

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**held at the Battersea Labour Club on Tuesday 11 July 2017**

**Attending:** Alan Palmer, Chris Beckett, Chris Rebbeck, Leon Watson, Rafael del Valle Domenech, Vic Rumsey, Lawrence Cook, Domenico Amabile, Tim Allen, Adrian Somerfield, Aldo Camilleri, Malcolm Dancy, Tony Ashby, Howard Groves, Emil Todorow, Tim Valentine, Tim Wells

**Apologies:** Paul Stokes, Pavel Nefyodov, Gregg Hutchence, Midhun Unnikrishnan, Bill Drennan, Steve Barry, Ryan Benguelo, Ben Franklin

**1. Minutes of last meeting and Matters Arising**

Minutes of last year’s meeting were circulated and agreed to be a true record. Vic asked whether the "matter arising" mentioned in the Matters Arising section of the previous years minutes actually arose. The issue was related to a proposed Best Player or Best Performance award. Chris noted that due to a "trophy mishap" we now have a spare trophy which could be put to good use. This was passed to the committee to act. **ACTION: Committee**

**2. Chairman's Report**

The chairman said "overall the club has had a very good year" but there were a number of "difficult issues". These he noted included the "serious matter" of rent going up from £25 to £35 per night, and a dispute that arose between our LL2 team and an opponent. On a "happier front" he noted the club's successes and issued a series of "thank yous" to club members for their sterling work.

**3. Treasurer's Report**

After a discussion that left the secretary very confused, but indicated that the Club had about £1,000 in reserves, the treasurer's accounts were accepted by a majority.

**4. London League Captain's Reports**

- LL1

Chris noted that the first team had a "very tough" season after a "good start against our near rivals" but said "all the games we lost we lost were tight squeaks". In the end though the team stayed up at the expense of Mushrooms, which he said was "fantastic". Chris also thanked the players who turned out. He said Midhun was the "star", but Stuart and Adam also performed exceptionally well.

- Eastman Cup

Chris said Battersea 1 were edged out in a "very close" match against a strong Richmond side. Despite the loss the result was "very creditable" and noted that Ali and Adam both beat IMs.

- LL2

Howard said the LL2 team achieved its objective for the season by not getting relegated, but also not getting promoted. In fact, he noted, it ended the season with exactly the same record as the previous season. He said an impressive 27 players had turned out for his team, and thanked them. He said there were no defaults or misboards, or problems finding a side throughout the season. Howard noted that Domenico had been his stand-out player with a 100 per cent record. He ended by saying that due to an "unfortunate incident" during the season "one of the upshots is that I will be standing down as captain".

- LL3

Tim said his team had had a very enjoyable season in which his team had achieved promotion. He said "without doubt" Tim Valentine was the top player "holding the team up from the bottom", but also thanked in particular Steve Barry. He said Aldo and Domenico both ended the season with scores of 3/3. He said "the top boards had a hard time but the lower boards kept us up". He said "next season if we can stay up that would be great, and we will start the season by thumping Battersea 2".

- MA

Arnold said the team had played more games than any other team due to having to play each side twice in the Major division, and "without a single default, which was good". He added "it was not the greatest of season, with us only just escaping bottom place, but we had a good time and it fulfilled our purpose". He noted Tim Valentine "did excellently".

- MI

Leon said regrettably he had not been able to prepare a report but that the league told the story - the U125 team "smashed it" and were by far the best team in the division. He added that the team had no defaults and included several new players who became regulars in the team, for example Chris Rebbeck and Tim Valentine, along with the reliable hardcore of Simon Baxter-Cummings and Joel Morales.

**5. Central London League Captain's Reports**

- CLL1

The secretary passed on Paul's brief report, it read: "Our team in Division 1 of the Central London League finished in third place out of the eight teams. We played 14 matches, won 7, drew 1 and lost 6. The best individual performers were Adrian Somerfield with 4.5/6 (75%); Chris Beckett 5/7 (71%); and Tommaso Penna 5/8 (63%)."

- CLL2

Emil said his team had put in a "tremendous performance" which was "very satisfying". He added "as a new captain, it has been an honour" and said the team achieved 8 wins, 4 draws and 0 losses. "We won the league by virtue of registering more wins than King's Head did," he said. Emil paid tribute to the "spirited performances" put in by his players and their "loyalty and tenacity". He thanked Midhun and Chris for stepping in for the last vital match which ended in a draw. He said notable performances over the season came from Joe Skielnik (5.5/6), Aldo (6/7), himself and Howard. He said he was "looking forward to playing in division 1".

**6. Tournament Secretary's Report**

The secretary passed on Ben's report, it read: "Apart from the period from September-December of last year, people have done a great job of getting games played. Thanks to Leon and Aldo for helping to get people involved towards the end of 2016. I think my persistence with sending out email reminders has helped as well. It was something I didn't much of last year and I've definitely noticed the difference. Arguably the tournaments would be close to finished if we'd have played more games during end of 2016.  Therefore I think that if we continue how we've been doing then next season will be even better in terms of keeping on top of the games. I do expect some overrun into the next season but I don't think it will be as bad as last time. The current situation in the internal tournaments is as follows: The total number of games in the championship is 28 games of which 9 have been played according to my records. Leaving 19 to play. Currently Chris Beckett and Aldo Camilleri are leading on 2.5pts with Ali Hill a close 2nd on 2. We've made much more progress with the rapidplay games. Group B has only 2 games left to play and Group A just 8 games. Group B is lead by Ali Hill and Rafael del Valle Domenech on 5.5pts and Group A is led by Alan Palmer on 5pts. I happy to continue with the tournament controller role for another year since I'm fairly used to it and have got into a good routine with collating the results and reminding everyone. Having said that I'm also ok with handing the role over. If I remember correctly Aldo is probably interested in giving it go and I'm sure he'd do a great job based on what he's done for the club so far."

**7. Proposals for next year's subscriptions**

Proposal A and B were discussed at length.

Arnold, in support of Proposal A, said the treasurer's report made it "very obvious we will have to pay a bit more". He added "every club is in financial difficulties, except Wood Green, but they try to solve it in different ways". He said "the figure proposed came from the treasurer and seems quite a lot but nobody will pay it as they will pay early". He said the real amount was "just a modest increase". He added "this is a venue that every club in London envies, it is one of the best and we want to keep it".

Howard said Proposal B, his proposal, was simple, universal and is "essentially extending the scheme for first team players last season to everyone next season". Tim Allen raised concerns about potential "administrative problems" when collecting game fees.

The discussion turned to Proposal C, proposed by Chris, which was linked to Proposal A.

Chris argued it was necessary to continue with Proposal C to maintain the status of the first team in division 1. He said "in an ideal world everyone would pay exactly the same, as per Howard's proposal" but, he said, "it is not possible for many first team players who often only play one or two games a season and who never attend the club". He warned if we change the membership model "they may join another club with a cheaper membership" and the club risks "shooting itself in the foot". He said "having a team in division one is a string to the club's bow and benefits all members". He noted Howard's proposal would become "administratively a bit of a nightmare".

Howard said it would be right to characterise the options as "principled" versus "pragmatic".

Arnold said Howard's proposal will lead to "quite a shortfall" in subscriptions and that "it seems self-evident" that the figures do not add up.

Proposal A was carried by 11 votes to 2 with 1 abstention.

Discussion turned to Proposal C.

Arnold said: "Chris's proposal is very persuasive but it amounts to a disincentive to people coming to the club. I believe if they paid the full amount they would come to the club, and don't believe the premise of Chris's argument. People value what they pay for, you get more loyalty from people who pay."

Aldo disagreed. "It is a different kettle of fish," he said. "These players, they are a different bunch of people."

Chris said " a lot of these people, for whatever reason, just can't come to club nights. It is not a case of it being a disincentive."

Proposal C was carried 10 votes to 3

Proposal D was carried unopposed.

**8. League/team entries for next year**

Arnold withdrew his proposal to drop the MA team, and it was agreed all teams will be re-entered to their respective leagues next season. The possibility of entering a new CLL3 team was passed to the committee to discuss.

**ACTION: Committee**

**9. Blitz Tournament**

The chairman proposed the annual Blitz Tournament, which had been postponed due to the Summer League, take place on July 25, August 1 and the final on August 8. Arnold volunteered to run it.

**10. Election of Club Officers and Team Captains for next year**

*Club officers:*

Alan agreed to stay on as chairman, saying "as all of you are cowards, I will carry on under sufferance". Leon had his arm twisted to carry on as secretary. Malcolm nominated Adrian to be treasurer. It was agreed Leon will draw up a comprehensive membership list. Ben, in his absence, was retained as tournament director, as was Bill as website editor. Arnold will continue as equipment maintenance officer.

*Captains:*

LL1 + Eastman Cup - Chris B

LL2 Malcolm to replace Howard

LL3 Tim

MA Arnold

MI Leon and Chris R

CLL1 Paul Stokes

CLL2 Emil Todorow

Summer League - to be decided at a later date.

**11. Any other business**

Alan wanted to thank Aldo for introducing technology to the club AGM.

The meeting was then closed.