

Minutes of Telepost Chess Club AGM

Held on Monday 5th September, 7.30pm at the Clubhouse

Present: Martin Ayres (MA), John Bashall, Fred Bench (FB), Paul Billington (PB), Dennis Bonner, (DB) Alex Brims, John Casewell (JC), Matthew Clark (MC), Jack Gough, Nick Holmes (NH), James Holyhead (JH), Rob Nield (RN), Cesar Pileggi, Matthew Ryan, Graham Shepherd, Shane Sweeney, Dave Tomlins, Kate Walker, John Westhead,(JW) Steve Wilson(SW), Kieron

Apologies: David Hodge (DH), Steve Kempself(SK), Keith Tabner

DB opened the meeting remarking the club had had a great season, with representation in 3 OTB divisions, Shropshire Online league, 4NCL online, the Five Counties, the Shropshire County Individual and the Shropshire Minor.

1. *Acceptance of the Minutes of the AGM on 23/8/21* - accepted

2. *Team Summaries*

A Team

MC summarised the season as not vintage but satisfactory, with Phil Zabrocki outstanding. He was optimistic for the next season that we should be contending for silverware.

The A team came third in Classical Division 1 and second in the Rapid Play League. We were fourth in the Online League. We did manage to complete all the Online fixtures.

Our player of the season was Phil Zabrocki who scored 4.5/6 in the Classical League and 9/11 in the Rapid Play. Nigel scored 3/5 in the Classical and 5/5 in the Rapid Play all on board 1.

Very well done as well to Fred who scored 3/6 in Classical and 2/5 in Rapid Play.

B Team

DH sent the following report:

The B team had a successful season in the 2nd Division of the Shropshire League, finishing as runners-up to a strong Maddocks B team. It is likely that the B team will be promoted to Division 1, although this may depend on how the league is re-organised for the 2022-23 season.

The squad members of David Hodge, Rob Nield, Steve Kempself, Kate Walker and Graham Shepherd all scored significantly over 50% for the season. The highest % scores were from Graham with 86% and Rob with 80%. These overall percentages do however mask the complexity of individual game performances in relation to the strength of the opponent. Although it is probably unjust to highlight individual games, the most notable successes from my memory were Steve's win against Richard Parry at Telford & Kate's win at home against Tony Preece from Maddocks. There were no doubt numerous other masterful games that have either slipped my mind or played when I was not present.

No team, of course, can be successful without the support of reserves. The B team was blessed with an abundance of club members who willingly (usually) supported the B team. 7 additional players played for the B team, often against stronger opposition. The most successful being Fred Bench who had 1 win and 2 draws.

My thanks to all club members who played for the team during the season. Next season the B team will be rewarded with a better organised and more dedicated Captain.

DB thanked DH for acting as captain in his first season returning to competitive chess.

C Team

DB reported that the C team came 4/7 with some hard fought battles with our B and D team.

Main team was Keith T, Nick Holmes, James Holyhead, Paul Billington and myself. There was excellent support from Trevor B, Fred Bench, Alex Brims, Peter Crean, John Westhead, Steve Wilson.

The team performance overall was good. Some of the our players had good results. If we had been able to field a full strength team for every match we might have done a little better.

D Team

SW reported that if we had been able to field a full strength team for every match we might have done a bit better. Playing our B and C teams and Telford A was always going to be tough. There were some successes, with a couple of scalps for SW and Fred a rising star.

E Team

MA reported:

1. The purpose of the E team is to provide new and inexperienced club players with the opportunity for playing in the Shropshire league. Invariably they come up against very experienced players in the other clubs, because they don't attract anything like the number of new members that we do. So I warned the new E team before our first match away to Telford B that it would be a 'baptism of fire'. Our team comprised Alex Brims, Oliver Elphick, Ben Rose and me. It was a whitewash but the Telford players complimented our new members on their performance.
2. For our next match, away to Newport C, there was a problem because Oliver was unavailable, and I mistakenly borrowed Fred Bench, who was a nominated player for our D team. Unfortunately his opponent, Willie Gormley, had to be taken to hospital, but the Newport captain, Phil Love graciously agreed to a draw for Fred's game in spite of my error. Ben Rose won against the young Jennifer Greenwood, so we managed to get 1.5 points.
3. After suffering another whitewash, partly owing to having to default on board 4, we were able to use John Casewell as a blue badge player playing online. He duly won his first two games for the team.
4. During March the club benefitted from an influx of new players, and the plan was to use 5 of them in the remaining matches from the end of April, aiming to give each new player at least two games.
5. The plan was a success and the season culminated in a win away to Maddocks C owing to individual wins by Jack Gough and Matthew Ryan, and an important draw by Thomas Keegan. This was in a run of 3 away matches in succession, including 2 on successive evenings.
6. So we have a good squad of new members going forward, both to provide players for the lower rated teams and to provide reserves for the higher rated teams when required.

Div 2 Online B team

JH reported that Telepost B online had a challenging season in division 2. Fixtures were difficult to arrange and we ended up with two non-played matches agreed as draws and one as a double default. He thanked NH for playing in all the games he managed to arrange! The team finished on +5 =4 -6 which was good enough for a mid-table finish. Season highlights included clean sweep victories against Telepost C, Telepost D and Shrewsbury C.

Div 2 Online C team

JC reported that the team used 9 players. Fred had a 61% win ration. DB, JW and MR all had 50%. He was pleased to have produced a team for each match. There was a lot of negotiation over away dates as we were the only club to advertise an online night. We started the season well, but tailed off from mid season onwards.

Online Division 2 D team

DB reported:

The D team finished 7/9, at least not in the relegation zone.

We used the D team to try out some of our new members, including Alex Brims, (87.5% win ratio), Matt Ryan and Ben Rose.

It was difficult organising the opposition teams as there were no fixed dates to play, as in the OTB league, only matches to be played sometime in a particular week .

Thanks to all the 13 members who played for the D team, including Peter Westhead, John Westhead's brother, who wanted to play for Telepost but doesn't live in Shrewsbury.

3. Shropshire Minor Individual/Membership status

DB explained what the competition is and encouraged club members rated under 1640 to enter this year's tournament. It is a chance to play 7 competitive matches, one a month, playing at various venues. This year there were 17 players from most of the Shropshire clubs for players under FIDE rating of 1640. The winner was Phil Love of Newport with 6.5 points.

Martin Ayres received a grading prize for Under 1395 grade, congratulations to him.

NH commented that it was our turn to win again this season as we had won the trophy in alternating years so far.

On membership, DB reported that we were blessed by new members - 35 current members, way above other Shropshire clubs. He appreciated the support from all the members and hoped for a successful season ahead.

4. Telepost Individual

PB reported that the OTB part of the competition started in October and had six rounds. It gives club members a chance to play competitive games. This year there was double interest with the online leg and we hoped to have a champion of champions match, but that didn't happen as Matthew Clark won both formats, having played 13 games, winning 10 and drawing 3. The U1700 winners were jointly SK, FB and SW and the whole competition was well contested.

MC thanked PB for his brilliant organisation. It was only the second time MC had been OTB club champion and he encouraged all to enter.

JC reported that online competitions had begun in March 2020 during the pandemic. He had a vested interest in wanting to stay connected to the club. All the results for online competitions can be found on the club website. MC won, playing 7 with 6 wins and 1 draw. Rob was second with 4 wins and 1 draw. We are currently playing the Summer Online, with 8 players, including three of our newer members.

5. Club and Shropshire Chess website

NH reported that for the club website he aimed for news updates every two weeks during season. He asked how many read it regularly and the majority present said they did.

Looking back over the news this season, these were some highlights:

September - Nat's simul - first OTB chess since lockdown for many. Record numbers at club night. Began the hybrid club champs.

October - Nat's presentation - shame we lost him. (RN may be able to do one?) OTB league resumed post-covid.

November - Steve's ever-present book arrives! Oliver, Alex and Ben made league debuts. Vinnie had a great draw against Simon Maydew.

December - first hybrid match with JC playing online as part of an OTB league match. Covid began to affect fixtures. Christmas meal snuck in ahead of pandemic pause.

January - lots of online with Fred seemingly playing for any and all teams! Club reopened right at the end of the month.

February - club survived the floods, Peter Westhead debuted online.

March - Telepost C beat Newport A online! Steve was on the radio and in the paper with his book. Blackpool, seven players, grading prize for James. (My favourite caption of Phil.). Telepost B got a vital draw against Maddocks B.

April - presented the new Shrewsbury Town cup. Another record-equalling club night. Matthew clinched the online club champs.

May - James beat Nat in Shrewsbury Town, Telepost E played two away matches in two nights and got their first points of the season, Telepost B secured second place in Div 2. Yana was on the radio.

June/July - the Clark months - Matthew beat Nigel in Shrews Town and beat Fred to win the OTB club champs. Steve continued to promote his book...

As ever, NH welcomed contributions including match reports, congress reports, interesting games, photos etc

On the Shropshire site, the main development was that Toby Neal (Shropshire Star journalist) retired from his regular column. He has been replaced by Peter Kitchen (ex Shropshire Star) who has provided a column virtually every week. Normally published early on Weds morning.

There is a diary available on both sites.

6. New members/Equipment

PB reported that number of new members was amazing. We have had 11 new Members in the last year:

1. Fred Bench
2. Tom Keegan
3. Alex Brims
4. Ben Rose
5. Graham Humphreys
6. Jack Gough
7. Matthew Ryan
8. Yana Smart
9. Cesar Pileggi
10. Tris Humphreys
11. Dave Tomlins

New members want to know details such as who does what and the idea was that PB was the go-to person for that. But he is also the new E team captain and has a passion for helping people who want to improve, including going over games together. He hoped people would be relaxed about joining and not feel there was any pressure. He thanked members for joining Shropshire's best club!

On equipment, there is a blue folder for signing out 8 Teaching Videos and 20 books generously donated by Phil. Reminder of the new items contained in the cupboard - 5 new digital clocks. The 5 clocks can be used which are clearly marked on the box and each clock. The SCA can loan these clocks for congresses/competitions run by the SCA. This means that we now have 14 digital clocks for League games. No clocks can be lent out in any other way - ie don't take them to the Nerdy for individual games. There are 17 good tournament standard Chess Sets.

DB asked members to please return equipment to the same place as you find it.

7. Treasurer's report

Telepost Accounts 2021- 2022

<u>Income (£)</u>			<u>Expenditure (£)</u>	
Subscriptions	26 x 10	= 260.00	League Fees	(5 x 10) 50.00
Online/Junior	4 x 5	= 20	Trophy	56.00
Donation		= 4.29	Clocks	105.00
Interest		= 0.04	Website fees	10.00
			4NCL Fees	30.00
Total		= 284.33	Total	251.00
Profit for the year		= £33.33		

Brought Forward from 2020	Current account	160.00
	Reserve Account	62.38
	Petty Cash	84.24
	Total	306.62
Profit for this year		£33.33
Total in club funds 09/08/22		<u>£339.95</u>
Consisting of	Current Account	£229.00
	Reserve Account	£62.42
	Petty Cash	£48.53

JW introduced himself to new members as he had not been able to attend many club sessions this year. He summarised the accounts shown above. The club is in a good financial situation, able to buy equipment and with more in the club funds than ever before. Most transactions had moved online and JW encouraged members to pay club fees online if possible. (DB to send email with details for this year's subs.). He reminded members that they had to be ECF members, at least bronze level, to play in the competitions, otherwise the club would be charged fees for ratings. A reminder that there are three fees to pay - ECF, Telepost Chess Club and Telepost Club. The total amount is still remarkably little compared to other sports.

DB remarked that JW had done a great job for a number of years and thanked him.

8. *Election of officers/captains*

The following were elected/confirmed en bloc, proposed by JC and seconded by SW and JB:

Secretary - Dennis Bonner
Treasurer - John Westhead
Website editor - Nick Holmes
Equipment officer/new members mentor - Paul Billington

Captains:

A team - Matthew Clark
B team - Steve Wilson
C team - Dennis Bonner
D team - Martin Ayres
E team - Paul Billington

9. AOB

Summary of Shropshire AGM

MC reported that minutes of the meeting are available on the the Shropshire website. Two main issues were discussed. The future of the online league - some people wanted to scrap the league but Shrewsbury and Oswestry in particular were keen to keep it. The meeting agreed to continue the league. Winter break - it was agreed that clubs that wanted it could have a winter break in the OTB league. Telepost will play the season as normal.

He also noted that in the Rapidplay league there was now an increased level of forfeit for defaulted games. It is important for the club to make a real effort to get teams out - if you play you help to avoid forfeits.

DB encouraged new players to read the OTB and online rules, available on the Shropshire site.

Telepost Dark Knights

JC explained the origin on TDK during the pandemic. He feels that online is still relevant but accepted that not everyone was keen and there had been two unfortunate instances of cheating. But online competition helps retain older members and those with health or mobility issues - it was a case of good things coming out of bad. He is delighted that we are entering the 4NCL under the Dark Knights name. John suggests players text their captain just prior to starting as he found himself spending more time making sure the team had turned up at the outset rather than concentrating on his game.

Newport Rapidplay

This is on 6 Sept, DB taking three players.

Telepost Rapidplay

This is on 12th September run by SW and 22 entries so far.

Shropshire U1640 Rapidplay

This is at the club on 19 September. We have entered two teams. A chance to win the Rapidplay Div 2 trophy.

Christmas meal

To be held at the Crown in Coleham, probably on 13/12. 10 people signed up so far - please let SW know if you're interested by next week as booking needs to be made.

10. Proposals

Teams in the Shropshire Online league - already agreed at captains meeting.

NH proposed that we have a trophy for the club championships. The competition almost died a few years ago but had been greatly revived this year and a trophy would help to cement this. General agreement, DB and PB to follow up.

JC asked whether the 4NCL was two teams or one squad. MC confirmed that it is a squad. MC and JC to confirm rules re ratings etc and match night procedures.

DB reported that the league controller for Shropshire League may have dropped out. Teams were currently being organised. It is probable that there will be two leagues this year. We will have A and B in Div One, C, D and E in Div Two. Likely to start in October.

Meeting closed 8.50pm.

NH 6/9/22