

2019 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Held on Thursday 19 September 2019 at The Fingerpost

In attendance: Alexandra, Fingerpost, Flying Coach, HMRUFC, James Watts, Little Horse & Farrier, Railway, Railway Fliers, Smart Alex, Sun & Castle, Tiviot, Travellers Call

Apologies: Horse & Farrier, Tame Valley

1. 2018 AGM Minutes

The minutes of the 2018 AGM were approved.

2. League Committee

The committee was re-elected for the 2019–2020 season.

Over recent years the number of committee members has reduced to three, so our Questions Tsar, John Palmer, was elected to the committee. We will continue to look for someone to fill the vacant position of Treasurer. Please get in touch if you are interested.

3. Finances

(a) The accounts for 2018–2019 were approved.

(b) As agreed at the 2018 AGM the team subscription fee for 2019–2020 has been increased £40 to cover additional costs related to the hosting of our website.

4. 2019–20 Season

Sadly the Hatters Arms have decided not to participate in the 2019–2020 season as they have been struggling for a while to field a full team each week. We hope to see them back soon. As a result we will have fourteen teams in two divisions of seven and changes have been made to the format for league matches – see item 4 (b).

(a) The final league placings and knockout results for 2018–2019 were confirmed.

Following the loss of the Hatters we no longer have an odd number of teams, so the 're-balancing' of the two divisions agreed at the 2018 AGM is not required (but will be used should we have an odd number of teams in future). For 2019–2020 the Tame Valley and HMRUFC are relegated to the B Division, whilst Railway Fliers and the Fingerpost are promoted to the A Division.

(b) To reduce the number of byes and produce a season of suitable duration the following format was agreed for matches during the 2019–2020 season. The same arrangements will apply to both the A and B Divisions.

'Normal' League Matches

These will be played over two 'blocks' of seven weeks. Every team will play each of the other teams in their own league division, once at home and once away. The questions will be as usual: two rounds of 30 paired questions and two 10-question written rounds.

'Inter-divisional' League Matches

In between the two blocks of seven weeks described above will be a block of eight weeks (from 21 November to 13 February). Over these eight weeks each team will play every team in the **other** league division once and have one week as a bye (so every A Division team play all seven B Division teams, and *vice versa*). These inter-divisional games **will** count towards a team's league performance/position for the season. In a departure from our usual practice the questions in Rounds 1 and 3 for these matches will **not** be paired. They will simply be asked sequentially (from 1 to 30 and 41 to 70), so it is therefore **absolutely essential that setters distribute the questions very carefully** to ensure a fair balance of question subjects and difficulty across the paper. Inter-divisional games will **not** use the handicap system.

Knockout Matches

The Cup and Plate competitions will continue as before: they will be played over four dates in the second half of the season and will still use the 'pick a number' format.

- (c) The Tiviot and The Railway kindly volunteered to set the questions for the first two weeks of the season (3 and 10 October respectively).
- (d) Stockport's representatives in the 2019–2020 WIST Champions Cup were confirmed as Smart Alex, Tiviot, Travellers Call and the Railway (under their 'euro-pseudonym' of *Lokomotiv Stöckpörtl*).
- (e) Three of our teams in the second-tier inter-league competition, the Lowly Grail, were confirmed as HMRUFC, Alexandra and Railway Fliers. A replacement for the Hatters Arms will be sought, with teams being asked in order of their final league placing in 2018–2019.
- (f) The traditional curtain-raiser to the new season, the WIST Trophy friendly against a representative team of our pals in the Withington Quiz League, will be played on Wednesday 25 September at the Albert Club, Withington. Teams that have been invited to provide two players for the Stockport squad are: Railway, Smart Alex, Travellers Call, Railway Fliers, Fingerpost and Horse & Farrier.
- (g) Our traditional Christmas Quiz venue, HMRUFC, is not available on 19 December, so the Christmas Quiz will be on Thursday 12 December and there will be an 'empty'

night in the calendar on 19 December. The end-of-season Presentation Night quiz will be on Thursday 7 May at HMRUFC. It was also agreed that we should re-start after the Christmas/New Year break on Thursday 9 January, which means that there will be no games on Thursday 2 January. There will be a third quizless night on Thursday 9 April, which is the day before Good Friday (aka Maundy Thursday).

- (h) The fixtures for 2019–2020 include all requests for byes made at the meeting.
- (i) There will be a change of venue for the new season. The team formerly known as The Fiveways will now be based at (and known as) the Flying Coach. Their new home is on the A6, between Stepping Hill Hospital and Hazel Grove. It is next-door to Asda and was known as *The Cock* until 2015.

5. Webmaster's Report

(a) Website hosting

As discussed at last year's AGM and also mentioned in agenda item 3(b) this year, there has been an increase in expenditure to cover hosting of the league website. The cost is £66 for 2019–2020. This will rise again to £71 from the start of the 2020–2021 season. To cover this additional expenditure it has been necessary to increase the team subscription fee for the first time since 2013. James Pettecrew (Flying Coach) kindly offered to help us find a cheaper alternative when our current web-hosting deal expires.

(b) Doing Your Bit (reprise)

Question-setting for events such as the Christmas, end-of-season, inter-league ('European') and pre-season friendly quizzes, is **still** being done by the same, very small pool of volunteers. It would be very much appreciated if someone other than 'the usual suspects' were occasionally to help out.

It *seems* that there has been an improvement in attendance at the Christmas and Presentation Night quizzes. There has **definitely** been an upturn in attendance at the AGM, with thirteen of fifteen and twelve of fourteen teams represented at the two most recent meetings.

(c) Job opportunities

Treasurer

We are looking for someone to join the committee to fill the vacant position of Treasurer (Dave Badley is currently 'acting' Treasurer).

Responsibility for trophies

As they have occasionally gone missing (requiring the purchase of a replacement) we

need to improve how we keep track of our numerous trophies. It was therefore agreed that Dave Badley will continue to collect trophies towards the end of the season for engraving before Presentation Night. Greg Spiller (Smart Alex) has kindly offered to keep an inventory of silverware and will track down any that Dave is unable to locate easily. All teams are asked to take reasonable care of any trophies in their possession and an occasional going over with a duster and/or polish would be appreciated.

6. Proposals from teams

(a) Question pairing – Tame Valley

The Tame Valley would like to make their annual suggestion that the pairing system for question-setting be dropped. The disadvantages of the pairing, namely the difficulty in setting two equally-difficult questions, the fact that many second questions can be anticipated and the fact that this system reduces the range of questions by half, outweigh the advantages, which seem to consist of the fact that that's what we've always done. The cup questions seem to manage very well without pairing and, on that subject, why do we need to choose questions causing unnecessary problems for the question reader?

A vote was taken and the proposal was rejected (although parts of it have been adopted for the new inter-divisional games).

7. Dates/venues for the new season

The following will be used for the 2019–2020 season:

- Pre-season friendly v Withington (Albert Club): Wednesday 25 September 2019
- First league matches: Thursday 3 October 2019
- Christmas Quiz: Thursday 12 December 2019 (at HMRUFC)
- Re-start after Christmas: Thursday 9 January 2020
- Presentation Night: Thursday 7 May 2020 (at HMRUFC)
- 'European' **Wednesday** nights: 13 November; 26 February; 22 April (dates provisional)

8. Any other business

A vote of thanks was made to the webmaster for his work on behalf of the league.

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