

2014-15 MCCU Delegate/Representative

I went to the MCCU AGM on 20 June 2015 in Cannock which was attended by 18 people including the ECF CEO, Phil Ehr.

Andrew Farthing stood down as chairman and as ECF delegate, roles he has performed well. He was elected to the honorary position of Vice President. John Pakenham was elected chairman and David Levens was elected ECF delegate. Matthew Carr took over John Pakenham's non executive director role. All the other officers, including me (non executive director), were re-elected and David Levens was elected director for junior chess.

The levy remained at £7 per point.

The Union's grading director, Peter Sherlock, reported that 12 Union stage county match games were played by 7 Nottinghamshire players who were not ECF members as at the end of May.

The meeting accepted Peter Sherlock's proposal to change the MCCU competition rules to cater more effectively for entries to the U180 section and indicated its preference to retain the current practice of union nominations rather than direct entries to the ECF stage.

Last year's meeting agreed it was worth trying to restore the MCCU congress. The CEO, Ray Dolan, duly organised a congress in Walsall in March. Unfortunately, it fell short of the break even number (approximately 80) as only 53 people entered and the event lost £860. After discussion about possible contributing factors, the meeting decided to support one more attempt at running the congress and Ray agreed to consult before deciding upon the date, format, entry fees and prizes.

Andrew Farthing summarised the ECF council meeting held last April, saying he voted against an increase in membership subscriptions as there was no supporting business plan, however the increases were passed by 104 votes to 103. Andrew Leadbetter, the MCCU Finance director, expressed his dissatisfaction at the way this vote, and that for game fee, had been conducted.

For Info: Bronze membership £15 (£11 for juniors), Silver £22 (£16), Gold £32 (£26), Platinum £60. On-line purchases and those via the NCA MO scheme may claim a £1 reduction, as before. Game fee is £2.50 for standard play games, £1.25 for rapid play games. 'Pay to play' fee at congresses is £7.

Phil Ehr spoke a few times, covering a range of ECF topics, including a review of the voting system at ECF council meetings and AGMs. He mentioned a court case that might possibly lead to bridge being declared a sport, which could strengthen the case for chess. He agreed to look at the possibility of ECF board meeting decisions being emailed directly to members to keep us better informed. He also said the ECF intends to increase direct communication with members about commercial matters such as the recent sponsorship deal.

David Levens informed the meeting about the National Chess Day on 12 September to raise money for the charity 'Mind', urging all counties to set up stalls to maximise coverage by the media.

Ray Dolan said there would be an arbiter course on 19 & 20 September in Walsall.

Drag Sudar