

DRAFT

WILTSHIRE COUNTY CHESS ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting held at Chippenham Chess Club on Tuesday 20th. May 2025

In attendance: R Carver (Vice-President), R Ludlow (Secretary), A Gladwell (League Secretary), P Owen (Rating Officer), S Zeidler (Treasurer), A Ransom (Tournament Secretary), G Georgiou, B Ogunshola, G Price, and D Ross

Gordon Price was attending his first meeting. He was congratulated on his recent appointment as Chairman of the Swindon club.

1. Apologies had been received from J Bourne (Chairman), D Parsons, D Auld (I am sorry for forgetting to announce this at the meeting) and P Girdlestone (Junior Chess Liaison Officer) - apology received after the meeting.

In the absence of JB, SZ took the chair.

2. Minutes of the 2024 AGM were accepted and duly signed by the Chairman.

3. There were no matters arising, not otherwise on the agenda

4. Reports from Officers:

a. The Chairman (JB) had asked for his warm thanks to be expressed to all officers of the Association for their hard work; they rendered his job easy and straightforward.

b. Secretary (RL) - no report

c. The Treasurer (SZ) distributed copies of the Summary of Accounts, explaining that the financial situation was healthy, there being a balance of £955.00. One club fee and board fee remained to be paid by Devizes. DR paid the club fee immediately and 'phoned Nick Steele about the board fee. SZ He thanked JB for his very generous donation of clocks.

The Summary of Accounts was accepted.

It was made clear that the County has eight boards, sets and digital clocks and that AR stored them at his home. It needs to be established if more are needed.

Clubs were asked to make clear the policy with respect to fees: players need to have ECF membership.

d. The Rating Officer (PO) declared that there was nothing to report.

BOg asked if the standard of play had gone up. PO said it was unclear. However, there **were** more players, especially at Swindon and Trowbridge. Both clubs were looking to expand further.

e. The Junior Chess Liaison Officer (PG) was absent, but has presented a written report since the meeting; it will be circulated.

BOg explained that junior chess was expanding in Wiltshire, with several organisations having junior groups. Some juniors had joined the Swindon club. He stressed the need for all clubs to have junior sections. Both he and PG were involved with CSC (Chess in Schools and Communities). He felt that the attendance at the AGM was disappointing and that chess needs to have a higher priority in the County.

SZ stressed that financial support for junior chess was available, if needed. He added that our website needs to have information about junior chess. AG was open to this idea.

AG said that adult and junior chess had always been separate in the County. BOg stressed the need for adults to coach juniors; a policy was needed for safeguarding and behaviour. RL offered to make the Trowbridge policy available to all. DR stressed the need for DBS checks.

f. The Tournament Secretary (AR) reminded the meeting that he had reported on the Blitz tournament, which had taken place in September, at the Executive Committee meeting in the same month.

He also reminded the meeting that, during the previous season (2023/24), there had been an Individual Championship, which was contested by the four winners of the club tournaments: A Coffey (Chippenham) had won the tournament, with D Ross (Devizes/Nationwide) being runner up. This tournament had not taken place this season, but he hoped that it would take place during the 2025/26 season, with the semi-finals and final to be held at Langley Burrell.

There had not been a Rapidplay Tournament, because BOg had organised one in Swindon.

BOg and SZ reported that there were team rapidplay events in other areas (Stroud and parts of Wales.) AR explained Wiltshire had had such a tournaments some years ago. SZ said that a rapidplay league (or rapidplay games to sit along the regular leagues) would be an agenda item for the Executive Committee meeting in September.

g. The League Secretary (AG) reported that all matches had been played in all three leagues.

The Major League had had three teams. The winners were Swindon and the runners up Chippenham.

The Intermediate League had had five teams. The winners were Swindon A and the runners up Swindon B.

The Minor League had also had five teams. The winners were Chippenham and the runners up Swindon A.

One board had defaulted.

All details were available on the website,

The meeting expressed thanks to AG for much hard work.

h. Vice-Presidents - no report.

5. Presentation of trophies. The Chairman presented the Major League trophy to G Price, representing Swindon; the Intermediate League trophy to G Georgiou, representing Swindon A; and the Minor League trophy to P Owen, representing Chippenham.

6. Election of officers: All officers expressed their willingness to stand again, including the Chairman (JB) in his absence. They were all duly proposed, seconded and re-elected unopposed.

The exception was the Junior Chess Liaison Officer, whose term of office was extended in his absence.

7. Appointment of auditor: It was agreed that there was no need for an auditor to be appointed. .

8. Subscription rates. These would be unchanged, with the affiliation fee being £5 and the team fee being £14 and £9 for subsequent teams in the same league. Fees would be charged for the Major League for next season (the same as for the other leagues), which was not the case for this season.

9. This item (Establishing leagues and rating limits) was postponed to the Executive Committee meeting in September.

RL felt that the rating limit for the Minor League this season was too high at 1600. Inexperienced players, with a rating in the range of 1100 in some cases, struggled badly, which was disheartening for them. And these were the very people we wanted to encourage,

BOg said that there might be junior teams, eg from the Chessmax Group in Swindon, which might enter the Intermediate League next season. Players would be under 16 and play all games at home. This would be clarified at the Executive Committee meeting in September.

10. This item (Establishing teams for next season) was also postponed to the Executive Committee meeting.

11. BOg reported on the Chiltern Chess League. Wiltshire had entered a team in the B Division (Under 1750). Other counties represented were Berkshire and Buckinghamshire; Hampshire; and Oxfordshire. Each county had initially played three matches in a league format, with a final round where the team coming first and second had played each other and similarly with the teams coming third and fourth. Teams had comprised ten boards each.

RL and GP had played in the competition and had thoroughly enjoyed it.

There was a fee of £80, which will be charged to WCCA. There was no charge for the venue.

It was hoped that we would enter a team next season.

The Swindon Rapidplay in October had also been very successful, with high numbers of players.

BOg publicised the Swindon congress in August.

12. RC's proposal that we move to incremental time controls was accepted (though not unanimously). The following alternatives were proposed: 75 minutes plus 10 seconds or 80 minutes plus 10 seconds. A decision on the detail would be made at the Executive Committee meeting. Another option might be to retain traditional time controls if both players wished to use them.

13. The proposal (RC) that there be no postponements allowed, except for "Acts of God", was not accepted. AG reported that some 20% of matches had been postponed during the current season. Teams should give as much notice as possible of a postponement, in order to avoid incurring extra hiring costs,

14. The date and time of the Executive Committee meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 17th September at 7.30 pm at Langley Burrell Village Hall.

15. The Annual General Meeting for 2026 would take place on Tuesday 19th May at 7.30 pm at Langley Burrell Village Hall.

#### 16 AOB

AR stressed that he needed to know in advance when the County sets would be needed.

BOg stressed that good communications were vital.

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22nd May 2025