

# **Oxfordshire Chess Association AGM**

**7.30pm on Thursday 18 September 2025**

**Held at Rose Hill Methodist Church**

**Present:** Nigel Moyse (Oxford City, \*acting Chair)  
Nalin Kadodwala (Cumnor, Chairman),  
Priscilla Morris (Honorary President)  
Sara Sengenberger (Treasurer)  
Gerard O'Reilly (Cowley),  
Steve Bennett (Cumnor),  
Paul Bizzell (Didcot, Online Chess Officer),  
Keith Freshwater (County Individual Championship Organiser),  
Alan Gentry (Witney),  
Roly Piggott (Wantage)  
Kenneth Hobson (Cowley, County Champion 2024-25)  
Richard Hobson (Cowley)  
Mike Truran (Witney, OCA Representative to ECF)  
Duncan Reith (Oxford City),

**Abbreviations:** OCA = Oxfordshire Chess Association, ECF = English Chess Federation,  
FWS = Frank Wood Shield

**1. Apologies:** John Carter, Will Burt, David Robson, Tony Burcham, Roger Thetford, Peter Hemmings, Anna Bishop, Tom Day.

**2. Minutes of 2024 AGM:** Keith raised a question on the post he holds, as he had understood that although retained at last year's AGM it was dropped as a committee post. Gerard advised that this is not recorded in the minutes and the post holder is still said in the Constitution to be a full committee member.

Sara advised that Julian Kennedy had been appointed as the OJays' liaison officer. She further asked about the reference to the 'Safeguarding Officer'. Nigel advised that the ECF has recommended each league should have such an officer. Duncan said he had been approached about the role.

No other issues were raised and the minutes were approved as the record of last year's AGM.

### **3. Matters Arising:**

Nigel informed the meeting that contact with the secretary John Carter had been lost over the summer and there had been some concern. In the past few days John had been in contact and said there had been serious issues preventing him from being able to function in his role and that although wishing to continue in it, he will not be fully functional for a time. Nigel further advised that the Chair Nalin had also had serious family issues that had taken up much of his time. Nalin confirmed this and hence the need for a stand-in chair for the AGM as his presence had not been certain.

Nalin raised thanks to Sara Sengenberger for setting up the AGM and all the work that this had involved. He also raised further thanks to Roger Thetford who had agreed to take on some of the Secretary's duties where necessary to ensure that the league would keep running.

#### **4. Chair's Report (Nalin Kadodwala)**

Nalin repeated his thanks to League Secretary John Carter for all the work he had done and the attention he had given to ensure things ran smoothly.

#### **5. Secretary's Report**

Nigel read out the Secretary's report from the May committee meeting as follows:

JC detailed winners of competitions and individual awards. Trophies had been collected in and passed to Sara for engraving. There had been two issues arising which did not have to be dealt with on appeal and involved board order infractions. All clubs for the coming season will have free choice for starring as previous infractions had expired and all starred players this year were satisfied.

#### **6. Treasurer's Report/Recommendations (Sara Sengenberger)**

Sara had distributed copies of the accounts to the meeting. There is a small deficit but we expected outgoings to be higher than income. A proposed increase to league fees was to be discussed under Item 10.

Mike asked why there was an entry for Chiltern Chess League scoresheets? Sara said this was a one-off due to the incoming captain finding there was an insufficient float left to cover this. It is supposed to be self-financing and there is a proposal to increase fees to cover this.

#### **7. Other Officers' Reports**

**7(a) County Captain** – There is a proposal that away matches incur a £2 match fee to cover the increased cost of the Cumnor Hall for home matches. Home matches to remain at £5 as per last season. The captain also wanted to encourage higher-rated players to participate in county matches as the lack of higher-rated players had been noted by other teams as reported at the May committee meeting.

Nigel reported that other counties are fielding higher-rated players and there was some discussion about what could be done. Reference was drawn to the recent ECF announcement of a proposed new competition that would feature County Champions or the strongest player from each county.

Keith suggested that a small group be set up to contact other counties and the ECF as to how they currently select their champion, then report back to the committee. Paul Bizzell offered to be part of this group.

Paul Bizzell (B Team captain) reported that the B team had won their division in the Chiltern league.

#### **7(b) Ratings Officer's Report (Peter Hemmings)**

Peter not being present, Sara read out the report from the May committee meeting -as attached in Appendix A.

#### **7(c) ECF Representative's Report (Mike Truran)**

Mike reported that so much had happened that it would probably be better if he took questions and suggested that members refer to the report from the Board of Directors and Councils that is going up on the ECF website - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/C43.6a-The-Board-of-Directors-Report.pdf>

Another useful link is - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/council-papers/>

He did report that following an issue with ECF membership, there are plans to automate the checking process to review if those playing in the leagues are members by 30 June.

## **8. Presentation of Trophies**

Sara announced the trophy winners as follows:

First Division: University 1  
Second Division: Oxford City 2  
Third Division: Oxford City 3

First Division individual: Shambavi Hariharan, Oxford City  
Second Division individual: Shubham Srivastav, Oxford City  
Third Division individual: Aditya Tekriwal, University

Frank Wood Shield: Witney  
Lester Millin award for best junior: Shambavi Hariharan, Oxford City  
Oxfordshire Individual Championship: Kenneth Hobson, Cowley

Gerard raised a point about the presentation of trophies. Prior to Covid, Cowley had offered to host the Presentation of Trophies at the Cowley Christmas Blitz as this was an occasion when far more players were present than at the AGM. This opened a discussion on the subject. At the end, Paul proposed that the committee ask clubs when they would like the Presentation of Trophies to be made. This was seconded by Gerard and passed with no votes against.

## **9. Election and Confirmation of Officers for 2025/26**

Sara directed members to the relevant page in last year's minutes. Priscilla Morris asked about her role as Honorary President as this was coming to an end and what had been discussed. It was reported back that although it had been raised at the committee meeting nothing had been discussed further. Gerard pointed out that under article 3.2.3 the committee is responsible for appointing the President for a 3 year term. Priscilla said she was willing to remain in position until a new Honorary President is appointed. It was to be put to the committee to act on this.

\*During this stage of the meeting Priscilla advised the meeting that in her role as Honorary President she had attended the funeral of Tim Dickinson with Kieran for the 4NCL team, Lucy Smith, Olla Yudofsky, and Anna Bishop. Their presence was very much appreciated by Tim's parents.

With no contested positions, the following were elected:

Chairman: Nalin Kadodwala

Vice-Chairman: Gerard O'Reilly

League Secretary\*: John Carter

\*Roger Thetford to support John in the role

Treasurer: Sara Sengenberger

|                                              |                  |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Ratings Officer:                             | Peter Hemmings   |
| Fixtures Secretary:                          | Roger Thetford   |
| Minutes Secretary:                           | Keith Freshwater |
| Online Chess Officer:                        | Paul Bizzell     |
| OCA Representative to ECF:                   | Mike Truran      |
| Webmaster:                                   | Roger Thetford   |
| County Individual<br>Championship Organiser: | Keith Freshwater |

## **10. Treasurer's Recommendations for 2025-26**

Sara was recommending raising fees for the coming season for reasons outlined in the Treasurer's Report (Item 6 above). That said, the issue was less urgent as the Secretary had indicated that the projected £200 needed for the county tournament website would not now be necessary.

There was initial acceptance that costs were low and had not been raised for some time and also that it is desirable to hold a surplus. However, Mike Truran questioned this and asked if it was necessary given that there was still a reasonable surplus and if all fees were collected this was not a major issue. After further discussion it was decided not to increase the fees. It was also discussed whether to claim back the £575 not spent on the development fund. This was felt to be unnecessary at this time.

## **11. Formation of the league for 2025-26**

The league structure as 4 divisions was agreed with only a minor change in that 'Cumnor 1' should be called just 'Cumnor,' the club now having only one team.

• **Division I:** Banbury 1, City 1, City 2, Cowley 1, Didcot 1, Oxford Uni 1, Wantage 1, Witney 1

• **Division II:** Abingdon School, City 3, Cowley 2, Cowley 3, Cumnor, Didcot 2, Oxford Uni 2, Witney 2

• **Division III:** Banbury 2, Bicester Ashton 1, City 4, Didcot 3, Oxford Uni 3, Wantage 2, Watlington

• **Division IV:** Banbury 3, Bicester Ashton 2, City 5, Cowley 4, Didcot 4, Wantage 3, Witney 3  
(Division IV only 4 boards)

## **12. Proposals for changes to OCA rules**

**Proposal 1** – With a return to 4 divisions it was necessary to consider the game timings and what they should be and how the rules should be worded. After some discussion it was proposed by Mike and seconded by Paul that the game timing for Div 3 in 2025-26 should

remain 65 min + 10 sec. and that Div 4 would be the same. This was passed with 4 votes without objection but a couple of abstentions.

**Proposal 2** – 4 Boards in a new division IV. Unsurprisingly this was passed with no objections.

**Proposal 3** – Relaxing of starrng rules. The submitted versions of Proposal 3 raised issues concerning the admissibility of proposals under the Constitution.

Gerard noted that because unforeseeable circumstances over the summer had disrupted the normal circulation of rule proposals, sticking literally to the letter of the Constitution would radically frustrate implementing the Committee Meeting's recommendations and the effectiveness of the AGM. He therefore urged that the meeting admit the submitted rule change proposals insofar as they were self-evident implications of the Committee's published recommendations but not admit new elements or proposals going beyond these implications. After inconclusive discussion, the meeting adopted a less restrictive approach and version A of Proposal 3 was approved but with abstentions.

\*Note – there was agreement from both sides of the discussion that there is a Constitutional issue here that needs to be resolved.

**Proposal 4** - Changes to the Frank Wood Shield. Following the Committee Meeting in May, Roger Thetford submitted a proposal for the competition to be changed to a two game Rapidplay format. This proposal includes details of how this could work. It was agreed that the competition had been declining in popularity. Discussion began on this but with very limited time left in the evening. However, a vote was taken and the proposal passed with 4 votes for and 1 against.

The meeting closed at 22:14

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Freshwater', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Keith Freshwater

## Oxford and District Chess League

### GRADERS REPORT 2024-2025

Results have been received and submitted to the ECF as shown. Feedback now only tells me about new players that were assigned ECF codes. The Oxford League and Chiltern Leagues were submitted on the dates shown. Results submitted to the OCA results database before those dates are included in each submission. When a submission includes new players there is a delay before the whole file is committed and the results visible (sometimes several days but usually get caught in time for the ECF monthly list).

|                                |               |        |                 |   |               |
|--------------------------------|---------------|--------|-----------------|---|---------------|
| Oxford & District League       | Standard Play | PHOL25 | 30 October      | 8 | New players   |
|                                |               |        | 2 December      | 9 |               |
|                                |               |        | 4 March         | 9 |               |
|                                |               |        | 29 March        | 3 |               |
|                                |               |        | 28 April        | 4 |               |
|                                |               |        | 20 May 2025     | 2 |               |
| Chiltern League                | Standard Play | PHCL25 | 30 October      |   | 1 New player. |
|                                |               |        | 2 December      |   |               |
|                                |               |        | 31 January      |   |               |
|                                |               |        | 4 March         |   |               |
|                                |               |        | 30 March        |   |               |
|                                |               |        | 27 April 2025   |   |               |
| Wantage Roger Davidge Swiss    | Standard Play | PHWC25 | 31 March        |   | 0 New player. |
|                                |               |        | 16 May          |   |               |
|                                |               |        | 20 May 2025     |   |               |
| Wantage Junior Club Tournament | Rapid Play    | PHWJ25 | 28 April        |   | 0 New player. |
| Didcot Club Tournament         | Standard Play | PHDM24 | 28 June 2024    |   |               |
|                                |               | PHDM25 | Results awaited |   |               |

Results from other events including Kidlington and Witney were submitted independently.

Player identification is always a key issue and clubs are reminded that it is better to give a player's given name rather than just an initial. I can cope with misprints better if there is a name to work with.

There have been several instances where the name of a player in the database differs from that in the ECF database: most commonly, shortened Christian names or extra initials. Steps have been taken to bring things into line.