

**Minutes of NWCSL Team Captains' Meeting held on Tuesday 8th September 2015
at Alford Sports & Social Club, Manchester Road, Warrington, WA1 3NJ**

Introductory Note

These minutes are a summary of the meeting; they may not necessarily contain all the issues raised during the meeting by those present; and they may also expanding on some issues not discussed in detail with a view to providing information to member clubs.

Present

Committee: Bernie Gill (Chairman), Steve Eccles (Match Secretary), Henry Stone (Treasurer & Hon. Legal Advisor), Joss Garvey (Referees), Sheila Crane (Committee Member).

Clubs: Out of a total of 101 clubs registered for the 2015/16 season, representatives from 62 clubs were present; 18 further clubs collected their stationery (or had someone collect on their behalf) but were unable to stay for the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies were received from John Hugall (President), Dave Goulden (General Secretary), and from 13 clubs.

1 Chairman's Opening

The Chairman opened the meeting at approx. 7:30pm.

He informed the meeting of the sponsorship with iSPORTstore.com for 2015/16, the second year of a two year agreement with an option for a further third year, and the benefits available to club members from iSPORTstore in relation to both equipment (very competitive prices) and events such as the tickets for the Grand Prix.

The Chairman also drew attention to the fact that some corrections and changes would have to be made to the Handbook for 2015-2016 issued with the league stationery. If any representatives noticed anything which it was felt needed correction, they were asked to let the Committee know. An updated version would be issued in pdf form on the web site as soon as possible.

2 Team Captain's Responsibilities/Player Behaviour

The Chairman and Match Secretary reminded representatives of the need for good behaviour during matches, to remember that squash was a game and we all played for enjoyment, that the Constitution and Rules were set out in full in the Handbook and on the web site, and that all clubs would be expected to be aware of the Constitution and Rules.

The following were some of the specific issues to be borne in mind for the coming season:

- a) **Conflicts** - Team Captains should attempt to diffuse potential conflicts before they become a problem,
- b) **Players' behaviour/language** – It is for the Team Captain to ensure that the behaviour of players in public places is appropriate and controlled. All Clubs know who their problem players are and should take steps to ensure that problems do NOT occur. Clubs also have a responsibility to ensure that their problem players are dealt with appropriately if problems do occur.

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- c) **Respect for Officials** - Players have a duty to respect Markers/Referees/League Officials, who would get the full support of the Disputes/NWCSL Committees. The League provides referees for matches in Division 1 but can also provide referees for matches in other divisions where there might be a special reason to; but note that there is a cost attached.
- d) **Code of Conduct** – a copy of the players' code of conduct is on the ESR web site.
- e) **Player registrations** – Clubs must ensure, whenever possible, that all team players are registered before they play and, if for any reason that is not possible, they are registered within 7 days afterwards. Do not duplicate names (see below).
- f) **Scorecards** should be fully and correctly filled in (including the game scores), both on the website and on the hard posted copies – please enter website results carefully and check before saving. Results should be posted on the web site promptly and fully. Incomplete scorecards may result in fines being imposed. If results are not posted by the following Wednesday, they could be nullified.
- g) **Scorecards** still need to be retained, if they are not posted (or scanned and emailed) to the Divisional Representative. The scorecards may be needed by the Divisional Representatives, if there are any disputes.
- h) **Cancelled Matches** – it is the home team's responsibility to update the result.
- i) **Home Teams** – to be present to receive the away team and be organised. Remember that both teams need to exchange scorecards, already filled in with their players' names, before the start of the match.
- j) Matches will start on the following dates:

Division 1	22 Sep
14 Team Divisions	17 Sep
12 Team Divisions	24 Sep
10 Team Divisions	1 Oct
8 Team Divisions	24 Sep

k) **Player playing order windows for Divisions 1 & 2**

4 opportunities to submit lists:

- 1st Quarter – by 15th September 2015
- 2nd Quarter – from 20th October 2015 to 30th October 2015
- 3rd Quarter – from 18th December 2015 to 2nd January 2016
- 4th Quarter – from 15th February 2016 to 16th February 2016

- l) **Rule 7.6** - Re-emphasising rule 7.6 that if playing after 31st December 2014 – permission must be sought.
- m) **Rule 7.7** - Re-emphasising rule 7.7 of requirements for playing in the last 4 matches.
- n) **Division 1 Clubs – Referees** - 1st Division clubs to remember that they should provide hospitality for Referees ie a drink during the evening, as well as food & drink at the end of the match.
- o) **Disputes** – A Disputes Form is available on the website. Further information, including supporting letter can be sent with the form. The Disputes Form must be sent to the appropriate Divisional Representative, with a copy to both the Match Secretary and General Secretary. **This form must be signed by the designated Club Representative. It is the**

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Club's responsibility to get in touch. It is no good complaining if you are not prepared to speak out.

3 Rule Changes and Other Issues

There had been only two rule changes at the 2015 AGM:

Amendment to Paragraph 3.7 of the Constitution which now reads as follows:

"Each Club must pay affiliation fees due to England Squash by the due date. If a Club's affiliation fees are overdue at the start of a season or become overdue at any time during a season, the Committee shall have the power to deduct 5 points per team per match from the start of that season or the date on which those fees become overdue until in either case they are paid. In addition if a Club's affiliation fees are overdue at the start of a season, that club may not be allowed to take part in the League."

Amendment to Rule 4.1 of the Rules by inserting the sentence shown in red below so that Rule 4.1 now reads as follows:

"Clubs must select and play available players in order of merit and in accordance with the clubs' playing order. If any team in a club shall not have a match on the relevant day, the club in question shall select players for that team as though it has a match so that the order of merit of other teams is maintained. **A Player, who has played all or the majority of his or her matches for a higher team, shall not be allowed to drop down to a lower team when the higher team does not have a match without the permission of the Match Secretary, whose decision will be final.** Where any team plays a league fixture on a different day in any week, no players in that team shall be eligible to play for another team during that week without the prior permission of the Committee, the General Secretary or the Match Secretary. The Committee may require any club to produce its selection of players for the team which does not have a match."

England Squash (ESR) Accreditation

Rule 3.7 will be applied strictly. ESR have had to reduce their staff drastically (from 60 to 20) and it is largely being left to the Counties to ensure that ESR accreditation fees are kept up to date. ESR is trying to encourage participation in squash and so it is important for clubs to declare the correct numbers so as to show true participation. The cost is only £7.50 per person. More people are playing out of leisure centres, whether public or private. There are grants available from ESR to improve club facilities but only to affiliated clubs. So there is a benefit.

A representative from a David Lloyd club said that it would be unfair to deduct points when players can't influence DL head office actions as regards payment. Another club representative asked whether non-team players had to be included, It was confirmed that they should be.

Reminders as to the Rules

Clubs were and are also reminded of the following rules, which cover the majority of issues which arise during most seasons:

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Rule 4.1 Playing Orders – Clubs are expected to play to their clubs Order of Merit.

Although the NWCSL Player Ranking system may not be exact, it does give a good guide of playing orders within a club.

Where clubs have two teams in same sections of a division, the teams should be playing in ranking order and clubs should not be operating teams as two separate squads.

Playing orders at the start of the season, particularly when a higher team does not have a match, still need to operate this rule.

If a club's lowest team is short of players and a higher team player plays to give an opponent a match on the night, then the higher team player should play at the lowest position in the team. The points for that match will awarded to the opponent irrespective of the result, but the normal team players' results will not be affected.

Rule 5 Match Date Alterations – The appropriate Divisional Representative and the Match Secretary should be informed in advance and agree to any postponement. Clubs are reminded that they do not need to agree to postponements.

Rule 6 Match Walk-overs – A reminder that 1 walk-over in Divs 1 & 2 or 2 walk-overs in other Divisions (3 & 4) can result in automatic relegation.

Rule 7 Eligibility of Players

7.5 No player may play for more than one club in any one season without permission. Club were reminded that they should ensure that all their players are aware of this rule before they play their first match. Permission to change clubs cannot be guaranteed and may be refused under certain circumstances. Obviously, if a playing is moving home, which would result in an excessive amount of travelling to his previous club, then permission would likely be granted.

7.6 31st Dec deadline – exceptions

If a player, who played for the club the previous season, has been out during the first half of the season due to injury, business and/or personal reasons and not been able to play 1 match before the deadline, then permission is normally given for them to play during the second half of the season, subject to rule 7.7. New players to the area may be allowed to play, but each case will be judged independently. The main criteria is that clubs do ask for permission of the Match Secretary before any person who has not played before the deadline, play their first match.

7.7 Last 4 matches – exceptions

Regular players may, with permission, be allowed to play in a lower team if their current club playing order merits it at the time of the matches. See second sentence of this rule. Clubs should inform all their relevant team captains and selection committees of this requirement.

Exceptions to a club's lowest team can be considered, particularly if the match does not have an influence on promotion or relegation, but permission should be requested before the match.

Rule 9 Starting Times

The rule states that matches must commence at 7.00pm and at least 3 players from each team are present. The emphasis is on clubs/teams to comply with this rule. The committee will deal with any issues relating to late start, if brought to their attention.

Where there are late starts, as a result of teams (home or away team) arriving late, then every effort MUST be made to play the match. Teams / players CANNOT claim a match / tie; this decision has

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If all matches are NOT completed at the end of the evening (where a club has a limited time to complete matches), then the award of any unplayed matches/games will be decided by the committee, taking into account late start times.

4. Website issues

Web Sites

The Match Secretary reminded the meeting that there were 2 web sites, (i) the NWCSL web site and (ii) Resultszone. Announcements went onto the NWCSL web site and so representatives should look at both. He would nevertheless try to include information in League Notes on the Resultszone web site. There are instructions in the NWCSL web site about how to use the Resultszone web site.

Club Playing Lists - need to be kept up to date. Club Representatives should send the General Secretary or the Match Secretary a list of player names and ID numbers that needed to be removed.

Player names are NOT removed from the Resultszone database, but are retained as players without a club and can be found by searching under partial names (see also comments below under new registrations). So DO NOT ADD a name where someone has moved club or has not played for some time. Contact either the Secretary or the Match Secretary with the player ID number and they will make the transfer.

Please do NOT use INCORRECT NAMES when entering results. The use of incorrect names can have a significant effect on the ranking system.

New Registrations – need to allocate the correct number of starting ranking points

Check your club ranking list and allocate a starting number of ranking points similar to the players around where the new player will fit in.

Search in Resultszone under partial names before registering a new player for your club to check that the player is not registered with another club or in the database as a player without a club (see above). In either case email the General Secretary or Match Secretary

Team Administrators - Let the Match Secretary know of (i) any new administrators so that their access can be created and (ii) if there are any who need removing from the list.

Club Details - Please check that the website club details are correct (club rep name, telephone & email) and let either the General Secretary or Match Secretary know if they need amending.

5. Play-offs

Play-off dates: 14th & 21st April 2016, with the Finals on Saturday, 30th April 2016.

Fairways Lodge and Grove Park have offered their premises in previous years for the Play-off Finals. Clubs are invited to apply for this season. Minimum 4 courts will be needed.

6. Handbooks

The Handbooks had been printed and were being distributed with the league stationery. A few errors had however been noted which would be corrected and a revised pdf version would be posted on the NWCSL web site. If anyone noticed anything, which was incorrect, the Match Secretary should please be notified.

The Match Secretary asked the meeting whether clubs preferred to retain the hard copy of the Handbook or would prefer an electronic copy on the web site. On a show of hands

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there was a majority in favour of an electronic copy but still some who wanted to retain the hard copy. The Committee would consider what should be done, perhaps printing fewer hard copies and reducing the numbers distributed to clubs.

7. Any Other Business

Email Addresses - Clubs to ensure that email addresses are kept up to date.

Grove Park Masters – This now has a prime spot in the squash calendar – December 17th-19th. Some good players will be there and NWCSL players were encouraged to take part.

Nationals – Players were encouraged to watch. Note that NWCSL members do get free offers and we should make use of them.

Playing Orders – A number of queries were raised about playing orders, which were dealt with.

Twitter – NWCSL uses @nwcslsq

Thank You – To Sheila Crane who provided valuable assistance in the distribution of League Stationery.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at approx. 8.50pm.