

MINUTES OF THE LANCASHIRE COUNTY TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT ALFORD SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB ON 19 MAY 2014, COMMENCING AT 7:15pm.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He gave a brief summary of the major changes taking place within the ETTA, which will also undergo a name change to Table Tennis England, and is now based in Milton Keynes. He also mentioned that Tom Purcell, who is a new member on the ETTA Board, would be able to give a much better update on the current situation (see later under Any Other Business)

A 1 minute silence was requested by the Chairman following the death of the ETTA Chairman, Andy Seward, earlier this year.

PRESENT: Committee members: S Clarke (Chairman), D Wolstencroft, Mrs J Rushton, D Goulden, G Rushton, T Purcell, J Bolton & M Ireland.

Local Leagues: Blackburn, Blackpool, Bolton, Bury, East Lancs, Lancaster & Morecambe, Liverpool, Manchester, Oldham, Preston, Southport, Warrington & Wigan.

APOLOGIES: G Aspinall MBE (President), who was unable to attend due to his wife illness, EA Pentland (Treasurer), who had only just come out of hospital, A Garnett & Local League – Lytham St Annes.

MINUTES: The minutes of the previous AGM had been circulated in advance of the meeting and they had also been available on the website. They were taken as read and an accurate account of the 2013 AGM.

Proposed by T Rigby, seconded by R Neal that they be signed as a true record.
Carried unanimously.

MATTERS ARISING: There were no matters arising, which were not covered by the Agenda.

PRESENTATIONS:

County badges have been awarded to: Megan Dillon, Alice Dillon, Hannah Burrows, Ryan Maynard, Steve Green, Neil Pickard & Susie Hughes

There were no trophies available to be presented on the night, but they will be presented at the County Championships Conference in June to: the Juniors 1st team, runners-up in Division 1A. The presentations to the Over 60s team, winners of the Premier Division, had been made at the end of the second weekend of matches.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: The report was read out on the night by the General Secretary, who, on behalf of the Executive Committee, thanked local leagues Liverpool and Blackpool for organising and running senior tournaments during the season, as well as Brian Jackson for the junior 1 & 2 Star tournaments and Blackpool Junior 4 Star that he had run during the season and the Wigan League for running the Champions Challenge for the fifth year, involving 6 of the North West Town's League Champions from their Closed Championships.

The EC's appreciation to all the people that have organised and run events during the 2013/14 season, including the significant efforts that all the Junior Table Tennis clubs in the Lancashire region are doing in the coaching of some promising junior players and in particular to Dave Graham, for running the Lancashire County Championships Juniors & Cadet teams.

In concluding the report, the EC would like to express its thanks to all the Local League and Premier Club officials for their efforts throughout the season, as their inputs in maintaining table tennis in Lancashire region is important.

The Secretary also mentioned that with the help of the Preston League, the National Junior & Cadet Closed Championships had been run at the Tom Finney Centre in Preston during this season and is also planned for 2014/15 season as well.

Tony Rigby, Preston, also stated that there would be an international match at the Tom Finney centre on 20th July 2014, just before the Commonwealth Games, between Australia & England.

Proposed by D Graham, seconded by M Ireland, that the reports be accepted.
Carried unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Copies of the I&E and Balance sheet were available at the AGM.

In the Treasurer absence, the Chairman gave a brief explanation of the I&E account and reported that there was a loss of ~£1200 on the year. Income was up slightly from the previous year at £7129.52, whilst expenditure had risen to £8328.78, an increase of approx. £1500 from the previous year due to increases in the County Teams expenditure plus the one of purchase of County Badges at approx. £600, which normally would cover a 10 year period.

The Balance sheet surplus fund had reduced to approx. £7000.

The Committee is recommending that affiliation fee for next season remain at £3.00 per player.

Affiliation fees for 2014/15 season will remain at £3.00 per player based on number of players in a team plus one, i.e. £12.00 for a 3-person team & £15.00 for a 4-person team.

The Chairman reported that the accounts had been still to be audited, due to the Treasurer's illness. If any Leagues would later require a copy of the audited accounts, then they should contact the General Secretary.

There followed yet another discussion on Association's Surplus Fund, raised by Ian Mason (Blackburn). It would be impossible to cover all the details discussed, hence the following will be my (General Secretary's) summary of the situation.

If we first look at the Surplus Fund in "real terms", taking into account inflation (RPI Indices) over the past 10 years, rather than the individual profits or losses reported each year in the annual accounts.

In 2004, the Surplus Fund stood at approx. £6000.

In 2014, the Surplus Fund is approx. £7000, but in "real terms", its actual value compared to 2004 is approx. £5000

Even at its highest point of approx. £9000 in 2010, in "real terms", its actual value was only just over £7000.

During that 10 year period, 7 years have shown profits, whilst 3 years have shown losses.

Without some of the profits made in the 7 years, then the "real" value of the Surplus Fund would now be significantly less than £5000. If that had been the case, then I'm sure that we would not be continually having these discussions and some members may be even questioning the management of the Associations accounts.

On one side, there are some who believe that County should keep in reserve an amount of money in the surplus fund to cover operating cost and a surplus fund of approximately 1 years (+/- 25%) operating costs is sound business practice in the sporting world.

On the other side, I'm guessing that there is pressure from possibly a small number of individuals within local leagues on their league officials to why it is all necessary.

It is the age old question of what does the County or the ETTA do for me?

Without going into the all the pros & cons of why all sports need governing bodies, it can simply come down to whether individuals are pro-active or just simply prefer to be re-active to the way any sport is operated.

Can Local Leagues operate completely separately from their governing bodies?

In the short term, then the answer is possibly yes, but will they sustain it in the long term?

I would definitely say no, they can't, any sport without a governing body will slowly die in time?

Is it really the money aspect that individual complain about, since £3 per player per annum is hardly excessive?

Saying all that, I'm also sure that a small number of individuals will still disagree and it comes down to the old adage that it is impossible to satisfy all of the people all of the time.

Proposed by D Wolstencroft, seconded by D Graham that the report be accepted.
Carried unanimously.

COUNTY MATCH SECRETARY'S REPORT: This was circulated on the night and read out by Mrs J Rushton.

County Trials

The Cadet & Junior trials were held in September 2013 at Our Lady's RC High School in Higher Blackley, Manchester and were well attended. Thanks goes to Dave Goulden for organising and running the trials, along with other committee members who assisted on the weekend.

County Championships

There were 7 teams entered into the County Championships for season 2013/2014.

One Cadet, Two Junior, One Senior, Two Veterans and One Over 60's team.

Congratulations go to the Over 60s team who finished top of the Premier division and the Junior 1st team who came Runners up in Division 1A.

CADETS

The Cadets, in the Premier Division, played over one weekend at Wellingborough in January and was captained by Dave Graham. Although I have no individual results, the team won four matches, drew one and lost two to come third in the final league table.

JUNIORS

Both teams were captained by Dave Graham. The 1st team in Division 1A played on two Saturdays, the first in November at Halton and the second in February at Wellingborough. Again, I have no individual results, but the team finished runners up having won five matches, drawn one and lost one. The awards have not been sent to me this season, but will be presented at the County Championships Conference in June and I will send them out to the players at a later date.

The 2nd Junior team played in Division 2A, again on two Saturdays. The first at Draycott in November and the second at Halton in February. The team won three matches and lost two to come third in the final league table.

SENIORS

The Senior team in Division 2A, captained by Paul Cicchelli, played all their matches on one weekend in November at Draycott, finishing third after winning three matches and losing two. This was a good result considering our strongest team was unavailable and the team included a number of Junior players.

VETERANS

The Veterans 1st team played in the Premier Division over two weekends at Cippenham in October and Draycott in February. Phil Bowen was captain on both weekends. The team finished sixth in the division, having won one match, drawn one and lost five.

The Veterans 2nd team played in Division 3A and due to counties pulling out of the division, played four matches in one weekend in October at Draycott, with a single match being played against Cheshire in March at Great Barrow near Chester. The team finished mid table, winning two matches and losing three. The first weekend was captained by Graham Coupe, with the match against Cheshire captained by Ken Jackson.

OVER 60's

The Over 60's team played in the Premier Division over two weekends in October and February at Milton Keynes. Of the 7 matches played, Lancashire won 5 and drew 2, finishing top of the division. They were presented with their awards at the second weekend. The first weekend was captained by Phil Bowen and the second by Ken Jackson.

Congratulations go to the Over 60s team in coming top of the Premier division and the Junior 1st in Division 1A in coming runners up. I would also like to congratulate the players who are being awarded their County Badges.

Thanks should also be given to all those who captained the teams throughout the season, for all parents who helped with transport for the Cadets and Juniors and to each and every player for their efforts throughout the season.

County Training Day

Following the success of the first Cadet and Junior training day in April 2013, there is to be a further training day on Saturday 24th May at Our Lady's RC High School with Andrew Rushton as coach. The top Cadet and Junior players who are eligible to play next season have been invited.

There was a question from Graham Jefferies (Bury) over selection process for County Teams, particularly for Seniors, Veterans & Over 60s team, since there are County Trials for Juniors & Cadets.

Senior, Veteran & Over 60s players are normally selected off the ETTA ranking lists. Since all local league players do not play tournaments or events where ranking points are gained, there may be some players who are overlooked, who may be good enough to represent the county.

It was suggested that a letter should be sent to all Local League Secretaries for a list of their players that they considered capable of representing the County and may want to be considered. Action by Match Secretary.

Proposed by R Neal, seconded by D Graham that the report be accepted.
Carried unanimously.

ELECTIONS:

President: Even with the President's current situation, due to his wife's illness, the Chairman proposed, seconded by D Wolstencroft, that our current President be re-elected.
Carried unanimously.

Vice Presidents: The Chairman asked that all the current Vice Presidents to be elected by the meeting, which was proposed by D Wolstencroft and seconded by T Purcell.
(The current Vice Presidents being Mrs D Yates, D Plowes, P Callaghan, G Stokes, N Deakin, Mrs J Rushton, K Williams, EA Pentland, G Rushton, D Graham, J Clegg)
Carried unanimously.

There had been no new nominations for the Executive Committee, hence the current Committee members, who were all willing to re-stand, they were re-elected unopposed.

The Chairman stated that there were still vacancies on the Committee and if anyone would like to be co-opted, they should contact a committee member.

PROPOSED RULE CHANGES:

There were no proposed rule changes.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Tom Purcell, who is a member of the ETTA (Table Tennis England) new board, with responsibilities for increasing membership, gave a brief update on the current situation.

The items covered included:

1 Update re ETTA structure/re-organisation, which now included four new heads of departments, which were all external appointments of professional people with significant experience in sport.

2 Lancashire Player Membership Figures – the number of approved player members in some local leagues did not add up when compared to the number of teams playing in the leagues. The breakdown of the number of unapproved players on local league list was also under investigation, of whether these players were unpaid members, retired from playing table tennis, moved away from area etc.

3 Future Voting – currently each local league has a number of votes equal to the number of registered players in their league. Effectively, this means that players who play in multiple leagues have multiple votes. The potential change will be that players will have to nominate which local

league will be their primary league, when renewing their membership, so that their vote will only count for their primary league.

4 Development of membership to include other classes e.g. recreational/social players
Current membership stands at approximately 28,000. The plan is to increase membership by approximately 10,000 by 2020 by including all classes of players/volunteers, as well as trying to increase the number of playing members.

The Chairman brought the meeting to an end at approx. 8.30pm, thanking all those present for attending, since the Lancashire & Cheshire Table Tennis League AGM was following on afterwards.