

NORTH WEST COUNTIES SQUASH LEAGUE

MINUTES OF THE 50th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT WARRINGTON SPORTS CLUB ON THURSDAY 29th MAY 2008 AT 7.30 PM

Present: Bernie Gill	President & Chairman of Lancashire
John Hugall	Chairman
Henry Stone	Honorary Legal Advisor & Treasurer
Andrew Nicheas	Vice President & Representing Cheshire
John Cunningham	1 st Division Rep & Vice President
Jane Law	Chairperson of Cheshire
Andrew Beeston	Vice President
Norman Astbury	Vice President
Ged Illot	Vice President
Norman Chatburn	Vice President
Tony Parker	Vice President
Roy Lomas	Vice President
Joss Garvey	North West Referees Co-ordinator

Apologies were received from the General Secretary – Dave Goulden, the Sponsor – JJB Sports (Chris Ronnie), and Vice Presidents: Graham Horrex, Bob Ireland, Colin Cary, Bill Litteljohn, Robin McIntosh, Phil Taylor, Ian Bradburn, Robin Barlow, George Westbrook, Chris Boyes, Alan Edge

The meeting was opened by the Chairman, who then introduced the personnel on the top table, the Vice Presidents present and that the Sponsors, JJB Sports were unable to attend due to Chris Ronnie having to leave for urgent business on the day.

There were approx. 50-60 clubs represented, during the evening.

1. Apologies for absence – received from 15 clubs.
2. Minutes of the previous AGM held on 24th May 2007, which had been previously circulated to clubs, as well as being available on the website, were taken as read and approved by the meeting.
3. Matters Arising – There were no matters arising
4. Presentation of Accounts
The Honorary Treasurer, Henry Stone, presented the accounts to the meeting.
Income had decreased by approx. £100 over the previous year, at around £15200, excluding the Sponsorship money.
Expenditure showed an approximate increase of £2500 over the previous year (excluding Junior Grants).
Stationery, Printing fees, including handbook, had increased by £1600 to £2700, which did not reflect the true situation, since some of last years printing costs had been paid by one of the sponsors.
Referees' fees showed a significant decrease over last year, which was thought to be due to timing of when referee fees are paid compared to the collection of the contributions from the 1st Division clubs.
The new computer and printer had been depreciated by £181, whilst promotional expenses, including the website, had increased by £750 over the previous year, with some of the increase being due to the change in the sponsor.
County grants had remained the same at £8000.
This all resulted in a profit of just over £760 for the year.
The majority of sponsorship money, £10,000, had been allocated to the clubs, which had made applications for a junior grant.
The Treasurer thanked the auditor, Simon Westhead for auditing the accounts on our behalf.

Following the Treasurer's explanation of the Income & Expenditure Account and the Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2008, acceptance of the Treasurer's report and figures were proposed, seconded and duly approved by the meeting. There were just two questions on the accounts from the floor.

A). Increase in cost of League Handbooks & whether we needed it any longer with having the website.

The President replied that the increase reflected the increase in sponsorship from JJB.

The Chairman, as well as endorsing the President's comments, also stated that there was the convenience of having a handbook in the squash bag because you don't normally have access to a computer during match nights and any decision to forego the handbook would have to be referred back to the sponsor since it was a significant source of advertising.

B). Increase in the website costs.

The Chairman replied that the overall costs of the website over the past number of years had been quite small compared to the commercial costs of website design, which was solely down to the Phil Taylor from Resultszone.

5. Re-application from associate members

Re-applications were approved by the meeting for Deeside, Glossop, New Mills, Saints and Tollgate.

6. Application from new clubs and additional teams

There had been one potential, but unconfirmed application from a new club, Total Fitness Wigan, at the time of the AGM.

It was known that there would be additional team applications from a few clubs, but at this stage, the full extent will only be known at a later date.

7. Restructuring

John Cunningham explained the restructuring proposals in the absence of the General Secretary.

With regards to late finishes, the AGM was unanimous that the number of players in a team should NOT be reduced from 5. The AGM, apart from the 1st Division, was also unanimous that the scoring system should NOT be changed to a point per rally. The Chairman had explained the difference in time between standard scoring and the point per rally system, on average 30-50 minutes per night – 10 minutes per match.

From next season, Division 1 will use a point per rally scoring system

The restructuring proposals stated that the implications were that divisions 4 & 5 would possibly have to merge next season, if no action was taken to reduce the number of teams to 12 in each section of the divisions.

The general feeling of the meeting was that it was imperative to maintain a Division 5 and the reduction to 12 teams over a protracted period should take place, starting with divisions 4 & 5 for this coming season. The Chairman stated that there would be some casualties along the way during the restructuring stage but these were unavoidable, irrespective of what route was taken.

8. Rule amendments

Constitution Change read out by Hon. Legal Advisor

The Committee shall have the power to decide on all matters that are not specifically provided for in the League Rules **and to appoint sub-committees to exercise any of its powers under the Constitution and the Rules of the League."**

Amendment shown in red.

Following explanation of the change, the Constitution Change was unanimously approved by the meeting.

The following rule amendments were proposed by John Cunningham, on behalf of the Executive Committee, to the AGM

1. DIVISIONS, PROMOTIONS AND RELEGATIONS

1.1 There will, where possible, be one first Division, **up to three second, up to six third, up to nine fourth, and sufficient fifth Divisions** to accommodate existing teams and additional clubs and teams. Each division shall be divided into such sections as the Committee shall decide are appropriate and each section ~~shall~~ **may**, where possible, contain **up to fourteen (14) teams**, each team containing five (5) players. If there are insufficient teams to make up an appropriate number of sections in Division 5, then Divisions 4 and 5 may be combined **although consideration will first be given to reducing the number of teams to eight (8) in some or all sections of Division 5 only with each team playing each of the other teams 3 times during a season.**

Amendments shown in red.

Following explanation of the change and questions / comments from members present, the rule amendment was unanimously approved by the meeting.

1.2 Delete the current rule 1.2 and replace with;

At the end of a season the top team in each section of Division 2 and the top 2 teams in each section of each lower Division will be promoted. The number of teams relegated from each section of each Division will be such number as is required to accommodate

- (i) all promoted teams and
- (ii) any changes to the number of teams in each section of each division.

Following explanation of the change and questions / comments from members present, the rule amendment was approved by the meeting with 3 voting against.

4. TEAMS

Add as new rule 4.2

4.2 In the 1st Division each club must submit a playing order for its team before the start of the season **for approval by the Committee**. Where a team's proposed playing order is different from that of the League's ranking list, the club must provide an explanation **for consideration by the Committee** as to why it is different and, if such explanation is accepted, approval.

Each club may also submit at such other times during a season as may be specified by the Committee from time to time a revised playing order with an explanation for consideration by the Committee and, if such explanation is accepted, approval. **If no revised playing order is submitted at such times, the Committee will treat the previously approved playing order as having been re-submitted for approval.**

The players in each team in the 1st Division must play in the order specified in the playing order approved by the Committee from time to time.

Permission must be requested from the 1st Division Representative for any player whose name does not appear in the approved playing order to play in a 1st Division match.

Re-number current rules 4.2 & 4.3 to 4.3 & 4.4 respectively.

Following explanation of the change and questions / comments from members present, the rule amendment was unanimously approved by the meeting.

7. ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS

7.7 No player may play in the last four league matches of a division or the play-offs for that division unless he or she has played in at least four league matches in that division, or a lower division, for that club earlier in the season. **In extenuating circumstances** the General Secretary, the Committee or any one of its sub-committees, can permit a player who does not meet the above criteria to play for a **lower club's lowest team in his club** during the last four matches of the season provided that the club's

playing order of merit is maintained in accordance with rule 4.1.

Amendments shown in red.

Following explanation of the change and questions / comments from members present, the rule amendment was approved by the meeting with 3 voting against.

9. Presentation of Plaques, Trophies & Shields

Unfortunately, the sponsor JJB Sports was unable to attend the AGM.

The presentations of each sections winner's plaques and the overall division winners for Divisions 2 to 5 were made by the President and several of the Vice Presidents.

The President also presented the "Brian Rhodes Memorial Shield" to Division 1 winners Prestbury.

The Chairman of Prestbury responded on behalf of the Division One Winners, Prestbury.

Sale received the Division 2 shield and trophies,

New Brighton 2 received the Division 3 shield and trophies,

Hyde CC 1 received the Division 4 shield and trophies and

New Brighton 7 received the Division 5 shield and trophies

as the overall winners of their divisions.

10. Election of Officers

President	-	B.Gill	Proposed: Wigan Seconded: Stockport
Chairman	-	J.Hugall	Proposed: Sale Seconded: Stockport
Treasurer & Hon. Legal Advisor	-	H.Stone	Proposed: Burscough Seconded: Hyde CC

were elected unopposed.

Vice Presidents: All the current Vice Presidents plus new VP's Ian Cardow & Tony Sewell for 20 years service as Divisional Representatives & Nick Taylor for services to squash and NWCSL were proposed and accepted by the meeting.

The President, prior to the vote, spoke highly of Nick Taylor's services to squash and following the vote, Nick Taylor responded thanking the NWCSL for recognising this and making him a Vice President, which he was glad to accept.

11. Any Other Business

A number of unrecorded items were discussed under AOB

Team Captains Meeting

The team captains meeting for 2008/2009 would more than likely be in early September 2008. (To be confirmed). League stationery will be handed out at this meeting and clubs should encourage team captains and/or club representatives to attend.

The meeting was drawn to a close by the Chairman at 9.00pm, who thanked the Sponsors, JJB Sports, the club representatives who had attended, Warrington Sports Club for the use of their premises and the Vice Presidents for attending.

Written by Dave Goulden
General Secretary to the League
from the minutes taken by Andrew Nickeas