

The Shrubbery Hotel - Somerset Cricket League

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 27th August 2014
at 7.30pm at The Football Club Building, the BAY Club, Burnham on Sea

Those present Malcolm Fox, Toby Strang, Tom Packman, Amanda Counsell, Edward Martin, Matthew Lunn, Matthew Counsell, Martin King, David Derrick, Andy Fairbairn and Ray Hancock.

1. Preliminaries. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Matt Counsell for making the arrangements to host it at the football club.
2. Apologies were received from Ian Latchem and Derek Hicks.
3. The Minutes of the previous Management Committee Meeting (July 21 '14) were approved.
4. There were no matters arising. The Hon. Secretary noted that the clubs in Divisions 5 – 7 had not been asked about regionalisation. (Minute 14). This exercise would now be conducted immediately after the end of the season based on the likely divisional positions after promotion and relegation has taken place.
5. There was no correspondence other than the items that would be dealt with later in the agenda or had been circulated previously.
6. The Hon. Treasurer said that he had no further comments to add to those made at the previous meeting.
7. The Chairman reported that he had spoken to Chris Norton, Chairman of WEPL, regarding promotion and relegation issues. He was advised that a WEPL Board meeting on September 2 would determine the movements into and out of the SCL for 2015. There were individual problems facing a number of WEPL clubs. These required a resolution before these final movements could be made known. The Management Committee decided to leave the promotions/relegations within the SCL to be discussed at the next meeting (Sept. 10). The Chairman noted that a letter had been circulated by Ashcott & Shapwick and Chilton Polden CCs regarding a possible merger between the two clubs. The Committee welcomed this initiative as it would clearly help both clubs maintain four competitive Saturday cricket teams. The Hon. Secretary said that he had agreed that the league status and positions of the CPCC teams, after promotion/relegation in the SCL had taken place, would be transferred to the 'new' club's 3rd & 4th teams.
8. Disciplinary issues that had taken place since the previous meeting all concerned the use of a player who had not transferred from the WEPL or team strengthening from higher level teams. Clubs involved were fined by a points' deduction.
9. Results service and monitoring. The Committee agreed to revise the system of monitoring and fining. Next year, the fines will be made by the appropriate divisional monitor (as happens already), but the appeal will be considered jointly by the other two monitors. The Hon. Secretary will be the final 'backstop' if necessary. However, he has not been called upon this season – so far! The Results Pads will be dispensed with in 2015 and teams will not be required to submit the white copy to Ian Latchem. Instead, David Derrick will copy the results from the website and post them to Ian on a weekly basis.

10. Sledging and Bad Language. Edward Martin raised the concern about over-enthusiastic sledging and bad language. The Committee fully endorsed his observations and would make a serious point at both the forthcoming AGM and EGM in April '15. Meanwhile, Andy Fairbairn agreed to produce a poster, which would be widely distributed to cricket clubs throughout the County. The SCL would be in the forefront of this distribution and make every effort to draw players' attention to it and take action if cases of violation were reported.
11. Player transfers – a transfer form on website. The Hon. Secretary noted that there had been a number of issues with player transfers and proposed that a new transfer form be posted on the website for use in 2015 onwards. The form would contain all the salient details required for a transfer.
12. Standard cricket ball 2014. Reports by members indicated that no substantial problems had been raised by clubs. The 'damp' summer weather had probably affected the balls in two ways. On one hand the balls did not 'scuff' up, but on the other, some did become a little soft. The Hon. Secretary said he had had one ball returned where the stitching had broken and he had replaced the ball.
13. Ground Standards and wet weather issues. The Hon. Secretary advised the Committee that on a number of occasions he had received complaints about games being 'called off' when closer investigation by the opponents indicated that a match could have been played, even with a later start. There was clearly a problem, which it was difficult to address, as no rules existed that could be applied to games outside of the 1st Division. The Hon. Secretary had repeatedly published statements that reminded clubs of "Rule 5, Matches (d) Weather Conditions" whereby games can start up to 5.00pm. Furthermore, the decision with regard to the suitability of ground conditions had to rest with the home team. The Committee will investigate a number of suggestions for a rule change which it was hoped would address this problem in 2015. Concern was expressed that a number of grounds (mostly schools & colleges) were not meeting the minimum standards set down by the Grounds Committee. It was agreed that the Grounds Committee Chairman would contact clubs that lacked the basic facilities and be prepared to enter into discussion with the providers if this would help.
14. Promotion/relegation. It was agreed that promotion and relegation issues could not be contemplated until the WEPL decisions had been confirmed. Meanwhile, the Hon. Secretary would contact clubs that had cancelled 3 or more games - as they were unable to raise a team - to ascertain their intentions for next season.
15. Andy Fairbairn drew attention to the results of the recent player survey. He also noted that two seminars would be held in the South West on September 10 & 11 at Bristol and Exeter respectively to explore these results. Two SCL members were invited to attend and they were asked to contact Andy to make the arrangements.
16. Preliminary discussions on possible Rule Changes for 2015. It was agreed to change the criteria for the Team of the Month prize. An element of the Don Crouch scoring would be incorporated into the formula and Matt Counsell said he would look at the possible adjustment. David Derrick said that he would discuss changes to the results service with John Squirrell and that it would possibly need a rule change to implement. The possible amalgamation of some 2nd XIs would be investigated. Committee members agreed to consider other possible changes and bring these observations to the next meeting.
17. Rationalising the Hon. Secretary's workload. The Chairman had previously asked members for their observations. Amanda Counsell volunteered to be responsible for all aspects of the club welfare officer's training and qualifications, together with maintaining an accurate record of all serving officers. Matt Counsell volunteered to revise the Don Crouch system and take any resultant action.

He also agreed to be the Committee recipient of all disciplinary complaints and actions. Toby Strang agreed to accept and act on any ground complaints, including complaints about pitch unavailability through wet weather conditions. David Derrick offered to act as Assistant Hon. Secretary in the Secretary's absence, together with a remit to ensure that all club details on the website were correct and up to date. The list of Management Committee members would be amended to reflect these additional roles.

18. Presentation Dinner – Friday October 24th 2014. The Hon. Secretary said that a preliminary note had been made in the recent club circular and the ticket price would remain the same as last year at £18. It was later confirmed that Steve Kirby, SCCC would be the principal guest and he would be interviewed in a question & answer session by Matt Counsell and/or Edward Martin.
19. Club items. Alan Parsons (T St. A) raised the question of the playing status of players arriving late at the start of a match. The Committee re-affirmed the statement made previously regarding late arrivals. “When a player enters the field of play he may bat or bowl immediately”. This applies to all games in Divisions 2 – 9. The Committee wished to find ways to encourage people to play the game rather than ways to discourage them. It was concerned and disappointed that Taunton St. Andrews B was denied the opportunity to bowl a late arrival in a recent match.
20. Fixtures 2015. These would be made as soon as all teams wishing to play in 2015 was known. This was likely to be in the early part of October. Any club anticipating the withdrawal of a team, amalgamation of teams, a relegation of more than one division or knowledge of a club/team wishing to enter the SCL should contact the Hon. Secretary as soon as possible.
21. Any other business. There was none.
22. Date of next meeting Wednesday September 10 at The Shrubbery Hotel, Ilminster at 7.30 pm.
23. Date of October meeting. Tuesday October 14 at the County Ground, Taunton at 7.30 pm.
24. Date of AGM. Monday 17 November 2014 at The Shrubbery Hotel, Ilminster.