



MetroWest Chess Club

Largest Chess Club in New England

Serving the MetroWest Boston chess community since 1983

MetroWest Chess Club Annual Meeting Minutes

Kennedy Senior Center, Natick, Mass

Minutes Prepared by Mark Kaprielian

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I. Overview

A. Summary

The annual meeting was held on January 18th, 2011 in accordance with the Bylaws at the primary site of the club which is the Natick Senior Center.

The meeting was presided over by President Mark Kaprielian

29 Members were present.

A general state of the club status was given

The meeting consisted of questions from the membership with most responses provided by the President. The remainder of these minutes summarizes the topics discussed.

B. Result of Elections held in November 2010

John Bottini	Re-elected
Ken Ballou	Re-elected
Mike Barry	Re-elected
Mark Kaprielian	Re-elected

Jim Krycka	Re-elected
Matt Phelps	Re-elected
Harvey Reed	Re-elected

II. Topics of discussion

A. What is the history the Masters play for free policy and is it still relevant today?

The rule was put in place for the following reasons:

1. At the time club attendance averaged about 20 players (early 1995). The idea was that if we could attract a few masters, it would help draw in more players, especially those in the 1900 and above range.
2. Since the club was offering prizes in the Open section totaling about \$120, it was thought that most masters could earn much more than their share of first place by simply giving private lessons on the four or five nights that they would otherwise be at the club. While we certainly couldn't compete dollar wise, we could maximize the net amount they could win by eliminating the entry fee and unlike a popular policy at other events at the time, not deduct entry fee from winnings.
3. In light of our much better attendance and general situation, some thought has been given to the idea of changing the policy to make membership in the club a requirement for free entry for masters.

Adjusting the policy will be added as topic for the board.

B. Should we have a rule about Cell Phones?.

The club does not currently have a policy regarding cell phones. We have been thinking about it for a while and observing the impact of this rule as done by other clubs and organizers. We do make an effort to remind everyone each week. Part of our reluctance is that we want to not make for an unfriendly atmosphere by severely penalizing players. On the other hand, it is a disturbance to the rest of the participants.

The board will consider this matter pending recommendations from our TDs.

C. What should be done about clocks that make sounds when pressed?

The general consensus of the club's TDs is that sounds should not be allowed. The USCF rules will be examined to see if explicit rules by the club need to be put into place to formalize this.

D. Sections breaks have been staying the same for some time now, why don't they change anymore?

The sections breaks are reevaluated one or more times per year depending on the observation of the distribution among the sections. The basic philosophy in place is that we try to keep the number of participants in each section the same. Where to set the breaks is actually a complex topic and much analysis and thought goes into it. Some of the things that we try to balance or take into account are:

- Keeping the sections competitive
- Giving "shelter" or "protection" for players such that they are not going to face much stronger players week after week and therefore get discouraged from playing.
- Analysis shows that on average 7 players will choose to play up in each section for any given month

- Provide a means for the Under 2000 players to earn points for the U2000 championship qualifications
- In the past we had a few members stuck at their rating floor. Now days we have almost none. Moving the floor to provide these players a chance to be at the top of a section instead of at the bottom all the time was a real consideration. We observe for this situation but rarely see it as an issue anymore.
- The current section breaks have reliably produced an average of 20 players per section when we average 80 or more players in the event.
- There has been almost no negative feedback and almost all positive feedback about the current section breaks.
- An informal poll done during this meeting showed only positive feedback about the current section breaks.

E. What is the no food rule about?

The purpose of the no food in the playing room rule is to reduce distractions such as smell and particularly noise in the playing rooms during the rounds. While occasionally someone would eat a meal during the game the most common occurrence was someone eating chips or other foods from bags that would make noise. Recently there have been some occurrences of people getting lozenges or candies from bags that make noise. In those instances the people have been spoken to about using non-noisy containers. We are not yet considering any additional rules for these situations.

F. The introduction of other programs such as the most recent DGT Boards for game capture.

The club has a long standing policy that new programs may be introduced but not at the expense of using existing resources. Basically this means that if a program needs people to do the work to support it, it cannot use or draw from existing volunteers. For example, several times in the past the idea of expanding to a second night was strongly proposed with a collection of both members and TDs supporting it. At the time the most critical resource needed was three TDs to create a “TD Pool” who would commit to being there every week. At the time the club was averaging three fairly regularly attending and two occasionally attending TDs in the Tuesday night TD pool. One of these regular attending TDs was the main force behind the 2nd night. He would switch from Tuesdays to the alternate night. At the time there was no commitment from any other TDS nor could any volunteers be found to become committed 2nd night TDs. Having one committed TD switch away without a replacement would have left the still growing club at critical risk on Tuesday nights. The program did not launch.

The current DGT game capture program is currently drawing a committed resource from the club. The plan is to release this resource in the near future. Having this resource handling this additional program is, in my opinion, putting strain on that person and thus we are at risk of losing a very valuable person.