SUFFOLK COUNTY CHESS ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the SCCA Committee Meeting

Held on line via Zoom on 19th May 2025, 7:40 - 8:10.

Present: President – Simon Wilks (SW)
Vice President – Piotr Dolewka (PD)
Secretary – John McAllister (JM)
Treasurer – Anthony Taylor (AT)
Competitions Secretary – Sam Gaffney (SG)
County U1850 Team Captain – Bob Jones (BJ)
Internet Officer – Steve Lovell (SL)

1. Apologies for absence

None.

2. Minutes of the last SCCA Committee Meeting February 3 2025

These were circulated after the previous meeting, and copied along with the agenda for this meeting.

3. Matters Arising

The minutes were accepted as correct. SW reminded the committee that the issue regarding defaults in the rapid play handicap (AP27) have still not been fully ironed out. His own view was to give the defaulted team the option to have that board discounted from the grade calculations. This was postponed due to the limited time available for this meeting.

SW also stated that his other action (AP29) was in draft form, but that he felt it was now suitable for sending. This was agreed.

It was also agreed that AP30 would be distributed to all clubs before the start of next season.

4. Treasurer's Report

AT reported that our current account stood at £1169.87 and our deposit account stood at £1010.82. He stated that he had received no bills since our last meeting, but was expecting bills for web hosting and engraving. Even so, he felt that the accounts were strong enough to transfer £500 from the current into the deposit account.

AT then reported that Barclays Bank had offered all of their business customers the opportunity to enter a draw for free tickets to Wimbledon. As there was no harm in entering he took up their offer, pointing out that the committee will then have to decide what to do with the tickets in the unlikely event that the SCCA won. A raffle was suggested.

BJ informed AT that he was owed £80 for county match venue costs, which he would be claiming soon. AT confirmed that would have no impact on the transfer of the £500, especially as invoices to the clubs for next season will be issued before long.

5. Competition Secretary's Report

SG reported that all competitions were now complete and summarised the winners:

Division 1	Ipswich Sports Club
Division 2	Stowmarket
Division 3	Ipswich C
D1 Rapidplay Cup	Manningtree A
D2 Rapidplay Cup	Stowmarket A
D3 Rapidplay Cup	Ipswich C
U1800	Manningtree
U1650	Ipswich
Rapidplay Handicap	Felixstowe
POTY Div 1	Angus Irving (Ipswich)
POTY Div 2	James Irwin (Stowmarket)
POTY Div 3	Martyn Colebrook (Ipswich)
N&S Cup	Manningtree

The question was raised as to whether this was the first time a team other than Ipswich or Bury had won the N&S Cup. BJ was able to confirm that it wasn't, confirming that the last time this happened was in 1987 when BT Research did so.

PD asked what had happened in the outstanding rapid play handicap matches. SG stated that the last handicap match was defaulted by Saxmundham, and Woodbridge narrowly lost to Saxmundham, giving the title to Felixstowe. PD also questioned the result of the Bury v Stowmarket D2 rapidplay result. SG explained here that Stowmarket won the match but were penalised for an ineligible substitute, but that Bury conceded the match rather than benefit from the penalty imposed by that substitution.

Also discussed was the D1 rapidplay final. SL explained the difficulty and frustration he had had trying to raise a team for this match, and was simply unable to get anyone stronger than himself, which would have been a very weak team, which he felt would have been unsuitable to field against the expected opposition.

6. Review of Competition Rule 3.2

SG had proposed a re-write of Rule 3.2 in order to formalise what in effect already happens:

A match may be postponed by agreement between the two captains. Where any two teams arrange a postponement then the postponed match may not be scheduled for a date that would make it the last match of the season for either team. A request for a postponement, made at any time up until 12 hours of the originally scheduled match date, cannot be unreasonably refused. Subsequent requests to postpone a postponed match may be declined. In this case, the match will be played on the last agreed date. The date for the rescheduled match must not be later than 30 April.

BJ objected to the 12 hour notice, he felt that was far too short a notice to request a postponement. BJ would be happy with the proposal if 12 hours was changed to 48. After some discussion, the consensus was that 12 hours notice was too short to request a postponement, therefore 12 would be changed to 48 and the proposal would be put forward. JM pointed out that we need to include a previously agreed change (AP28) that the restriction on making it the last match of the season only applied to teams from the same club.

SG questioned whether we should change 30 April to 30 May, which is what is happening in practice. There was no objection to this, therefore the proposal would go forward with April amended to May.

7. Review of Competition Rule 5.5 (g)

BJ requested a discussion on the implications of this rule, explaining how difficult it can often be when you have two teams in the same division where none of the eight nominated players can substitute for the other team, and any un-nominated player can only substitute for one of the teams. He pointed out that in the Bury League up to three substitutions can be made by players for teams in the same division and suggested that the SCCA bring such a rule in for all of our divisions.

SG reminded the committee that this was debated at length at a previous AGM when John Feavyour (Saxmundham) made the original proposal. Various pros and cons were raised and discussed, but the consensus of the committee was not to change the rule, and that if Bury felt strongly enough they could make such a proposal themselves.

BJ questioned whether there was a conflict between 5.5(e) and 5.5(g). This was not seen as such by some of the committee, but due to alack of time, this would be brought up later.

8. Review of the SCCA Child Welfare Policy

BJ reported that he had finally made contact with Tim Kent, and that they had arranged to meet at his house the following day, May 20th. The expectation was that this matter would be sorted at that meeting.

9. Review of Action Points

This was covered under Item 3, Matters Arising.

10. AOB

SW informed the committee of a new County event being developed by the ECF. Details are not yet known, but a Zoom meeting has been arranged for June 18th. SW stated he would be unable to attend and asked if anyone else would be prepared to do so. JM said he would attend on behalf of the SCCA.

BJ reported that the U1850 had progressed to the semi-final of the National competition against Yorkshire.

SL pointed out that there was still time to apply for ECF Grassroots funds for events aimed at promoting chess at grassroots levels.

11. Date and venue of next SCCA Committee Meeting

A date would be set via email later.

SUMMARY OF ONGOING ACTION POINTS

AP23. BJ to liaise with Tim Kent to review the SCCA Child Protection Policy. A meeting has been set for 20th May.
AP27. SW to circulate his views on the rapid play handicap issue for discussion regarding any future rule changes.

AP28. JM to draft an amendment to rule 3.2 such that it is only applicable to teams from the same club.

AP29. SW to write to all clubs in the SCCA, explaining the need for a first team captain, what the role requires and an appeal for clubs to look among themselves for a suitable candidate.

AP30. BJ to revisit his "Guidance for Captains" paper in line with PD's comments and circulate a reviewed copy to the committee for distribution to the clubs.

PROPOSALS FROM THE COMMITTEE TO PUT TO THE AGM

Competition Rule 3.2. Replace the existing rule with the following;
A match may be postponed by agreement between the two captains. Where any two teams from the same club arrange a postponement then the postponed match may not be scheduled for a date that would make it the last match of the season for either team. A request for a postponement, made at any time up until 48 hours of the originally scheduled match date cannot be unreasonably refused. Subsequent requests to postpone a postponed match may be declined. In this case, the match will be played on the last agreed date. The date for the rescheduled match must not be later than 30 May.

Competition Rule 5.2. Change "mid-season" to "January"

Competition Rule A1.7 - Insert "only" between "make" and "one" and change "for another team" to "across all other teams (not one per team)".

Constitution Clause 9. First sentence. Replace "Treasurer" with "SCCA".
It is not usual or necessary for administrative arrangements to be specified in a Constitution. The process for changing an administrative matter should not be so cumbersome as to require a resolution at a General Meeting. The treasurer does not normally deal with the trophies and would therefore be entirely dependent on others for information as to their whereabouts.