

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Chess Arbiters' Association held during the British Championships at Norwich Sport Village on Saturday 6th August 1994 at 2.30 pm

PRESENT

Eric Croker (Chairman) [EC]

Steve Boniface (Secretary) [SB]

Dave Eustace (Treasurer) [DE]

Neil Graham (Committee Member) [NG]

Tony Corfe (Auditor) [TC]

Gerry Walsh [GW]. Stewart Reuben [SR]. David Wallace [DW]. Alex McFarlane [AM], John Robinson [JR]. John Turnock [JT]. Dave Sedgwick [DS]. Dave Woodruff [DWR]

Rod McShane (Associate)[RM], Neville Belinfante (Associate)[NB]

APOLOGIES were received from:

David Welch(Chief Arbiter) [DWE] Richard Furness(Information Officer) [RF] Roger Edwards. Roy Brown, Andrew Whiteley, Mike Sinclair. Mike Wills, Ian Cowen. Peter Morrish, Dave Jarrett, George Smith (Associate)

OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman welcomed members and associates to the AGM and stated his intention to move matters briskly as many present had duties to perform that afternoon. His intention was to complete the meeting by about 4.30 pm.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM

These were presented and approved.

MATTERS ARISING -

DS asked about how the item concerning blacklisting players had developed

SB replied that this was being done on an ad hoc basis verbally between events. Known troublemakers were being refused entry under existing rules. Careful checks were being made to ensure that ungraded players gave details of their playing records and doubtful grades were being queried. In addition some events were giving only low prizes for ungraded players

NG commented that there could be legal implications in keeping and/or circulating printed lists of such players.

AM.said that in Scotland a written list was maintained by the SCA, but only after complaints had been received from two different events.

MINUTES OF THE EGM

This had been held in London in September 1993 in order to complete business from the AGM in Dundee, and to present the accounts of the association. Minutes were supplied and agreed.

MATTERS ARISING

NG asked for an explanation of the "Corden Rule" referred to.

SB explained that in Junior events. the late Mr. Corden used to deal with an odd number of players by pairing the first player to lose with the person not paired at the start. This way the loser had a second chance to score. and everyone got a game.

DS wanted to know what was happening about dealing with players who allegedly 'threw' games in order to keep their gradings low. It was not easy to prove that this was done on purpose.

GW pointed out that if players were so inclined, they could simply arrange to lose on time, which was also undetectable.

DS thought that organizers could pass on suspicions to graders with the recommendation that the games concerned should not be graded for the offender. This could have legal problems.

TC asked about the New Swiss Pairing Rules. He wanted to know if arbiters should be allowed to use variations of them.

EC explained that the rules were in transition, and that individual members could not be forced to follow the official line. However he thought that one year was not long enough for a trial, and pleaded for stability in such matters.

DS drew attention to the comment in the minutes by the Secretary that he was 'unlikely to adopt the new rules' himself was this not an indication that the CAA itself did not fully

endorse the latest version?

SB replied that he was personally exercising the stipulated concession for controllers to employ variations where they were notified in advance. He also reminded the meeting that as the year—long trial period ended during the congress, it should not be assumed that they would become permanent. His basic difficulty with the new set was the median upfloat.

SR confessed to having similar misgivings about this last point although this did bring the advantage of symmetry throughout the pairing process. He confirmed that the rules would be considered for renewal at Norwich, and he valued the opinion of the CAA.

GW stated that the BCF had in the past attempted to enforce the use of 'official' systems but without success. Moreover when common sense conflicted with technically correct pairings, then common sense should prevail.

DW thought that the BCF could insist on a stipulated system by refusing to grade events not using the official rules.

NG disagreed. As congresses were independent, this would be unenforceable. However players expected certain standards and would not support events using poor systems.

DS reminded the meeting that although the BCF should encourage use of the official system, it should not be too rigid about this. Worthwhile experimentation with new ideas would be inhibited. He was currently investigating the Crouch System and had employed it in recent events with positive results.

EC concluded the discussion on this item under Matters Arising by stating that all arbiters should at least be aware of the recommended system, and that new controllers in particular should be encouraged at least to try it. However, he felt that as this subject could lead to extended discussion this should take place under Any Other Business.

DW asked about the item referring to the possible production of an annotated version of the Laws of Chess, and the likely copyright implications.

SB confessed that he had not pursued this particular matter, but would appreciate DW's advice in his unique position on the FIDE Rules Commission.

DW thought that there would be no problems for an organization such as the CAA to do this. as it would be a purely internal document and there would be no financial implications. He offered to ask a question on the matter to the Commission.

The meeting expressed its gratitude and accepted this offer.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

EC remarked that the CAA had been much more active in the past year and paid tribute to his fellow officers who had worked hard throughout the period.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

SB presented his report for the year [copy attached]

SUBSCRIPTIONS

DE referred back to his Treasurer's Report and formally proposed a renewal fee of £5 for the coming year both for Full Members and Associates.

DS pointed out that as several new members, mostly associates, had joined as recently as July 1994. these should not be subject to the renewal fee.

DE agreed that as this would be unfair, anyone joining the CAA since August 1993 would be exempt from this charge.

TC proposed an amendment that the full £10 should be collected from all members to bolster the funds.

DE did not see any point in building up unnecessary surpluses. He had already allowed for a sizeable buffer in his figures.

As the amendment did not receive a seconder, the substantive motion was voted on and approved nem con.

SR asked if a list of current CAA members could be published.

DE replied that he was compiling a full list and once renewals had been collected he would arrange for this to appear in Arbiting Matters.

SB introduced a proposal that membership cards should be given to members. A short discussion ensued, but as this proved to be of little interest. he withdrew the motion.

TRAINING

SB presented his paper covering item 9 on the agenda [attached]

SR queried the recommendation that the English Chief Arbiter be in a unique position to propose candidates for the title.

SB replied that the Chief Arbiter could act as liaison for all countries within the UK. and was in a good position to judge possible applications from nations outside the Federation.

NG raised the question of liaison between the Unions and the CAA where endorsement of arbiters was required.

DS emphasized that such co-ordination should be a 3-way process including the BCF. But it was important that candidates from a Union should have the backing of that body itself.

NG suggested that the CAA Committee should positively ensure that there was at least no known opposition from the Union.

SR understood that the CAA's original role was merely to set the examination paper for the title.

EC assured the meeting that the CAA was determined to be in every stage of qualification from recruitment onwards.

DS thought that records of candidates should be kept and their progress monitored.

SB explained that he kept such records of trainees in the West and urged other regional trainers to do the same. He asked for volunteers to cover the Midlands and East Anglian areas.

SR said that he would like to see a broader exchange of ideas on arbiting and quoted a contact from the New Zealand Chess Federation which had been dealt with by himself and the CAA

Secretary.

SB remarked that he had recently conducted a pilot scheme in designing a postal training schedule which NB had recently completed. He was about to start a second with candidate in Columbia. and there was a third possibility with a deaf man.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

SB asked about the appointment of Senior Arbiters. As this role was central to the recommendation of trainees, should the current system for appointing Seniors be reviewed ?

SR invited the CAA to make nominations for consideration. He would liaise with DS on this matter.

DS quoted the stipulated method of "voting by peers" for the title. He queried whether this in fact happened.

SR explained that originally he and GW drew up a list of likely nominations, and the few recent appointments had been done on a similar basis. He agreed that the system be reviewed.

SB wanted to know if the CAA was happy to continue to hold its AGM at the British Championships. Other venues had been put forward. but the EGM in London had not been a success. He would not

like to rule out regional meetings for specific purposes. however. He took this opportunity to thank SR and his team for arranging the meeting place for the CAA.

The feeling of the meeting was that although there were some problems with all arbiters present attending. on balance the present format was still the best choice.

TC related that at a recent significant event the controlling was being done badly by obviously inexperienced "arbiters". He wondered whether it should be compulsory for events to

employ a fully-qualified practitioner.

SR pointed out that many areas have problems. In the West there were too few arbiters. In the South there were more staff, but far many more events. He was reluctant to impose such a restriction at the moment.

NG thought that essential information such as pairing system and Chief Controller's name should appear on all congress entry forms. He thought players would react positively.

DW suggested that the BCF could offer a reduction in Game Fee for doing this and announcing insurance cover, etc.

SR promised to consider this, but thought it impossible to refuse an event support if it registered and paid Game Fee.

At approximately 1630 the meeting was opened to discuss further the new Swiss rules. The general feeling was that the trial should continue for at least 2 years. Some comments made:

JT Pairings based on opposition of equal gradings was fairer.

SR offered to canvas stronger players on their opinions.

NB thought that average players didn't worry about the system.

SR reminded the meeting that he was canvassing opinions upon possible Law changes in 1996.

SB asked if anomalies between normal and rapidplay versions could be resolved. for example the clock abuse rule.

DW stated that technically proposals for changes could be made at any time and did not have to wait for the FIDE congress.

The Chairman wound up the meeting by reminding members that one important function of the CAA was to protect its members. While not a Trade Union, it would ensure that any members involved in difficulty while acting as arbiters would have their interests looked after by the body.

With a vote of thanks to the Chairman, the meeting concluded at 16:45 approximately.