

# **GLOSSOP & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE**

## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Dinting Cricket Club, on Tuesday 24 June 2008, 7.30pm.**

### **1. Chairman's opening remarks**

The Chairman, Mike Flynn, opened the meeting at 7.35pm.

### **2. Apologies**

Pat Downs, Lee Brown, Alan Darnell, Simon Hardwick

### **3. Minutes of the previous AGM held 28th June 2007**

Having been proposed by Ken Handley, and seconded by Beryl Halsall, it was unanimously agreed that the minutes of last year's A.G.M. should be accepted as a correct record.

### **4. Matters arising**

In relation to a query raised at the last A.G.M. but one, concerning the possibility of an online guest book/forum facility being added to the League's website, Vernon Hyde was able to report that, after further investigation and deliberation, the Committee had decided not to pursue the matter. Given that no further interest had been expressed in the two years since the original suggestion, it was felt that this would not likely to be a contentious decision. Thus it proved.

At last year's meeting it was announced that Tim Baker was intending to purchase a trophy in memory of Graham Hardwick, and that donations towards the cost would be welcomed. Donations were subsequently made, the trophy was purchased, and the Committee decided that, as the Graham Hardwick Memorial Trophy, it should be annually presented to the 1st Division League Champions. The Committee invited Graham's widow, Margaret, to attend this year's Presentation Evening, and also asked if she would like to make the inaugural presentation of the trophy. Margaret agreed to the idea, and duly presented the new trophy to her son Simon who accepted the trophy on behalf of his team, the Hollingworth Nomads, this year's 1st Division Champions.

### **5. Correspondence**

Vernon reported that messages of condolences had gone to the families of Howard Storah and Dorothy Dook, both of whom died earlier this year. Also donations were made in accordance with the families' wishes. In Howard's case this was to Cancer Research U.K., and for Dorothy the named charity was the Cystic Fibrosis Trust.

Vernon had corresponded with the English Table Tennis Forum via their recently developed website, asking if they would include a link to the Glossop League website in their list of local leagues. They had done so, and had also asked if we would link to them from our website. This we have done.

There had been e-mail correspondence from the Cheshire T.T.A., and from Derbyshire Schools, publicising their respective annual tournaments.

### **6. Reports**

**President** - John Halsall said that he wished to offer his thanks to the Officers and the Executive Committee for the contributions they made to ensuring the smooth running of the League for all its members. Vernon, suitably embarrassed, came in for some singular praise, but felt slightly less uncomfortable upon hearing the President's not unexpected sting-in-the-tail which, in this case, attributed Vernon's success in running a tight secretarial ship to his singular abilities in the being-a-pain-in-the-bum department! Vernon, deciding on balance that this could still be regarded as a compliment, duly thanked the President.

**Chairman** - Mike Flynn began his report by referring to the deaths of Howard and Dorothy, and once again expressed the League's condolences.

He went on to thank League President, John Halsall, for the continued valuable support which he gives to the League, despite living so far away.

Mike felt in no doubt that the success of the League should be attributed to the elected Officers and Executive Committee members who all contribute in a professional manner to its efficient running. Vernon Hyde, he said, is extremely thorough and keeps us all on our toes. Mike offered his thanks to Vice Chairman Di Twist for all her behind-the-scenes work. Mike Hilton, he observed, had always carried out the Treasurer's work in a thorough manner, and produced excellent accounts. However, although he would remain as Town Championship organiser, Mike had now decided to resign as Treasurer, and Mike Flynn thanked him on behalf of the League for the service that he had given us over many years.

Mike went on to observe that a League revolves around its Match Secretary, and that our own Match Secretary, Tim Baker, carries out this unenviable task in a thorough and professional manner – for which, Mike offered his thanks.

Bill Mackie had tendered his resignation as Welfare Officer and Mike offered his thanks to Bill for having volunteered to accept the position.

Finally, Mike expressed his thanks to Eric Pentland who had been our auditor for several years but who had now resigned, and also to the members of the Executive Committee who carried out numerous tasks on behalf of the League.

Before closing, Mike said that instances of swearing and unsporting behaviour during matches had been brought to the Committee's attention. Whilst obviously aware that we need matches to be competitive, we also need to adopt a correct approach to them, and Mike said he hoped that everyone could keep this in mind in future. Mike also urged teams to make every effort to provide refreshments on a match night, thereby adding to the social atmosphere of the evening.

**General Secretary** - Vernon Hyde said that, in his role as League Representative, he had once again been required to exercise the League's vote at the forthcoming A.G.M. of the E.T.T.A. in regard to proposed Rule changes.

He said that this year most of the proposals concerned amendments to wording in the Rules of the Company and whilst, if approved, there could be a long term effect on the voting procedures and decision making processes of the Company, there seemed to be nothing that would have any immediate effect on us at local league level.

There was, however, to be an Extraordinary Meeting at which a vote was to be taken on a proposal which, if passed, would make it obligatory for local leagues to purchase their civil liability insurance through the E.T.T.A.

Vernon explained that this season the League had taken advantage of the E.T.T.A.'s offer of such insurance and had saved £100 in the process. However, the E.T.T.A.'s insurers were now insisting that they would only offer cover if all the member leagues, county organisations, etc. were included in the arrangement. Should the proposal to make such cover an obligatory part of E.T.T.A. affiliation be rejected, then we would be in a position of having to try and get cover independently – something which might prove both difficult and expensive. Taking that into account, the Committee had requested that Vernon vote on the League's behalf in favour of the proposal. Vernon informed the meeting that he had completed the proxy voting papers accordingly, and they had been sent off to the E.T.T.A. in time for the meeting. He would keep the League informed of the outcome.

- Vernon said that he and Tim Baker had, this season, produced, and uploaded to the website, four sets of match reports, and that it was their intention to continue in the same fashion next season. Vernon offered his thanks to those who had contributed, and his encouragement to those that hadn't.

- In regard to the E.T.T.A. registration forms for the forthcoming season, Vernon said he was adopting the same approach as last season. Forms were distributed with an accompanying explanatory letter, an addressed envelope for their return, and a request from Vernon for as speedy a response as possible.

**Treasurer** - Mike Hilton circulated copies of the accounts, and offered an explanation of the various elements contained therein. Due to the unavailability of our auditor prior to the meeting, Mike had to present the accounts unsigned. He was confident however that there would be no changes to

them in the immediate future, and he said he would have them audited as soon as possible.  
*[copies of the accounts are appended.]*

**Match Secretary** - Tim Baker informed the meeting that the decision to offer a discount to teams registering promptly had been very successful, with the majority of teams taking advantage of the saving. This had helped considerably with planning the League and handbook preparation, and the same procedure was to be adopted for 2008/9.

Tim felt that the availability to members of information on the website had contributed to the efficient running of the League, and that feedback regarding the season had been generally good. Postponements had not posed a huge problem, but Tim encouraged people to try and avoid them if at all possible.

Tim reinforced the Chairman's points about behaviour and hospitality. Unsporting behaviour and bad language, particularly in the presence of junior players, was not acceptable and, whilst not a rule as in some Leagues, provision of refreshments for the visiting team was regarded by the Committee as a not unreasonable expectation.

Also not unreasonable, he felt, was the expectation that the season's trophy winners would make every effort to collect their awards at the League's presentation evening or, having informed the Committee of their inability to attend, to at least try to ensure that someone was available to collect an award on their behalf.

Tim said that he was aware that some teams had been unhappy about the number of non-playing weeks in the second half of the season, brought about by a combination of an early knock-out in the Volcrepe Cup and the 'X' & 'Y' fixtures in each division. The situation had been given some thought, and attempts would be made to try and improve it. He would return to the subject later in the meeting when he discussed the likely formation of the League for next season.

In regard to this season's Volcrepe cup, Tim thought that the handicapping had been successful, and that the event had run well.

In conclusion, Tim observed that the increase in both the actual, and potential, numbers of junior players in the League was very gratifying, and the fact that the League had steadily grown from the 19 teams of not that many seasons ago to our current total of 30 indicated very positive progress

**Town Team Organiser** - Tim reported that the team, promoted last season to the Premier division of the Lancashire and Cheshire League, had retained their place in that division. The team consisted primarily of Simon Hardwick, Steve Lyons and Paul Madden, with appearances from other eligible League members as and when required. Tim confirmed that we would be entering a team again next season, and that Steve Lyons had agreed to take over as Town Team Organiser. Tim encouraged anyone who would like to be considered for the team, and who would be eligible to play, to let Steve Lyons know of their interest.

**Town Championship Organiser** - Mike Hilton circulated a report on the Town Championships *[appended]*, which, as well as commenting on the success of the event also included an explanation of the finances involved. There had been a slight increase in the cost of the room hire and the tables this year, as well as a slight drop in entries. Consequently there was a loss of £69 on the event, as compared with last year's profit of £117. However, Mike pointed out that, taken over the last three years, the cost to League funds had been only £32. The Glossop Leisure Centre is due to change hands before our next Championships is due, so there is a degree of uncertainty about whether we will be able, or want, to hold them there. Alternative venues will be investigated just in case there should be any reasons for us not to return to the Leisure Centre.

**Presentation Night Organiser** - Mike Flynn said that 123 tickets had been sold this year, although not everyone turned up on the night. The event had been held at the new venue, Glossop & District Cricket and Bowling Club. Mike had subsequently checked with several people, both League and non-League, for their views. In general it was felt that the accommodation was excellent, and so was the service offered by the staff. However, comments about the food were somewhat less glowing - small portions, together with an apparent scarcity of meat being the main reasons for disquiet. (The vegetarian option was obviously not adversely affected by an absence of meat, and it was the opinion of those few people who had chosen to eat it that it was very good.)

Mike had reported our dissatisfaction with the potato pie to the Steward of the Club, who was very concerned, and promised to take the matter up with the caterers. Mike also established that, should we wish to do so, we could bring in our own caterers for the event, but there would be a £1 per head 'use of kitchen' charge.

Mike said that the Committee had agreed that we would use the Club again for next year's event, and that he should go ahead and book the room at the earliest opportunity, given the apparent growing popularity of the Club as a venue for functions. **[This has now been done, and the date of next season's Presentation Night will be Friday 8th May. This will avoid a clash with the Oldham League's proposed date of Friday 15th May.]**

Mike offered thanks to Barry Fordham for compiling and delivering the quiz, whilst acknowledging that he may have misled him somewhat in regard to the level required – thereby absolving Barry of all responsibility for producing some questions that would not have disgraced University Challenge. Mike also suggested that the presentation might have benefited from a slightly calmer delivery!

Mike also offered thanks to Tim Baker and Graham Bellis for organising the trophies, to Di Twist and Beryl Halsall for running the raffle, and to all those who had donated raffle prizes.

Mike felt that, given the general increase in the cost of living, it was now time to review the ticket price for the Presentation Evening. He suggested that an increase from £6 to £8 would not be excessive. There were no objections raised from those attending the meeting, so next year's tickets will be £8. The Presentation Night levy which each team pays as part of its League fees will therefore this season be £24, with teams still being entitled to an allocation of three tickets to the event with no further charge.

**Development Officer** - Mike Flynn reported that the coaching sessions at St. Phillip Howard had continued throughout the year under Dennis's leadership, and with the enthusiastic help of Barry Fordham and Nesta Chambers – sometimes assisted by other players. Mike dealt with the administration of the scheme, and also attended monthly meetings of Glossopdale Sports and Recreation Forum.

Mike said the sessions have still not reached a break even point of 20 attendees. The highest figure had been 17, and the lowest 6. Several efforts to increase numbers have been made by attending events at St. Phillip Howard, as well as by the issuing of press releases, and appearances on radio broadcasts.

Due to increased charges, the session fee will be raised from £3 to £4 from the summer term. Mike said he would soon be meeting with Emma Champion, the Sports Development Officer at St. Phillip Howard, to explore any possible ways that she might be able to offset some of the League's current losses on the Saturday sessions.

Mike indicated that practice facilities are still available at St. Phillip Howard on Sundays, but they need to be better supported.

Mike asked Dennis Bradshaw how the Saturday afternoon coaching sessions were progressing, and Dennis expressed his satisfaction – the only real problem being the lack of attendees. He was particularly pleased by the fact that some of the juniors from the Saturday sessions would be joining a League team and playing in the third division.

Barry Fordham raised a question regarding the Junior team. He wanted to know if any of the other third division teams would object to playing the doubles in the middle of a match rather than at the end. This would enable some junior players to take part in a match by playing the doubles only, and allow them to leave at a reasonable time rather than having to wait until the end of the evening. No objections to this idea were raised by anyone present.

Barry also asked about a 7.00pm start for the Junior team. It was agreed that there had been precedents for this and, that for home matches, a 7.00pm start would be indicated in the handbook. As far as away matches would be concerned, it would be necessary to negotiate start times with each of the relevant Team Secretaries.

Finally, Mike said that he had been approached by Joe Beadle, who runs the table tennis sessions at the Medlock Leisure Centre in Droylsden, to see if the League would be prepared to assist with the funding of a table tennis road show event to be held at Glossop Sports Centre at a cost of £400. Joe was looking for the League to contribute £200 towards the costs. It had been suggested that the event could be used to generate further interest, and participants, in our Centre of Excellence at St. Phillip Howard. The Committee had discussed this and, after some further investigation, had decided not to involve the League, and Joe Beadle had been informed.

## 7. Resignations and elections of Officers

Mike Flynn informed the meeting that Mike Hilton had tendered his resignation both as Treasurer and Executive Committee member. No nominations for the Treasurer's position had been received at the time of the meeting. Mike asked whether anyone present wished to offer themselves for nomination, either for Treasurer or Committee member. No offers were forthcoming.

The Committee had accepted Bill Mackie's resignation as Welfare Officer. One nomination for the post had been received, namely Barry Fordham. In regard to that nomination, a Proposer and Secunder were asked for. Dennis Bradshaw and Steve Reese duly obliged. On a show of hands, Barry was elected unanimously.

## 8. Re-election of the Executive Committee

The current serving members of the Committee, Mike Hilton and Bill Mackie excepted, had agreed to stand for re-election. The meeting was asked to approve a motion that they be re-elected en bloc. The motion was proposed by Warwick Francis, seconded by Fred Lilley, and carried unanimously.

## 9. Appointment of an Auditor

Eric Pentland, our Auditor for this and many previous years, had indicated that this would be his last year. Mike Hilton had expressed a willingness to take over as Auditor, and was asked if he would still be prepared to do so. He said he would. He was duly thanked, and duly appointed.

## 10. Proposed rule additions/amendments

The background to, and the nature of, the proposed Rule changes had been circulated to all Team Secretaries three weeks prior to the meeting. Vernon briefly went through each one again, and called for a vote on them individually. The results were as follows:-

### i) An amendment to Rule 3L

#### Proposal

That Rule 3L (Playing Conditions) should have the following sentence removed:-

*Smoking is not to be permitted in the immediate vicinity of the table.*

**Proposed by : Ken Handley    Seconded by : Beryl Halsall**  
**Carried – unanimously.**

### ii) An amendment to Rule 7a

#### Proposal

That Rule 7a (Town Championships), which currently reads:-

*..... players must have played in at least 4 League matches prior to one week before the date of the Championships.*

Be amended to:-

*..... players must have played in at least 4 League matches in the current season, **prior to one week before the date of the Championships.***

[bold type and underlining to be as indicated above]

**Proposed by : Chris Guard    Seconded by : Ron Mitchell**  
**Carried – unanimously**

## 11. League Fees for 2008/9

Mike Hilton explained that, because of this year's financial shortfall it had been thought prudent to increase the League fees for the 2008/9 season, and so there would be an extra £5 added to the fees – the first real increase in 5 years. Last season did see a nominal increase of £10, but this was deducted providing teams paid within the specified time limit for receipt of entry forms. Mike said the same system would be applied next season, and so the fees would £70, discountable to £60 for prompt return of entry forms. The Town Championships and Presentation Night levies would be additional costs. The meeting was asked to approve the increase. Nesta Chambers proposed, Steve Reese seconded, and there was unanimous approval.

## **12. Formation of the League 2008/9**

Tim Baker felt it likely that, based on current information about additional teams and teams leaving, we would probably end up with much the same number of teams as this season. If so, this would leave room for additional teams in every division – assuming the season was based on the current 12 week cycle. The Committee had considered the possibility of divisions comprising unequal numbers, but had decided against it. Also considered had been the possibility of basing the season round a 10 week cycle, thereby reducing the likelihood of 'X' and 'Y' fixtures. Whilst no final decision could be taken on that until it was known how many teams were actually going to be playing, the Committee tended to favour retention of the 12 week schedule as it offered greater flexibility in regard to fixture rearrangements and the possibility of slotting in teams new to the League.

Tim said that the Committee had discussed various ways of compensating for the blank weeks that could result from 'X' and 'Y' fixtures, particularly when combined with an early departure from the Cup competition. These included an earlier start to the Volcrepe Cup so as to more evenly spread out any non-playing weeks; a 'consolation' competition for losers in the first round of the cup – they would go on to a knock-out second round; and the possibility of having a list of teams on the website who would be interested in trying to arrange friendly matches in the event of a blank week in their schedule.

With regard to the 'friendly match' idea, Tim explained that as well as distributing League entry forms, he would also be giving out a form on which teams could indicate whether they wanted to be included on a list of those willing to participate, and he asked that these be returned with the completed entry forms.

## **13. Cup Competition 2008/9**

Tim indicated that the match format of the cup competition would remain the same season. It had proved to be a format which seemed to please the majority of teams in the competition. There were concerns however about a minority of teams who did not have a lot of sympathy for handicap competitions in general, and particularly those with 9 doubles games in them. The topic was opened up to the meeting for discussion and some of the points and suggestions made were as follows:-

- Nesta Chambers wondered if there could be a divisional cup competition. Tim pointed out that to run one would add a minimum of another 4 weeks to the season, and that because of time constraints on the use of a number of our League venues, it was difficult to see how we could extend the season. There was a suggestion that we bring the start of the season forward as an alternative, but Tim said that the same factors had to be considered, namely the starting and ending of bowling, cricket, and tennis seasons with which many of our teams have to co-exist.
- Neil Coppard expressed concerns about teams dropping out of the competition because of a lack of interest, and thereby spoiling things for teams they might have played. He wondered if it might be an idea to fine people who default on their Volcrepe commitments.
- Fred Lilly suggested that, in order to ensure a competition comprising only those teams with a commitment to play, we should perhaps introduce a system whereby teams have to apply to enter the Volcrepe Cup rather than just being automatically entered as is the case currently.
- Ron Mitchell offered the idea of scheduling the Volcrepe matches, en bloc, in the last few weeks of the season. When and if a team was knocked out, then for that team, the season would effectively be finished. Tim observed that, were this format to be adopted, it could be very difficult to administer because of the short time between each of the rounds. Also Team Secretaries would be offered very short notice to organise their teams, and there would be little or no scope for match reorganisation. *[Ron subsequently added the observation that the first round, in which everyone participates, could be scheduled at any time, with just the remaining rounds taking up the last few weeks of the season.]*

- There was a question as to whether some form of 'round robin' might be introduced to the competition. Tim observed that we had in fact already tried this, and that it was less than successful. This was largely due to the fact that a number of teams had complained about having to play the extra first round matches when they had little chance of going through to the second round. A minority of teams in those circumstances just pulled out of the competition leaving their prospective opponents short of a match.

- Warwick Francis said that he would like to endorse the current competition's format. He said that he and his team enjoyed the variety it offered, and the chance to meet other League members who they would not otherwise play against.

#### **14. Centenary Celebrations**

Mike Flynn informed the meeting that in 2010 it will be 100 years since the League was established. He said that our Vice-President, David Jones, had suggested that the League might look to ways of celebrating its centenary year. It had been decided that a working party should be formed to explore this idea, and Mike said that David Jones, John and Beryl Halsall, and Barry Fordham had agreed to serve on the working party.

#### **15. A. O. B.**

- i) Peter Greenhalgh, speaking for the Old Glossop Cricket Club team, said that two of the current team would not be available to play next season, and he asked the meeting to put in touch with him anyone they might know who was looking for a team to play with.
- ii) Warwick Francis asked the Committee if they were aware of what might have happened to any funds held by the Tameside League at the time of its dissolution. He said that he thought that there was a requirement that any assets remaining at that time should have been granted to a voluntary organisation with similar objectives, e.g. another Table Tennis League. Warwick was interested to know whether the Glossop League might have expected, or might still be expected, to benefit. Vernon said that such a requirement was certainly written into our own Constitution, but he was unable to comment on whether Tameside had had anything similar in theirs, or even whether they had a written constitution at all. He said he see if he could discover any relevant information.
- iii) Chris Guard raised a point relating to the use of pimpled bat rubbers for which approval had been withdrawn by the E.T.T.A./I.T.T.F. Vernon explained that when a local League became affiliated to the E.T.T.A. it undertook to play table tennis in accordance with the official 'Laws of Table Tennis'. These Laws do not currently include any reference to the use of I.T.T.F. approved, or otherwise, rubber surfaces. They concern themselves only with the thickness and colour of covering materials, together with some broad definitions of pimpled and sandwich rubber.

Vernon said that in order for a League to pass judgment on the legality of any rubber on a member's bat, that League would have to incorporate a rule in its handbook requiring players to only use coverings listed on the I.T.T.F.'s approved rubbers list. As the Glossop League had no such rule, there could be no enforceable restrictions on members' choice of rubbers, other than those implicit in the 'Laws of Table Tennis. The Committee had considered whether to propose a rule relating to rubbers, but had decided against it.

Vernon also pointed out that the same advice would apply to the use of speed glue, for which restrictions were being introduced this year. But as with the rubbers, these restrictions will apply at E.T.T.A./I.T.T.F. organised events, but not at local level unless a League amends its League Rules appropriately.

There being no further business, Mike Flynn brought the meeting to a close. Vernon neglected to check the time, but is prepared to vouch for the fact that darkness had not yet fallen.