

Banbury and District Tennis Leagues

Minutes of AGM
6th February 2014
Souldern Village Hall

Present

Nick Adams (League Secretary), Bronwyn Adams (Deddington), Trevor Stevens (League Treasurer), Colin Mercer (League Chairman), Sue Mercer (Harbury), David Hudson (Hook Norton), Ray Armstrong (Banbury West End), Sue Jelfs (Banbury West End), Mark Gregory (Byfield), Paul Christie (Middleton Cheney), Garry Liversage (Middleton Cheney), Lizzie Cooke (Warwick), Ian McGivern (Warwick), Liz Finlyson (Tysoe), Sylvia Wilcox (Tysoe), Shirley Griffith (Brackley), Jim Griffith (Brackley), Clare Buckingham (Towcester), George Gibbs (Deddington), Judith Haynes (Charlbury), Diana Jarman (Charlbury), June Ward (Deddington)

The meeting opened at 7:30 p.m.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Di Proctor (Marsh Gibbon), Steve Rogers (Banbury), Fiona Steen (Byfield), Rob Morrissey (Priors Marston), Trevor Barnes (Towcester)

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (7th February 2013)

The Minutes were circulated. They had been previously posted on the Banbury Tennis Leagues website. There were no questions or comments.

George Gibbs (Deddington) proposed the Minutes be accepted. The proposal was seconded by Judith Haynes (Charlbury) and the Minutes were accepted unanimously.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes

- 3a. Responding to a question last year from Shirley Griffith (Brackley), the League Secretary confirmed that the reasons that matches were conceded were now included on the League website.
- 3b. The League Secretary thanked David Hudson (Hook Norton) for alerting him last year to the fact that website menus did not work properly when using the latest version of Microsoft Internet Explorer. The cause of the problem had been identified and fixed.

There were no further matters arising from the Minutes.

4. Secretary's Report

A written report was circulated and is available on the League website.

Attendees were reminded to uphold the aims of the League when considering rule changes; particularly that it is intended to promote friendly competition in which basic common sense and sportsmanship should prevail.

The League Secretary also drew the meeting's attention to the reduced number of Floodlit and Winter Leagues entries and concern that this did not represent an adverse trend.

A discussion followed. Ray Armstrong (Banbury West End) said that whilst overall membership had increased, the numbers of team players had reduced. This trend was confirmed by other members.

After further discussion it was suggested that a survey be conducted to gauge interest in other formats; e.g. a Summer weekend competition. The League Secretary agreed to do this.

The report was accepted by the meeting attendees and Colin Mercer (Harbury and League Chairman) expressed his thanks to the League Secretary.

5. Treasurer's Report

A written report was circulated and is available on the BTL website.

The apparent anomaly in the Secretary's fees is due to last year's error that has now been corrected.

Summer Fees are identical year on year. The drop in Winter Fees is because fewer teams entered. Despite a small deficit of expenditure over income the balance sheet remains healthy with a reasonable surplus of cash.

The Treasurer stated that bank interest is insignificant due to low rates.

The Treasurer confirmed that the Secretary's honorarium was currently £1,050/annum and proposed that the members agree to increase this by £50/annum. He pointed out that no additional costs (e.g. stationery, postage etc.) were claimed so this is an 'all in' figure. The Secretary responded that this increase was unnecessary but it was proposed by Sue Jelfs (Banbury West End), seconded by Mark Gregory (Byfield) and carried unanimously.

To cover this, the Treasurer suggested an increase in Registration Fees from £12/team to £13/team. This was proposed by David Hudson (Hook Norton), seconded by George Gibbs (Deddington) and carried unanimously.

The Chairman asked if there were any further questions. There were none.

The Chairman thanked Trevor and asked for approval of the accounts. Approval was proposed Garry Liversage (Middleton Cheney), seconded by David Hudson (Hook Norton) and passed unanimously.

6. Election of Officers

It had previously been agreed that the role of Chairman would be on a revolving basis whereby club names would be picked 'out of a hat' annually in advance.

Colin Mercer (Harbury) had indicated his willingness to continue for a further year. Trevor Stevens (Deddington) and Nick Adams (Deddington) stated they were willing to continue in their roles as Treasurer and Secretary respectively. No further nominations had been received.

Judith Haynes (Charlbury) proposed that the Officers be re-elected, seconded by Mark Gregory (Byfield). The proposal was carried unanimously.

7. Proposals

There were 5 proposals. They are attached as appendix A to these minutes.

1. Difficulties in rearranging matches:

The principle of proposal 1a was quickly agreed by the members so the discussion was mainly about the timings of 'cancellation to agreement' and 'cancellation to notification'.

Eventually a vote was taken by a show of hands as follows on the timing of 'cancellation to agreement':

7 days	for 3
10 days	for 13
14 days	for 2

A further show of hands of 11 to 3 resulted in a decision to reject the final paragraph regarding the match being declared void if no agreement can be reached.

The proposed amendment will now be:

"In the event of having to rearrange a match the home team must offer 3 dates giving a period of 10 days for the opposition to agree one of those dates. These dates must be within 14 days after cancellation of original date and all parties, including the League Secretary, should be advised of the new date as soon as it is agreed.

Captains should first check the website for available free dates avoiding clashes, consecutive nights or two matches in same week."

This will affect rules 3 and 5.

2. Teams conceding matches:

A lively discussion with some very valid points raised.

An amendment suggesting that the team conceding should forfeit all points with their opponent being awarded all points was proposed by June Ward (Deddington). It was seconded by Sue Mercer (Harbury) and carried by 14 to 1 with 1 abstention.

It was agreed that the suggestion that teams conceding more than once in a season should be deemed to have withdrawn be held in abeyance until next year pending the success or otherwise of this proposal.

The proposed amendment will now be:

"If a team concedes a match they will have 9 points (8 in Winter and Floodlit Leagues) deducted and their opponent will receive 9 points (8 in Winter and Floodlit Leagues). No games will be awarded to either team.

A match is also deemed to be conceded if claimed by an opponent under rules 3 or 7."

3. Teams playing players down:

Discussions included whether or not it was practical to nominate playing squads early in the season but rejected as adding to club's administrative burden.

Nick Adams (League Secretary) opined that in the interests of transparency and openness all relevant events should be clearly indicated in the comments box of the match card.

Lizzie Cooke (Warwick) had received a comment from a Team Captain that the current rule was slightly contradictory.

Middleton Cheney's proposal was then seconded by George Gibbs (Deddington).

A vote was taken and carried 16 to 2.

Rule 10 will now state:

"No player should play down from his/her normal team. Players who have played three times for a higher team are not eligible to play in his/her lower team in that season. However, if a club is genuinely short of players for a fixture they can declare this to their opponents and:

- a. play with a player short and concede those rubbers that he/she is missing, or*
- b. play down a player from a higher division and concede those rubbers that he/she has played*
- c. use a club player that may not normally play in a team*

In exceptional circumstances players may 'play up' but will not be tied to the higher team as long as a competitive gain is not sought.

In any event the circumstances must be agreed with the opposing Captain and the agreed outcome indicated on the score card."

4. Illness and injury:

Diana Jarman (Charlbury) said this proposal simply formalised existing practice. The members generally agreed.

It was subsequently seconded by Mark Gregory and carried unanimously.

The new rule will now state:

"If a player is unable to continue due to illness or injury, uncompleted games in the rubber being played shall be forfeited. Should the player not recover in time to play a subsequent rubber, it shall be forfeited entirely".

5. Limit rearranged matches:

Proposed by Judith Haynes (Charlbury), seconded by Lizzie Cooke (Warwick) and carried 13 to 3.

Rule 2 will now state:

"The proposed fixtures will be posted on the League website as soon as possible after entry forms are received by the League Secretary.

Unlimited fixture changes within the period of the League (October to March/April to September) are allowed before a deadline date which is also posted on the League website.

After the deadline date each team is allowed to change one fixture only which should be agreed with the opposing team and notified to the League Secretary as soon as possible via the appropriate webform."

8. Formation of the 2014 Summer League

The new Summer League structure has worked out well. Two teams from 2013 didn't enter but thanks to extra entries from Brackley and Tysoe we will start with a full house; 6 divisions with 6 teams in each.

The agreed Summer League formation is attached as Appendix B.

9. Any Other Business

The Chairman asked if there was any other business.

Lizzie Cooke (Warwick) offered her apologies for a slight mix up with the formation of Warwick B and C teams in Winter League Division 2. It will be fixed next season.

Fiona Cronin (Byfield) made a late request for the meeting to consider a rule change.

Currently rule 11 states that no player may represent more than one club in a specific League in one season. Fiona asked whether the rule could be changed to allow a player to play for two clubs in the same league as long as they are in different divisions?

The attendees agreed to consider the request but it was unanimously rejected.

As there was no further business the meeting moved on to:

10. Presentation of Certificates

The Chairman presented certificates to the Winners and Runners Up of the 2013 Summer League. Certificates for Banbury and Kings Sutton will be posted.

Congratulations to all Winners and Runners Up.

With no further business to discuss the Chairman thanked all attendees for their contribution inviting everyone to further participate in the refreshments.

The meeting closed at 9:12 p.m.

Appendix A

Banbury Tennis Leagues – 2014 AGM Proposals

1. Difficulties in rearranging matches proposed by League Secretary (after consultation with all Clubs)

Problem: At the last AGM in February 2013, Deddington proposed that a rule should be made to clarify the position when having to re-arrange matches.

After a discussion, it was decided that guidelines needed to be re-established and it was agreed that I poll members then make proposals based on their responses.

I have circulated a discussion document which condensed the suggestions down to two options.

Proposals:

- a. The home team to offer (2 or 3?) dates giving a period of 10 days for the opposition to agree one of those dates.

Captains must first check the website for available free dates avoiding clashes, consecutive nights or two matches in same week.

The rearranged date should be as soon as possible to avoid a build-up of fixtures at the end of the season and all parties, including the League Secretary, should be advised of the new date within 14 days after cancellation of original date.

If the two parties are unable to reach agreement, then the match is declared void and a notice to that effect is posted on the League website.
- b. A new date within the period covered by the League fixtures should be agreed and notified to the League Secretary as soon as possible via the appropriate webform. If the two parties are unable to reach agreement, then the match is declared void and a notice to that effect is posted on the League website.

Impact of the proposal: The prospect of the match being declared void should encourage both parties to cooperate and find a suitable date.

2. Teams conceding matches proposed by League Secretary

Problem: When teams concede their opponent currently take all the points. Overcompensating the opponent can adversely impact other teams in the League and affect promotion and relegation positions. It is felt that sometimes teams concede too easily without exploring all other options for playing a match.

Proposal: If a team concedes a match they will be penalised 4 points and their opponent will receive 4 points (5 in summer). No games will be awarded to either team. If a team concedes more than once in a season, they will be deemed to have withdrawn and all matches will be awarded to opponents, even those already played.

A match is also deemed to be conceded if claimed by an opponent under rules 3 or 7.

Impact of the proposal: At the moment there is no penalty for conceding. All teams lose except the team awarded the match and they are overcompensated. If there is a significant penalty for conceding, teams will be less likely to do so.

**3. Teams playing players down
proposed by Middleton Cheney**

Problem: The current "Playing Down" rule is too rigid and we have had to limit the number of teams we can enter thus reducing the league numbers and the ability for people to play tennis.

Proposal: To have an Exception Process that allows a Club to request a player to play in a match to fulfil the fixture without having to concede the games he or she plays in when it's clear that no competitive gain is being sought (e.g. when a normally C team player has to play up to a higher team temporarily and then tied from being to play for his or her normal team).The opposing team then either accepts or declines the request after reviewing the facts and having match data on the website etc.,

If for whatever reason this is still disputed a final decision would be made by the League Secretary. We would expect the process to be rarely used so would recommend a limit of say max. 2 per club per season.

Impact of the proposal: This will ensure that Clubs have the confidence to enter more Teams and so more people can play tennis.

**4. Illness or Injuries
proposed by League Secretary**

Problem: there is no existing procedure to cover what happens if a player is unable to continue playing during a match due to Illness or Injury.

Proposal: the following rule be added "If a player is unable to continue due to illness or injury, uncompleted games in the rubber being played shall be forfeited. Should the player not recover in time to play a subsequent rubber, it shall be forfeited entirely".

Impact of the proposal: an issue not covered by existing rules is now covered.

**5. Limit rearranged matches
proposed by Charlbury**

Problem: The problem is that in the winter many matches have to be rearranged because the weather is bad and if we then have to rearrange matches because someone can't get a team we run out of weekends to play

Proposal: During the winter once the season has started clubs should only be allowed to rearrange one match (i.e. if they can't get a team) unless there is bad weather.

Impact of the proposal: there will be dates available for rearranging matches due to bad weather.

Note: Although this was initially proposed for Winter League, it was decided to extend the discussion to cover all three Leagues.

It would affect the existing rule which states: "After the deadline date each team is allowed to change two fixtures which should be agreed with the opposing team and notified to the League Secretary as soon as possible via the appropriate webform."

Formation of 2014 Summer League

Appendix B

Final 2013 Tables

Proposed 2014

(old format - 2 up/2 down)

Proposed 2014

(ranked 1 to 36)

Proposed 2014

(6 Divisions)

Division 1

- 1 Banbury A (Champions)
- 2 Byfield A (runners up)
- 3 Banbury West End A
- 4 Brackley A
- 5 Kings Sutton A
- 6 Deddington A
- 7 Banbury West End B

Division 2

- 1 Charlbury A (winners)
- 2 Banbury B (runners up)
- 4 Hook Norton A
- 3 Byfield B
- 5 Middleton Cheney A
- 6 Kings Sutton B
- 7 Brackley B

Division 3

- 1 Charlbury B (winners)
- 2 Hook Norton B (runners up)
- 3 Banbury West End C
- 4 Deddington B
- 5 Banbury C
- 6 Banbury West End D
- 7 Brackley C

Division 4

- 1 Kings Sutton C (winners)
- 2 Deddington C (runners up)
- 3 Middleton Cheney B
- 4 Byfield C
- 5 Harbury
- 6 Tysoe
- 7 Hook Norton C

Division 5

- 1 Banbury West End E (winners)
- 2 Byfield D (runners up)
- 3 Brackley D
- 4 Hook Norton D
- 5 Middleton Cheney C
- 6 Deddington D
- 7 Charlbury C
- 8 Hook Norton E

Division 1

- Banbury A
- Byfield A
- Banbury West End A
- Brackley A
- Kings Sutton A
- Charlbury A
- Banbury B

Division 2

- Deddington A
- Banbury West End B
- Hook Norton A
- Byfield B
- Middleton Cheney A
- Charlbury B
- Hook Norton B

Division 3

- Kings Sutton B
- Brackley B
- Banbury West End C
- Deddington B
- Banbury C
- Kings Sutton C
- Deddington C

Division 4

- Banbury West End D
- Brackley C
- Middleton Cheney B
- Byfield C
- Harbury
- ~~Banbury West End E~~
- Byfield D

Division 5

- Tysoe
- Hook Norton C
- Brackley D
- Hook Norton D
- ~~Middleton Cheney C~~
- Deddington D
- Charlbury C
- Hook Norton E

not entered

Banbury West End E &
Middleton Cheney C

- Banbury A
- Byfield A
- Banbury West End A
- Brackley A
- Kings Sutton A
- Charlbury A

- Banbury B
- Deddington A
- Banbury West End B
- Hook Norton A
- Byfield B
- Middleton Cheney A
- Charlbury B
- Hook Norton B
- Kings Sutton B
- Brackley B
- Banbury West End C
- Deddington B

- Banbury C
- Kings Sutton C
- Deddington C
- Banbury West End D
- Brackley C
- Middleton Cheney B
- Byfield C
- Harbury
- Byfield D
- Tysoe A
- Hook Norton C
- Brackley D
- Hook Norton D
- Deddington D
- Charlbury C
- Hook Norton E
- Brackley E
- Tysoe B

new entries

Brackley E &
Tysoe B

Division 1

- Banbury A
- Byfield A
- Banbury West End A
- Brackley A
- Kings Sutton A
- Charlbury A

Division 2

- Banbury B
- Deddington A
- Banbury West End B
- Hook Norton A
- Byfield B
- Middleton Cheney A

Division 3

- Charlbury B
- Hook Norton B
- Kings Sutton B
- Brackley B
- Banbury West End C
- Deddington B

Division 4

- Banbury C
- Kings Sutton C
- Deddington C
- Banbury West End D
- Brackley C
- Middleton Cheney B

Division 5

- Byfield C
- Harbury
- Byfield D
- Tysoe A
- Hook Norton C
- Brackley D

Division 6

- Hook Norton D
- Deddington D
- Charlbury C
- Hook Norton E
- Brackley E
- Tysoe B