

NORTH SOMERSET TENNIS LEAGUE

AGM MINUTES

(Draft to be approved at 2024 AGM)

Thursday 7th September 2023 (7.30pm)
at Avenue Tennis Club

ATTENDEES

NSTL President: David Pottow

Committee Members: John Barrington (Chairman), Barry Ramsden (Secretary), Carole Carter (Treasurer), Chris Wilson, Charlie Hart, Pippa Barry, Dae Sasitorn

Other Attendees: Jane Pottow, Jay Williamson

Apologies: Phil Hunt

Club Representatives:

Club	Representative	Club	Representative
Avenue	Barry Ramsden	Nailsea	Jon Lawson
Backwell	Pippa Barry	Priory	SimonHolloway
Brent Knoll	Rebecca Boston	Taunton	Karin Sladden
Bridgwater	Gabriel Carrillo	Trull	John Barrington
Cheddar	Mike Neslen, Dae Sasitorn	Victoria	John Knott
Cleeve	Jayne Weare Justine Griffiths	Wedmore	Michael Gill
Clevedon	Myles Wellings	Wells	Colin Blatchford
Congresbury	Martin Dibsdaile	Winscombe	Gill Sayzeland
Lympsham	Jacqui Gooding Charlie Hart	Woodland	Frances Ball
Minehead	Simon Midgley	Wrington	Anthony Holroyd

Absent Clubs*: North Somerset Academy, Weston

**Rule 13.2: if any Club is not represented at the AGM, every team in that Club will have 5 points deducted from their total after the first matches of the subsequent Winter and Summer seasons.*

AGENDA

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THE MEETING

1. WELCOME

The Chairman, John Barrington, welcomed David Pottow, the president; the Committee and all club representatives to the meeting.

2. MINUTES

AGM 2022 Minutes were circulated prior to the meeting and **accepted unanimously**.

3. MATTERS ARISING:

None

4. NSTL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

(Circulated several days prior to the meeting)

Another year on. Last year at the suggestion of several Clubs we implemented a system of arranging the Winter fixtures that avoided the bun-fight that existed previously. This year we will be giving the provisional fixtures to the Clubs prior to the AGM so that the very few fixtures that need to be changed can be done in person at or immediately after the AGM.

At last year's AGM the compulsory (except in very limited circumstances) full third set was abandoned and the captains were given the option of a Championship Tie-Break instead. As a result far fewer matches were curtailed for bad light.

The League's main objective is enable its players to enjoy tennis in a competitive and safe environment. For this to happen there has to be acceptable behaviour on court as does occur in 99.9% of matches. For several years the League has had a Code of Conduct which sets out the boundaries. Clubs should be aware that they can report to the Committee when those boundaries have been crossed. The Committee will conduct a thorough investigation and in serious cases will ban an individual from playing in the League as has happened recently.

A measure of the success of the League is growing participation. For this Winter we have had 4 new entries in the Mixed and 2 in the Vets.

I need to apologise to the Clubs for the delay in circulating the minutes of last year's AGM for which I take responsibility.

I would like to express my thanks to Barry who stepped in as League Secretary at the last moment this time last year. Dae Sasitorn has generously offered to try the position initially for this year. Much work is involved in running the League especially in the administration of the fixtures and results for which Chris and Phil are to be congratulated. Carole is always excellent in looking after the finances and having the trophies engraved. Pippa and Charlie can be relied on for drawing from their experience to resolve issues.

There is one further administrative matter for which your views would be welcome in AOB at the AGM. Apart from a few permanent trophies the League have been presenting shields to the Division winners. I suspect that after a few years these are discarded from the Clubs' trophy cabinets to make room for new shields. What would the Clubs like as recognition of their success? One option is to gradually replace them with cups that would be handed back the following year. These cups would then bear a permanent record of previous winners.

John Barrington,

3rd September 2023

All Clubs agreed that they had read the report, did not require it to be read out and had no questions arising out of the report

5. SECRETARY'S REPORT

(Circulated several days prior to the meeting)

Good evening all.

Good to see you all this evening, as you know I have been in the secretarial role for a whole 12 months.

I would like to thank you all for putting up with me over this period and hope that I did some of it correctly.

I have enjoyed the experience which has been made a lot easier with having the help of the committee members and the previous secretary Jenny, many thanks to you all.

The league is running well due to the enthusiastic members of the committee. Who I know send a lot of time and energy on carrying out their duties for the league.

The committee has had to consider and decide on many issues including:- LTA directives, proposed rule changes, complaints and a few others.

A big welcome to new members of the committee who I am sure will help the league run just as smooth.

I wish Dae Sasitorn, the incoming secretary the very best of luck, and with the help of the committee will make an excellent secretary and carry out the duties with professional care.

I hope all the clubs continue to play in the NSTL and make the future years as successful and enjoyable as this past year.

I now stand down and pass this important job to Dae.

I hope you have a good evening and wish you all the best.

Barry Ramsden Secretary 2022/23

All Clubs agreed that they had read the report, did not require it to be read out and had no questions arising out of the report

6. RULE CHANGE PROPOSALS, DISCUSSIONS AND OUTCOMES

The committee sent the proposed rule changes (with the original rules, the new proposals and reasons for the changes) and proposed code of conduct changes to all clubs several weeks prior to the AGM, giving all clubs the chance to discuss them with their members. Many clubs responded with comments; a few clubs proposed new Rule Proposals.

RULE 2.3

Current Rule	Proposed Rule (in red)	Why the changes
Any dispute between Clubs must be notified by the Club Chairman to the NSTL Chairman within 7 days. The Management Committee can take any action to resolve the dispute including, but not limited to, awarding the match to one or other of the teams, directing that the match be replayed or making an order as to the allocation of points for the match. Their decision, once made, is final.	The League Committee retains the right to insist a match shall be played when a walkover may be prejudicial to overall league winners or to the promotion or relegation prospects of other teams. If a team refuses to play they will be penalised points at the discretion of the NSTL committee. Any dispute between Clubs must be notified by the Club Chairman to the NSTL Chairman within 7 days. The Management Committee can take any action to resolve the dispute including, but not limited to, awarding the match to one or other of the teams, directing that the match be replayed or making an order as to the allocation of points for the match. Their decision, once made, is final.	The additional element is an extract from rule 8d of the Avon League. It is being proposed to highlight this potential issue to teams and therefore, when the match is significant to league positions, to ensure as far as possible that the match is played.

Outcome: proposal accepted unanimously

RULE 3.1

Current Rule	Proposed Rule	Why the changes
Subscriptions are per team in both Winter and Summer Leagues and set by the Management Committee. Clubs will be notified of the amount in the team entry form in advance of the AGM. Payment must be made online only and in full on submission of the form before the deadline (14 days before the AGM). If payment is made by this date, a reduction of 50% will apply (as stated on the form). Late payments and/or submission of the form may result the withdrawal of a team from the League	Subscriptions are per team and set by the Management Committee. Clubs will be notified of the amount in the team entry form in advance of the AGM. Payment must be made online only and in full on submission of the form before the deadline. If payment is made by this date, a reduction of 50% will apply (as stated on the form). Late payments and/or submission of the form may result the withdrawal of a team from the League.	Removal of the deadline date as it is mentioned in the rule 3.2

Outcome: proposal accepted unanimously

RULE 11.3

Current Rule	Proposed Rule (in red)	Why the changes
Postponed Summer matches must be played within 21 days of the original fixture. The Home team is to offer 2 dates, being different days of the week. All fixtures are to be played by 31st July.	Postponed Summer matches must be played within 21 days of the original fixture. For Summer matches, the home team is to offer 2 dates, being different days of the week. All summer league fixtures are to be completed by 31st July save in exceptional circumstances as decided by the Committee.	This is to cover the exceptional situation which happened this summer where rain in the final weeks of the season (and after!) prevented teams from completing fixtures by the 31 July deadline.

Outcome: proposal accepted unanimously

RULE 11.4

Current Rule	Proposed Rule	Why the changes
Postponed Winter matches are to be rearranged, although not necessarily played, within 14 days with the Home team again to offer 2 dates for different days of the week . Clubs should aim to play 5 matches by 31st December. All winter league matches are to be completed by 31st March.	Postponed Winter matches are to be rearranged, although not necessarily played, within 14 days with the Home team to offer 2 dates. Clubs should aim to play 5 matches by 31st December. All winter league fixtures are to be completed by 31st March save in exceptional circumstances as decided by the Committee .	Offering 2 different days of the week is not relevant for Winter League matches (many are normally played on Sundays) so this statement is removed, although it doesn't preclude offering 2 different days of the week

Outcome: proposal accepted unanimously

RULE 11.5

Current Rule	Proposed Rule	Why the changes
The Home captain must inform the League Secretary of any rearranged date.	The Home captain must inform the League Secretary of any rearranged date, modify the online fixture to the rearranged date, and add the result of any completed doubles matches online .	When looking at "Matches without result" online, this function only looks backwards. So if a match has been rescheduled but the date online has not been changed, it will look like it has not been rescheduled. Changing the date online means clubs can see the date of the rearranged fixture and the Admin team does not have to chase the home team to see if they have rescheduled.

Outcome: proposal accepted unanimously

RULE 4.2 PROPOSED RULE BY BRIDGWATER

Current Rule	Proposed Rule (in red)	Why the changes
Each team shall consist of two pairs. Matches in the Summer League will consist of 4 rubbers, each pair to play both pairs of the opposing team. Matches in the Winter will consist of a Women's doubles, Men's doubles and two Mixed doubles	Each team shall consist of two pairs. Matches in the Summer League will consist of 4 rubbers, each pair to play both pairs of the opposing team. Matches in the Winter will consist of 4 rubbers of mixed tennis, each pair to play both pairs of the opposing team	<p>This is a proposal by Bridgwater</p> <p>This would overcome the problem of adjusting who is 1st pair and who is 2nd pair, to gain maximum advantage in terms of points. This also includes Vets.</p> <p>Clubs will be asked to vote on whether they want to retain the existing rule or Change to the new proposal</p> <p>Note: If the new rule gets approved, this will start from the winter league 2024/25</p>

Many clubs took part in the discussion, the consensus was that the proposed format would eliminate the unfairness of selecting 1st and 2nd pair of the mixed matches, but it would take away the variety that the current format has to offer, and some stated further that it might discourage some of the players from taking part.

Outcome: proposal rejected via show of hands

RULE 6.1

Current Rule	Proposed Rule	Why the changes
The rubbers shall be the best of three sets. A standard LTA tie-break will be in operation in the first 2 sets at 6-6. A Championship Tie Break (“CTB”), where the winner is the first pair to reach 10 points with a margin of 2 points, will be played instead of a third deciding set on all occasions unless it is agreed by both captains to play a full set.	Alternative rule (to be voted on): The rubbers shall be the best of three sets. A standard LTA tie-break will be in operation in the first 2 sets at 6-6. Any third set will be played as a full set on all occasions unless it is agreed by both captains to play a Championship Tie Break (“CTB”), where the winner is the first pair to reach 10 points with a margin of 2 points.	There are 2 options presented here for every third set: Current rule: the default is to play a CTB unless both captains agree to play a full set Possible new rule: the default is to play a full set unless both captains agree to play a CTB. Clubs will be asked to vote on whether they would like to retain the existing rule or change to the alternative rule

Several clubs took part in the discussion, the consensus was that the proposed format would put us back into the problem of finishing the matches on time. Lymphsham suggested that some home teams might want to use it to their advantage to enforce the oppositions (if they are a long way away) to go back to finish the matches.

Outcome: proposal rejected via show of hands

RULE 8.2

Current Rule	Proposed Rule (in red)	Why the changes
If either the home or away team wishes to rearrange a Winter League fixture, they can do so provided all rearranged fixtures are agreed and the date changed on the online system by 30th September. Any matches rearranged before 30th September must still follow the principle of having half the fixtures played before the end of the year and half in the new year.	If either the home or away team wishes to rearrange a Winter League fixture, they can do so provided all rearranged fixtures are agreed and the date changed on the online system by 30th September. Any matches rearranged before 30th September must still follow the principle of having half the fixtures played before the end of the year and half in the new year. Winter League matches can also be rearranged after the deadline of 30th September providing both captains agree. Either captain has the right to refuse the change.	There have been a number of occasions when it suited both teams to reschedule the fixture but rule 8.2 prevented it. And to confirm, for Winter League matches, it must have the agreement of both captains to change a fixture date after 30th September. If one captain does not agree, then it remains at the original date. This is opposite to fixture rearrangement before 30th September. If either captain wants to rearrange, then an alternative agreed date must be found. Effectively, on 30th September, Winter League fixtures are “locked” and become known as the “published list” for rule 8.1’s purpose.
	The above rule applied to Summer League matches as well as Winter League matches	There will be 2 separate votes: 1. If clubs want this rule to be applied for Winter League matches, as per the rule proposal above 2. If clubs want this to apply to Summer League matches

Outcome: both proposals accepted via show of hands

RULE 10.1

Current Rule	Proposed Rule (in red)	Why the changes
For the purpose of this rule a walkover is when the match is conceded or a side fails to attend for a match. A partial walkover is when only 1 pair attends or, in the Winter League 1 pair or 3 players.	For the purpose of this rule a walkover is when the match is conceded or a side fails to attend for a match. A partial walkover is when only 1 pair attends in a Summer League match.	Removal of the application to Winter League fixtures. A partial walkover is not appropriate in the Winter League as at least one player from each side would not be able to play at all.

The proposal caused a bit of confusion as it was not very obvious to most why the change was needed. After much discussion, most clubs believed that there was no benefit of the proposed change; having a partial walkover is better than a full walkover, as one can still get some points and games rather than giving them all to the opposition.

Outcome: proposal rejected unanimously

RULE 12.2

Rule 12.1 Current Rule	Proposed Rule
In the event of resuming an abandoned match on a different day, the match shall continue at the point of abandonment. The same pairs need not be used. No player may take part in more than two rubbers in any match nor play against the same opponent in more than one rubber in a Summer League match.	(No change, but included so the reference to the proposals for rule 12.2 below can be understood)

Current Rule 12.2	Proposed Rule	Why the changes
(This is a proposed new rule to clarify eligibility in a re-scheduled match)	<p>Proposal 1: In a re-scheduled match, the eligibility of any player shall be decided as at the date of the resumed match in accordance with the terms of Rule 5.1</p> <p>Proposal 2: In a re-scheduled match, any player who started the match may complete the match. Rule 5.1 will not be applied in this instance.</p>	<p>His proposal is to clarify which players would be available at the point of playing a rescheduled match if the original match is unfinished.</p> <p>Rule 5.1 states: Players who have represented their clubs 3 times in a higher team may not subsequently play in a lower team that season.</p> <p>Proposal 1 implies that the eligibility of a player will be determined at the time of the continuation of the match. So, for instance, even if a player started the match, they would not be eligible if they had played 3 times for a higher team at the point of continuing the rescheduled match.</p> <p>Proposal 2 ignores the eligibility criteria. If a player started the match, they can complete the rearranged match whenever it is played.</p> <p>Clubs will be asked to vote for their preferred proposal</p>

Outcome: proposal 2 voted via show of hands

RULE 3.2

Current Rule	Proposed Rule	Why the changes
<p>All clubs must confirm on the form the number of teams they wish to enter by the deadline. Where a Club wishes to enter more than one team in each category, each team shall be given a suffix. The higher team shall be given the higher suffix. If a Club wishes to reduce the number of their teams, they can withdraw whichever suffix they desire provided this is done in writing 14 days prior to the AGM. In those circumstances the composition of the divisions may be adjusted at the discretion of the Management Committee.</p>	<p>Team entries will be made via the Team Entry Form. The deadline for entries via the Team Entry Form is 31 July (for the Winter league) and 31 January (for the Summer League). Where a Club wishes to enter more than one team in each category, each team shall be given a suffix. The higher team shall be given the higher suffix. If a Club wishes to reduce the number of their teams, they can withdraw whichever suffix they desire. In those circumstances the composition of the divisions may be adjusted at the discretion of the Management Committee.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In order to give the NSTL committee time to prepare the online fixtures, a 5-week period is needed. 2. This effectively means that the “team withdrawal” facility is removed after 31 July/31 January. This is because if a club did find that they would be unable to field a team after entering in the 31 July/31 January deadline, this would mean that the fixtures would have to be re-done and there may not be time to do this. Therefore, clubs are specifically asked to ensure this is avoided. 3. This proposal separates the entries for the Winter and Summer leagues. This is because of feedback from clubs who find it difficult to predict what teams they can field in the following summer when currently submitting their Team Entry Form in the prior August.

As explain clearly on the table above, these two submissions of the teams is to help the clubs to have more certainty about the teams entered as the dates are much closer to each season. Chris Wilson of the Committee stressed how important it was for the clubs to commit with the teams they enter because of the huge amount of work would incur if someone was to change their mind.

Outcome: proposal accepted unanimously

CODE OF CONDUCT: PROPOSED RULE BY MINEHEAD

Any team has the right to report any violation of the code to the Management committee who can, at their absolute discretion, take further action including imposing sanctions, points deductions or more, for serious breaches.

Outcome: This proposal was withdrawn as the mechanism for reporting breaches was already contained in the Rule

NEW RULE PROPOSED BY WELLS

Current Rule	Proposed Rule (New Rule)	Why
	<p>The management committee shall circulate copies, to all attending clubs, of the minutes of the AGM within 21 days of the meeting date. All clubs receiving copies of the minutes should return any comments on those minutes within 14 days to the management committee, after which a set of agreed minutes will be published on the NSTL website within 14 days.</p>	<p>To ensure the minutes are published in good time following the AGM, and to allow clubs to view the minutes whilst they are still fresh and pass comment where necessary.</p>

Outcome: proposal accepted unanimously

8. NSTL TREASURERS' REPORT

Circulated several days prior to the meeting together with account summary (see next page).

Carole Carter presented the report at the meeting, followed by a discussion.

As the Treasurer, I wish to say a quick thank you to John Barrington, our Chair, who has led the committee again this year. We have had some difficult situations to manage as a committee. Thank you also to my fellow committee members.

It is nice also to see David Pottow our President here tonight.

Coming to the accounts I would mention, as you will see from the copy you all have been sent, show a profit of £1011 for the year ended July 2023. Our outgoings are considerably reduced as we no longer have the Secretarial Cost £600.

It must be also noted that for another year we have not paid any LTA fees yet. They will be due & will show in next year's accounts. We have contacted LTA to sort. This will be £500 approx. I am not proposing any increase in fees as the LTA costs are still the same when we finally get billed for them. They will remain at £10 per team. Also, it must be acknowledged that Chris completes the LTA league entries etc. without a fee. Only claiming minimal expenses.

I have all the documentation with me if anyone would like to see. They have again been independently examined by Liz Ricketts (Accountant) for us.

One question I have for all the clubs is that the small wooden plaques, given to the winners of each division, cost £7.50 each and I am wondering in the interest of both the environment & economy whether next year we dispense with these plaques. Just then keeping the 4 trophies/shields, engraving for those is £9.50 each. If we source sustainable plaques, made from rubber trees, this currently would be at a cost of approx. £9.75, each.

I am asking what clubs think/feel.

In conclusion; -

With the permission of the Chair, I am requesting acceptance of the NSTL accounts for the Year Ended July 2023.

Thank you.

Carole Carter, Honorary Treasurer NSTL August 2023

The account was accepted unanimously

Discussion on small wooden plaques: the initial thought of using sustainable rubber tree plaques and re-engraved seemed like a good idea for the environment, but this would involve getting them back every year to be re-engraved which seemed like a difficult task and not environmental friendly. As not all the clubs are displaying them, there was a suggestion that we only issue to the clubs who want them or even ask them to pay for the costs themselves. Carole said costs were not the issue, it was more of environmental concerns.

Outcome: all clubs agreed to produce all the plaques as we have always done but with material made from rubber tree.

9. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND OTHER OFFICERS

All the current Officers and Committee stood for re-election with the exception of the Secretary, Barry Ramsden. Dae Sasitorn offered to try out the position for a year. With no new proposed candidates, the chairman suggested that the re-election of the current committee was made on block.

POSITION	NAME
President	David Pottow (Wedmore)
Chairman	John Barrington (Trull)
Secretary	Dae Sasitorn (Cheddar)
Treasurer	Carole Carter (Brent Knoll)
Committee Member	Chris Wilson (Wells)
Committee Member	Philip Hunt (Winscombe)
Committee Member	Charlie Hart (Lympsham)
Committee Member	Pippa Barry (Backwell)

10. RESIGNATIONS AND NEW APPLICATIONS

No new clubs joined, and no withdrawals.

11. COMPOSITION OF LEAGUES FOR 2023-24

The list of team entries was circulated to the Clubs with the fixtures, on both spreadsheet and on the LTA website. For the Winter League this year, the clubs have time until 30th September to make any changes.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AOB)

Colin B of Wells raised a question about the fixtures of the Winter League and asked to put this forward to have a collective discussion for the possibility of a change next year. The issue was that the fixtures of the Winter League had got too many different days and times and this inconsistency had caused some confusions and difficulties. He proposed that we play on Sunday morning as we used to or add one other to make two days of the week. Nailsea, as a new club, agreed. Woodland said many of their players could only play at the weekends, so they too had problems with various weekday fixtures. Other clubs who have fewer number of courts, Congresbury and Lympsham; specifically, were in favour of flexibility due to the limitation of their courts availability. Chris Wilson, of the committee, concluded that all clubs must discuss the matter with their members; the clubs have nearly 12 months to observe, to discuss and to find out what their club need and propose a new rule ready for discussion at the AGM next year.

13. PRESENTATION OF TROPHIES 2022-23 SEASON

The names of the winners were read out by Carole Carter and Trophies were presented to the winners by David Pottow, the NSTL president.

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm

Draft Minutes prepared by: Dae Sasitorn
Date: 14th September 2023

Minutes approved by:
Date: