Minutes of LDCL AGM 13/6/24

Present

Ben Graff (Chair BG), Tom Darling (Tres. TD), Julian Summerfield (Sec. JS), Dave Thomas (Fix. Sec DT) and Peter Stiff (Safety/Webmaster PS) Omar Khemoudj (Trophies).

Mike Johnson/John Conway/Ed Goodwin (Cov.), Mark Page (Ken.), Malcolm Harding (Rug.), Richard Buxton (Strat.), Arnold Peace (S&W), Gary Jackson (Ban.), Andy Johnson (Dav.).

Apologies

Gordon Christie (Dep. Chair-GC), Hok Chiu (ECF), Rob and Richard Reynolds (Olt.)

Agenda

1. Minutes of AGM 2023 were approved- proposed by BG and seconded by DT.
2. Chair- made 3 key points
3. A reminder that apart from D1- there is no formal relegation, although the side which finishes bottom (presently D2 and D3) should expect to be relegated.
4. When the committee is considering any disputes, the committee is reliant upon the goodwill of members of the clubs concerned, in the absence of any committee members involved or in attendance of the match concerned.
5. It is acknowledged that individual venues are potentially struggling with their own finances and it is incumbent of all players to support the venues purchasing drinks from the venues rather than bring their own where a paid bar is available.
6. Presentation of Trophies: D1 Kenilworth A, D2 Leamington A, D3 Coventry, D4 Leamington C, Open KO Kenilworth, U8750 KO Kenilworth, U1600 Kenilworth, Stanley Gibbins, Ed Goodwin 13/13, Blitz (Open)-joint Javier O Valdepenas/Bruce Baer. (intermediate) joint Spike Bloxham/Muhammed Mehmood (TBC)
7. Treasurer (TD)-bank account now with Lloyds, with no ongoing charges- bank balance £1982 up from £1963- catching up with 2 lots of engraving in current year. Treasurer recommended no change to the current £3 per board fee for 2024/25 season, which was passed.
8. Birmingham University (BU) made a late entry to D2 and after email correspondence from BG/JS, BU confirmed that they would be able to travel to and fulfil their away fixtures and start at the preferred time of 7.30 pm. The league considered their request:
9. On the basis of their home venue being “outside the reasonable area” which teams should be drawn. Their home venue was approved.
10. The timing of their requested was considered too late this year.

BG would communicate the LDCL position in respect of both should they wish to reapply in sufficient time next season (2025/26).

1. DT had received all requests from member clubs for league matches-in total 32 teams, although on a further review, with a new Sol F team, 33 teams are to be entered for season 2024/25; total unchanged. There was no desire at the meeting to split D4 into 4/5, with a graded D5 and whilst the preferred divisional structure is for a max. 8 per division resulting in 14 matches, some discussion took place to which division would have 9 teams and was concluded as follows:
2. D1- 8 teams unchanged-Leam. A replace S&W B.
3. D2- 7 teams increased to 9-relegated from D1, S&W B, replace Leam A promoted to D1, promoted from D3 to D2 Cov, additional voluntary promotion from D3 to D2 Leam B; Ban. B- despite relegation remain in D2.
4. D3-8 teams-unchanged- Cov promoted to D2, Sol C relegated to D4, less additional voluntary promotion to D2- Leam B, promoted from D4 to D3 Leam C- voluntary promotions from D4 to D3 Ken E and Strat C.
5. D4- 10 teams reduce to 8 – promoted to D3 Leam C and voluntary promotions of Ken E and Strat C, S&W E drop out with Sol F entering league.

BG thanks to DT for his work with fixtures.

1. GC provided email update, being unable to attend the meeting; some minor issues covering board order/playing up were experienced, initial registration took longer to resolve. A reminder of registration required 7 days before 1st match and grades as at 1st August governs player registration and board order and 1st Jan governs board order within allocated teams at the start of the season. BG thanks to GC to complete a difficult role.
2. PS re Safeguarding- nil to report. Re Website, website moving to a new server, with better efficiency and technology requirements. PS requested that all club secretaries please let him know of any changes to club captains, match night, venue, paid bar etc so that LDCL website can be updated. BG thanks to PS for his work for both of these roles.
3. In recognition of the need to support venues, BG proposed that, “LDCL is committed to ensuring that we play chess in a sustainable way. We want to properly support the venues and communities of which we are a part. To this end, we have an expectation that adult players will not bring water bottles or other such drinks to venues that have facilities, and will instead purchase a drink at the paid bar. Clubs at which drinks are not available are asked to arrange with the webmaster for this to be indicated on their entry in the league website.” This expectation was supported and would be placed in a permanent, prominent position on the website.
4. Rule amendments
5. Rule 7

Point D currently reads – “Subsequent registrations must be received 7 days before the new player is eligible to play.”

Add to this – “It is the expectation that a player will not be registered for a team if their grade is more than 75 above the grade of the lowest registered member of the club team below that for which they are seeking to be registered. However, recognising that a team’s circumstances can change during the course of the season, such registrations can be deemed acceptable, subject to approval from the LDCL Committee.”

– Add a new point “K”

“Registration submissions for the club for of which the Registration Officer is a member will be subject to final approval by the League Chairman, or some other Committee member nominated by the Chair, who does not play for the same club as the Registration Officer.”

1. Rule 19 Mobile phones/electronic devices- rule was amended and approved as follows

“Without the mutual consent of both captains, a player is forbidden to have a mobile phone or other electronic means of communication in the playing venue, unless they are completely switched off. Such devices must not be on their person. If any device is found to be switched on, the player shall lose the game. The opponent shall win. (This rule is mandatory and cannot be waived by a generous opponent.)” In practical terms phones must be kept in coats on the back of chairs, a bag or in the absence of either placed on the table.

1. Rule 19 Mobile phone protocol/guidance was approved

“If a player believes that their opponents’ mobile phone is on during the game, the following protocol should be followed-

The player should highlight to their opponent that they believe their opponents’ phone is switched on.

If the opponent accepts this, the game is lost.

If the opponent disputes the fact that his or her phone is on, the clocks should be stopped and the captains or other representative from each team will be called to inspect the relevant phone. At no time between the claim being made and the phone being inspected, should it be touched. Should the owner of the phone do so in any meaningful way, the phone will be judged to have been on and the game will be adjudicated as lost.

Should the person in question refuse to allow his phone to be inspected, it will be deemed to have been on and the game will be lost.

If the phone is inspected, the captains or other representatives from each team will make a finding of fact as to whether or not the phone is on. If it is, the game will be lost. If it is not, the game will continue.”

1. Rule 24 Disputes

This proposed additional wording was not carried “Where one player is claiming a win based on their opponent having violated the rules of chess, the burden of proof is on the accuser. If, after considering the evidence presented, the committee have reasonable doubt as to whether an infraction occurred, they should find in favour of the accused party.” This proposal was not carried.

The proposed additional wording was withdrawn “The committee, in rendering their verdict, should endeavour to address all arguments made by both sides in the dispute. To facilitate this, both sides should clearly list the points they consider relevant while presenting their cases.”

1. TD agreed to carry on in his role as reviewing best game prize and individual tournament. BG expressed thanks to TD.
2. All existing committee members were voted back in “en bloc”.
3. AOB, JS advised that Solihull had reserved the date of Wednesday 7th May 2025 to host the annual LDCL Blitz Tournament, subject to finding an arbiter to run the event.

Meeting closed at 10.15 pm.