



English Carpet Bowls Association

ENGLISH CARPET BOWLS ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the English Carpet Bowls Association held on 3rd February 2024

Present: Representatives from Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Durham, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, Northumberland, Suffolk and Sunderland

Neil Jolly (Vice Chairman), Pauline Charleton (Secretary), Paul Daniels (Treasurer), Mick Watkins (National Referee)

1. Apologies for absence

Rebecca Hearn (Child Protection Officer) and Peter Cook (Hertfordshire)

2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes were read and agreed as a true record, proposed by Peter Wood, seconded by Kay Cuthbert.

3. Matters Arising from previous minutes

None

4. Correspondence

None

5. Chairman's Report

Thank you all for attending this online meeting today.

In the month after our last meeting, we had the sad news of the death of our Chairman Colin Young, who had been unwell for a while. Colin's funeral was well attended & at our Nationals event there was a fitting tribute by the Sunderland team & duly respected by all those in attendance. Colin will be greatly missed by our carpet bowls community.

I'm pleased to report that the Nationals at Potters again ran smoothly & thanks must go to Paul for his work, both before & during the event. On the Friday night, the Inter-County Championship match saw Suffolk overcome Durham by 9-3. Then in the main event, for most of the weekend, it was a three-way tussle between Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire & Suffolk. By the last few sessions, it was a two horse race between Hertfordshire & Suffolk, decided only in the final games, with Suffolk taking top spot by just a single point. All counties who took part should be proud of the spirit in which all the games were played, in what was an enjoyable two days of bowls.

Looking ahead, we have the ECBA Rinks coming up next month. Then our next meeting & AGM in April, both of which we will touch on today.

6. Secretary's Report

None

7. Treasurer's Report

The accounts are currently showing a surplus for the year, although the insurance is still due to be paid out, which will be at least £600, but we should break even this year.

Part of the reason we have been able to keep our head above water was that Colin Young organized

fundraisers at the Festival of Bowls and Champion of Champions. We need to look to continue with these, but it will be dependent on volunteers to help out.

Colin had also taken responsibility for purchasing the trophies for all ECBA events, in the absence of anyone else, Suffolk will be able to step in for this year's events.

8. Referee's Report

Mick reported that we continue to receive rules or equipment related enquiries, which are dealt with as they come in.

9. Child Protection Officer's Report

Rebecca continues to liaise with the Bowls Development Alliance, and attends their safeguarding meetings.

10. Competitions

- a) ECBA Rinks - to be hosted by Northumberland at Linton on Sunday 24th March, entry is currently open, but will be restricted to a maximum of 20 teams.
- b) Festival of Bowls - 29th April to 3rd May at Potters. We have been in touch with Potters for an update on the entries, and are waiting to hear back. We will be looking to circulate details to the counties, as a reminder to all that they can still get their entries in.
- c) Champion of Champions - 1st & 2nd June at Stanley. Sunderland will be checking on what equipment is currently being stored at Stanley, and what, if any, will be needed to be transported in for the event.

Mick Watkins suggested that we consider naming the Champion of Champions team trophy after Colin Young. The representatives were asked to go away and get feedback from their counties, but those who expressed an opinion thought it was definitely a good idea.

- d) ECBA Triples - Cambridgeshire hosting at Littleport on 1st September
- e) Nationals - 25th-28th October at Potters. As with the Festival, we have been in contact with Potters about the pricing for this year's event. We had hoped for a response before the meeting, but although they've been chased, we haven't heard back yet. Neil will continue to pursue them for a response. Based on the last two years, the cost increase has been £30 per person. However, the 2022 and 2023 Nationals did take place on fireworks weekend, so the cost may generally have been higher than normal. This year we are there the weekend before fireworks, so this may be cheaper.

11. Any Other Business

- a) Hertfordshire suggested the adoption of the ECCBA rules for playing short, for the 2024 Nationals, the wording for which is as follows:

Should a team arrive at the Eastern Counties Championship without a full squad, up to a maximum of 6 players short, the team with the three players will play the 8 woods in the following format, with no penalty. Player 1 plays their 2 bowls as normal, the same for the 2nd player, then player 1 and 2 bowl alternatively against the opposing 3rd player, then the skips bowl as normal.

The caveat would be that rather than being allowed to go 6 players short, the minimum team size would need to be in line with the current ECBA rules, which is a team of 20 (4 short).

While the ideal is that every county has a full team, it was felt that there continues to be a need to ensure that counties who struggle for numbers can still compete, and that changing the rule would have the benefit of being a simplification, would cut out the need for players to play 3 consecutive games, as is currently the case, when filling in.

A proposal for this change will be tabled at the AGM and representatives were asked to discuss and seek feedback from their bowlers.

More generally, on the subject of the Nationals, the concern was once again expressed that if Potters' prices continue to rise as they have, that holding the event there may become

untenable, particularly for the Northern counties, who are faced with the possibility of very steep price rises for coach travel.

- b) A change of format for the Champion of Champions will be proposed by Cambridgeshire at the AGM, which would allow for a move to 3 wood Pairs, without impacting on the timings of the event (see attached proposed schedule of play).

The change was implemented for the ECCBA Champion of Champions last year, and worked well.

A proposal for the change will be tabled at the AGM, and the counties will have a chance to discuss it amongst themselves, before the meeting.

- c) Cambridgeshire asked if the date of the Champion of Champions could be kept away from half-term time in future. This is something which will be taken into consideration for 2025.
- d) Sunderland reported that, following the death of Colin Young, who was also their chairman, they will shortly be having an AGM.
- e) Neil reported that the current committee are happy to carry on in their current positions, and that he is willing to stand as Chairman, in the absence of anyone else willing to take on the job. In this case, there will be a need for a new Vice Chairman.

12. Date of Next Meeting/AGM

Saturday 13th April 2024 at The Brentwood Hotel, Rotherham (Meeting at midday, followed by AGM)

The meeting closed at 11.55am.