

NORTH WEST COUNTIES SQUASH LEAGUE

MINUTES OF THE 52nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT FAIRWAYS LODGE ON THURSDAY 27th MAY 2010 AT 7.30 PM

Present: Bernie Gill	President & Chairman of Lancashire
John Hugall	Chairman
Henry Stone	Honorary Legal Advisor & Treasurer
Dave Goulden	General Secretary
John Cunningham	1 st Division Rep.
Peter Withington	Lancashire Rep to NWCSL
Bill Littlejohn	Vice President
Norman Astbury	Vice President
Ged Illott	Vice President
Roy Lomas	Vice President
Joss Garvey	North West Referees Co-ordinator

Apologies were received from Vice Presidents: Graham Horrex, Bob Ireland, Colin Cary, Robin McIntosh, Andrew Beeston, Robin Barlow, Chris Boyes

The meeting was opened by the Chairman, who opened the meeting by asking those present to remember 3 members who had passed away during the season. The General Secretary spoke about John Potter, a past work colleague and friend, who had been the NWCSL webmaster for the past 8 years. John had played at Neston and his son Michael played for Heswall in the 1st Division this season and previously David Lloyd Manchester. The Chairman then spoke about Stuart Hardacre, Reedley, and read out a eulogy from his funeral. He also spoke about Paddy Sullivan, Manchester Northern, including some of his achievements not only in squash but also tennis. Following a minutes silence for the 3 past members, the Chairman then introduced the personnel on the top table and the Vice Presidents present.

There were approx. 40 clubs represented, on the evening.

1. Apologies for absence – received from 18 clubs.
2. Minutes of the previous AGM held on 21st May 2009, 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. £1500 over the previous year, at around £13100.
Expenditure showed an approximate decrease of £3000 over the previous year.
Printing & Stationery fees, including handbooks, had decreased by £1500. This was due to past League Stationery, prior to the recent Sponsorship deals, being fully used up.
Referees' fees showed an increase of £250 over last year.
Promotional expenses, including the website, had decreased by £350 over the previous year.
Miscellaneous expenditure had reduced by approx. £1000
County grants had remained the same at £8000.
This all resulted in a profit of just over £775 for the year.

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 2010, acceptance of the Treasurer's report and figures were proposed by Mick Regan, seconded by Peter Withington and duly approved by the meeting. There were no questions on the accounts from the floor.

The re-election of the Auditor, Simon Westhead, was also approved by the meeting.

5. Re-application from associate members

Re-applications were approved by the meeting for Deeside, Glossop, New Mills & Wrexham Brymbro. The re-application for Tollgate was approved, following a complaint by one club over the state of the Tollgate courts, subject to the Committee approving the courts after some planned refurbishment work.

During the re-application for Saints, one club (with a team in division 2 West) spoke out against the Saints re-application, based on the travelling distances. When this re-application went to the vote, one club (which has a division 2 West team) voted in favour of the application, whilst two clubs (both of which did NOT have a division 2 West team), voted against the re-application.

The rest of the clubs present, approx. 40, abstained from the vote, including the club which originally spoke out against the Saints re-application. Hence, Saints re-application was lost by 2 votes to one and not approved.

Further discussion on the Saints re-application was raised again under AOB; please see details below in AOB.

6. Application from new clubs and additional teams

There had been no applications from new clubs as yet, although there was a potential of two new clubs, Moss Side and MMU Cheshire

Several clubs had indicated that they would be entering additional teams, although no details are currently available.

7. Possible Changes to the League

A number of items over possible changes to the League were discussed by the meeting. These covered further restructuring, reverting the 1st Division to a Thursday night, club and team ranking orders, team squads in sections of divisions which contain two teams from the same club and PAR.

Restructuring – No further restructuring was being considered. The General Secretary stated that some sections in division 5 may result in divisions of 8 teams (playing each other 3 times over a season).

All matches on a Thursday night – the advantages and disadvantages of moving the 1st Division back to a Thursday evening were discussed. The main advantages would be the clarity in reserves playing up on a Thursday, compared to a Tuesday, would have to follow more accurately a clubs player playing order and no clashes with National League matches. Some of the disadvantages would be availability of referees, requirement for 2 (or at least 1.5) courts for 1st Division matches maybe resulting in loss of teams, lower division players watching 1st division matches rather than participating in their own matches and effects on sponsorship. One of the main reasons for moving the 1st Division to a Tuesday evening a number of years ago was due to sponsorship and the ability to get Tuesday night results publicised in the press (Daily Telegraph) on a Thursday. The opportunity of moving the 1st Division to another night during the week, due to the National League also playing on a Tuesday, was discussed but found to be impracticable. Similarly, a proposal that lower division teams could move to a Tuesday evening was dismissed by the meeting.

Player Rankings – discussions centred on whether all clubs / teams should play to a prescribed playing order, just as the 1st Division teams. Website visibility of where players are playing has lead to an increase in complaints, making the administration of sections much more difficult for the Divisional Reps. There was a strong voice from the meeting that teams should be selected in accordance with a club player order of merit which should reflect the NWCSL Ranking list, although there were some reservations with regards to accuracy of ranking list for occasional players, players returning after long term injuries, how to age player rankings, players who no longer wanted to play at the higher levels and social players who preferred to play in teams with their friends. The general feeling of the meeting was that all teams should follow closely a club's playing order of merit.

Squads - there was no real support for allowing teams to play squads in sections of a division containing 2 teams from the same club.

PAR – point a rally for 2nd Division. This had not been raised since last year, so it was assumed that there would be no change for 2010/11 season either.

8. Constitution and Rule amendments

There were 8 Proposition to put to the meeting.

Propositions 1 to 3 were individually presented to the meeting by the Hon. Legal Advisor, who explained the reasons behind the changes. These 3 propositions were each voted on and accepted by the meeting.

There was then a proposal from the floor of the meeting that the next 5 proposition should be taken on block, which the meeting agreed to, and the remaining 5 propositions were voted on and accepted by the meeting.

The actual wording of the propositions can be read by clicking on the various links below

Proposition 1

Objective of these amendments – to deal with the change of name of the SRA on 31 December 2009, generally to tidy up the definitions etc, and to insert sub-paragraph numbers for ease of reference.

Proposition Approved

Proposition 2

Objective of these amendments – to insert sub-paragraph numbers for ease of reference in a few remaining paragraphs which do not already have them.

Proposition Approved

Proposition 3

Objective of these amendments – to clarify the rights of members and players in regard to the power to suspend etc.

Proposed Amendment to the paragraph in the Constitution in regard to suspension of membership – under the Heading “Membership”

Proposed Amendment to the paragraph in the Constitution in regard to suspension of players – under the Heading “Rules and Administration”

Proposition Approved

Proposition 4

Objective of these amendments – to enable “young blood” to come onto the Committee whenever it is considered appropriate and thus to help to ensure the future of the League.

Proposition Approved

Proposition 5

Objective of these amendments – to ensure that as many Clubs as possible are represented at the pre-season meeting so as to ensure that as many as possible are familiar with the Constitution, Rules and other League business thus to help to ensure the smooth running of the League and the enjoyment of all of the game of squash.

Proposed insertion of new paragraph in the Constitution in regard to the pre-season or Captains’ Meeting – under the Heading “General Meetings”

Proposition Approved

Proposition 6

Objective of this amendment – to ensure that as many Clubs as possible are represented at the Annual General Meeting, so as to ensure that as many as possible are involved with any changes to the Constitution & Rules and other business of the League, to help to ensure the smooth running of the League and the enjoyment of all of the game of squash.

Proposed insertion of new sentence in the Constitution in regard to the Annual General Meeting – under the Heading “General Meetings”

Proposition Approved

Proposition 7

Objective of these amendments – to ensure that as many Clubs as possible are represented at the pre-season meeting so as to ensure that as many as possible are familiar with the Constitution, Rules and other League business thus to help to ensure the smooth running of the League and the enjoyment of all of the game of squash.

Proposed insertion of new paragraph in the Constitution in regard to the pre-season or Captains’ Meeting – under the Heading “General Meetings”

Proposition Approved

Proposition 8

Objective of these amendments – to make it clear that requests for decisions on the Rules should be made by member clubs, not by individuals, and to tidy up.

Proposition Approved

The outstanding division section winners, which were not collected/presented at the Presentation Evening:

2W Liverpool CC 1
3CN YMCA Thornton 1
3NW Xaverian 1
4N Vale of Lune 3
4SE Gt Manchester Police 1
5S Congleton Bear Town 1
5SW Cheshire Officers 3

were presented to the Club or collected by a representative from one of the other clubs present.

Outstanding Shields to be collected by clubs from General Secretary

3SE Tollgate 2
4NW David Lloyd Knowsley 1
4W Heswall 3
5CS Village Warrington 4
5NE David Lloyd Bolton 1
5W Heswall 5

10. Election of Officers

President	-	J Hugall	Proposed: Committee Seconded: Sale
Chairman	-	B Gill	Proposed: Fairways Lodge Seconded: Cheetham Hill
Treasurer & Hon. Legal Advisor	-	H.Stone	Proposed: East Lancs Seconded: Brooklands
General Secretary	-	D Goulden	Proposed: Stockport Seconded: Woolston

were elected unopposed.

Vice Presidents: All the current Vice Presidents were re-elected.

County Representative: All County Representatives were re-elected.

League Representatives: All current Divisional Representatives were re-elected, with any new Divisional Representatives to be co-opted.

11. Sponsorship

The new Chairman stated that although we are actively looking for a new sponsor, if anyone knew of likely sponsors to let a Committee member know.

12. Any Other Business

Saints re-application

During AOB, the Club which originally spoke out against Saints re-application, stated that it was NOT his club's intention to have Saints removed from the NWCSL, but what they were really objecting to, was that Saints would now have two teams in 2 West for season 2010/11, with their 2nd team gaining promotion from division 3SW, meaning club teams would have to travel twice to the Saints venue. There was a request for a re-vote on the Saints application, based on them only being allowed to enter 1 or 2 teams into division 2 West.

Since the vote had already been taken and recorded, under AGM rules, then this would not be allowed, plus the two clubs who had originally voted against the Saints re-application were no longer at the AGM.

It was decided that under the Constitution (now item 3.3), the Committee did have the discretion to reconsider a new application from Saints made after the AGM up to 1st July 2010, subject to possible conditions:

- (i) the views of the other teams affected in division 2 West should be canvassed, and
- (ii) Saints may only be allowed to enter 1 team in division 2 West, dependent on these views.

The General Secretary would relate this information to the Saints club to see whether they wanted to reconsider a new application based on these conditions.

Referees

There is a shortage of referees for 1st Division and more are needed. Manchester Northern are hoping to hold a referee's course soon but one proposal is that all clubs with first division teams should be looking to qualify one referee, who is also prepared to officiate regularly in the NWCSL.

Presentation Evening/Play-offs

The general view of the play-off day was that the players enjoyed the format. There were some viewing difficulties on two of the courts used at Warrington, which limited the spectators' enjoyment. Unfortunately, the presentation evening was not as well attended as hoped and some refinements need to be considered for next season. These could include holding the play-offs, presentations and AGM all on one day, if a suitable venue is available.

Website

The General Secretary asked if anyone knew of someone who may be prepared to take on the Website to contact him.

General Secretary's role

The General Secretary stated that he thought that the General Secretary's role would eventually require splitting into a General Secretary & (possibly) Match Secretary role.

Team Captains Meeting

The team captains meeting for 2010/2011, provisionally set for Tuesday 7th September 2010 at Alford Sports & Social Club, Warrington. (To be confirmed)
League stationery will be handed out at this meeting and clubs should make sure that team captains and/or club representatives do attend.

The meeting was drawn to a close by the Chairman at approx. 9.30pm, who thanked the club representatives who had attended Fairways Lodge for the use of their premises and the Vice Presidents for attending.

General Secretary