22 annual accounts because the financial year ended on 31/5/22 so all the transactions took place in the 2022/23 financial year.

Income was much reduced in the 2021/22 financial year due entirely to the smaller number of teams that entered the SCCA competitions. Income was down from £635.71 in 2019/20 to £422.14 with all but £0.14p coming from fees charged to our clubs. The 14p was the pitiful return of interest at 0.1% on the SCCA deposit account.

Expenditure dropped from £559.68 in 2019/20 to £275 in 2021/22 but as £100 of the 2019/20 costs was due to default fees for the EACU teams and £217 of the 2021/22 expenditure took place following the committee meeting on 30/5/22 and is shown in the 2022/2023 financial year, the association appears to have made a surplus of £147.14 in the 2021/22 season. This is an illusion.

Reduced income and one-off items, £25.00 for ELEZ costs, £72 for Website fees for 2019/2020 and £120 for new trophies for the Rapidplay competition mean that we have, despite appearances, subsequently used some of our reserves.

I have not had a claim for the EACU refreshment costs, the accounts show £40 was paid in the past, so I have written to the EACU captains to ask that they submit their claims.

As the trophies for the season have not yet been presented there has been no claim submitted for engraving costs or for the purchase of the POTY trophies. About £80 was spent in the past.

I also expect a £72 bill for the website for 2022/23 to appear.

I do not expect an invoice from the ECF as the ECF LMS no longer shows any non-members who have played enough games in SCCA competitions to generate fees to be paid by the SCCA. Should such an invoice arrive I will pay it and then immediately invoice the clubs involved to reimburse the SCCA.

The total of these unpaid but expected costs is £192 and this will mean that the carried over costs from 2021/22 into 2022/23 will be £402 should all these bills appear. If our income remains the same we will have just £40 left to pay the season's expenses and so we may be taking over £400 from reserves.

Our balances on 10/7/22;

Current Account £ 569.96 with £ 84.50 in cheques that have been written but not yet cleared.

Deposit account £1357.77

The SCCA finances are reasonably healthy thanks to the reserves built up over many years.

There seems to be a general opinion that the SCCA is holding too much cash and that those holdings should be reduced.

If this is what the AGM wishes to happen then the wish will be granted next year as we potentially take £400 from reserves.

Of the £422.14 of total income in 2021/22, £300 or 71%, with an expected extra 9% still to be claimed, will have been spent solely to support the two EACU teams. Long term this is unsustainable and we need to either reconsider the levels of support for the EACU teams, increase our income which is almost entirely from team fees, hopefully by getting more teams back in the league, or decide that we are happy to watch our reserves dwindle away. The 2022/23 income from team fees is impossible to know yet as entries do not close until 31/7/22 and relying on 2021/22 entries is probably unwise as last year was an odd year because of COVID mask issues.

With on-line banking I can now see the SCCA balances in a few moments but I still cannot use BACS because of the requirement for two signatures. Having to use the Royal Mail to physically get a cheque to our Secretary in Manningtree to be countersigned and then on to the payee before it can be deposited for the clearing process to start, means that cheques to the value of £120.16 issued on 4/6/22 had not been cleared by 8/7/22.

The Invoice for the use of this meeting room required that it be paid by BACS so I had to pay with BACS from my personal account and then write myself a cheque, write an explanatory letter and send it with the cheque and an sae by post to John MacAllister for a counter signature, John had to post the cheque back to me and I then had to post the cheque to my bank, a ridiculous amount of trouble for the £8.00 involved. With stamps at 68p each the process of paying an £8.00 bill cost another £2.04 or an extra 25%. By Bacs the time taken to pay the Ipswich Institute was tiny and the cost nothing. When I was discussing this with a friend, he suggested that I simply pay the £8 myself and be done with it as it was not worth the time and trouble involved to reclaim it! I tend to agree with him.

Let me confirm that as Treasurer I should pay only those sums that I am authorised to pay by the constitution or that are agreed by the AGM or the committee and appear in the minutes. Someone in the past went to a great deal of trouble to put quite tight limits on the treasurer's activities some of which are in need of revision.

As the SCCA has seen fit to put all the instructions for the Treasurer in the constitution where amendments can only be made by an AGM with a supermajority in favour this means I have to trouble this AGM with the following issues.

Section 8 of the Constitution deals with finance

8.1 Financial Year

The SCCA's financial year will run from 1 June to 31 May.

Why ? The season is supposed to end on 31st May however the EACU matches may well continue if we reach the later stages so refreshment charges and potential travel assistance may still be outstanding, the bill for non-members from the ECF is not issued until July and trophies have not been engraved because some competitions may not have finished. These costs then fall into the next financial year which is rather messy and something of a pain to report about to this meeting. Sort this out by changing the financial year to run from 31st of August 1st September.

8.2 Fees

Affiliated Clubs will pay entry fees for SCCA competitions as determined at the AGM. Each Club will provide the Treasurer with contact details of its official responsible for paying fees. The Treasurer will, by 30 September in each year, provide each Affiliated Club with an invoice for fees in respect of the season's affiliation and club competition fees. If payment is not received by 30 November a surcharge of 5% per month or part thereof will be added to the fee. Affiliated Clubs are liable for any rating fees charged by the ECF.

The Treasurer will, in January each year, provide each club with an invoice for fees in respect of the games played by those who are not members of the ECF prior to 31 December.

I have proposed a change here.

8.3 Bank account

A Bank current account will be maintained by the Treasurer to receive income and make payments on behalf of the SCCA. All withdrawals will require two signatories drawn from the President, Secretary and Treasurer. A Deposit account may also be held to hold extra funds. Withdrawals from this account will be paid into the current account and only one signatory is required for this purpose. It is 2022 and BACS is the norm for both personal and business banking so why not for the SCCA? BACS cannot have two signatures indeed the BACS system does not have any signatures just bank access codes and pin numbers.

8.4 Financial records

The Treasurer will keep proper financial records of the SCCA's financial affairs and will present a current statement of the Association's finances at all Committee Meetings and the AGM. At the AGM the Treasurer will report on the SCCA accounts for the year just ended. The accounts will be audited.

This is all OTT for the size of the SCCA finances. I issued 9 invoices, I received and banked 8 cheques and 1 BACS, I received and paid 1 invoice and interest of 14p was received in the whole of the 2021/2022 financial year.

So what is there to report on at every meeting and audit? We have a full blown accounts system when we should have a sheet of A4.

Budgets. Nobody knows what was budgeted except me and we ignored it anyway. For example, The budget for overall expenditure for 2021/22 was £662, the actual expenditure was £275. the budget for trophies was £50 this year, we have spent nothing. There is no budget yet for 2022/23 yet we have already spent £230.16 and expect to spend a further £192 on costs that I know we have incurred but that have yet to be invoiced. There was no budget for EACU defaults but we paid out £100, no budget for website charges in 2021/22 paid £72 or 2022/23 where I expect another £72.

Producing a formal budget that these examples show is about as useful as a chocolate teapot is a waste of time and effort so there will be no detailed budget and instead the previous year's accounts will be the Treasurer's guide for the following year.

8.5 County matches

County Team Captains will be responsible for organising the matches in the EACU. The SCCA will fund the venues and light refreshments by reimbursing the County team captains for any expenditure they make.

This is not how it works, the EACU Invoices the SCCA directly for the hire of the venue, a levy and any default fees. Team Captains deal only with the refreshments.

A claim for these expenses will have to be submitted to the Treasurer by the County team captains, supported by documents showing the expenditure and the Treasurer will then release the funds. A contribution towards the travel costs to County matches that reach the national level will be made to a level set by the Treasurer and agreed at each Annual General Meeting.

No guidance for the Treasurer on the level of assistance be it £50 or £500? The latter figure is not a joke with petrol at £2.00 per litre, an average of 5 cars travelling up to 150 miles each way to a fixture at 30 mpg. 50 gallons at £9.50 a gallon is £475. Better hope we do not have too much success!

8.6 Suffolk Closed Championships

The organiser of the event will be responsible for the cost of running this competition. The SCCA will pay for trophies and engraving.

9. Trophies

The SCCA will provide trophies for its competitions.

The Treasurer will maintain a list of these trophies and their whereabouts.

We have a list of trophies but their whereabouts is in many cases only indicated on that list by a question mark. I am about to add the three new Rapidplay trophies to that list when I get a description of them.

Knowing the whereabouts of all the trophies has defeated the previous treasurer and others, the 2016 AGM minutes state that the whereabouts of the trophies was unknown. The progress of the search for the trophies has been minuted at every AGM since then but despite the efforts made we have failed to locate them all.

I had no idea of the whereabouts of any of the trophies until this meeting having not seen a trophy since they were presented at the last AGM held here before the Covid pandemic when I was Competitions Secretary not Treasurer.

Without some system of formal registration to keep track of the trophies we will be forever looking for them. Let me suggest that when a trophy is awarded an entry be made in a register showing the name, address and telephone number of any person taking a trophy out of the AGM room. This entry must be made even if the recipient is a stand-in for the winner. Such a register would be a written record of the whereabouts of each trophy and allow the SCCA to require the person who took the trophy away from the AGM to be identified and asked to account for its current whereabouts.

Trophies will be presented to competition winners at an appropriate meeting of the Association and must be returned to the SCCA at least two weeks before the following year's presentation.

The SCCA has no office or storage place for trophies so the phrase "returned to the SCCA" is meaningless for where does a trophy holder return his trophy when the AGM is imminent? Who is the person to whom the trophies must be returned by the trophy holders by the deadline set at two weeks prior to the AGM? If such a person exists then how can a trophy holder discover who he is?

May I suggest that a named person and an address for receiving trophies from trophy holders be established and published on the County website.

Who is charged with the task of getting the trophies cleaned, engraved, repaired, replaced if lost and transported from wherever they have been collected and stored for at least a fortnight to the AGM? Currently the answer is nobody.

Trophy holders are responsible for their safe keeping and return, and in the case of loss or damage to the trophies, must pay the SCCA the cost of making good such loss or damage.

Gentlemen, it is no wonder the trophies get lost and are not all present when the AGM comes around because we, the SCCA have setup the system so that it will fail.