

Match Secretary Report for the 2010 WDCL AGM

A good year for WDCL, with player registrations increasing gradually as the season went on, the **website** receiving an ever-increasing number of hits (Division 1 results approaching 1000 hits – approx 2 per person per match) and the up-to-date results improving the level of information available for all of the league's members.

On the downside, the poor weather not only meant that several matches were postponed, but highlighted potential problems with match re-arrangements, and consequently several matches were **defaulted**. A few matches included double-defaults so that the match could go ahead.

In addition, there was a certain amount of confusion surrounding the rules regarding **panel players**, and several clubs had players removed from the panel, and other players replacing them, as the original panel players couldn't play in 50% of the games. No club was penalised for playing an un-registered player.

Unfortunately, **adjournments** again put additional work onto the league organisers, and there were a few disputes surrounding the re-commencement of adjourned games.

There's increasing tension between players that favour the 90-minute fixed-finish and players that favour the long game, and my view is that the sooner this is sorted out, the better it will be for the league in general.

Newcomers and Juniors

On the newcomers side, 144 games were played by players with estimated grades, indicating that they're either new or returning players – Padgate Chess Club was the highest-scoring club in this category with 49 games. Well done Padgate.

Also, 46 games were played by players with an estimated grade less than 70 – Formby Chess Club had the highest number with 13 games. (Totals include 500 league and Cup matches.)

However, one slightly more sobering statistic is that players ranked in the bottom 3 at their club only averaged 2.8 games last season – 1.9 if you remove Culcheth and Winwick from the statistics. Granted, many of these players come and go, but is the league doing enough to cater for them ?

Good to see WDCL have so many strong juniors – juniors from Division 1 teams St Helens (2 juniors), Central (1), Northwich (1), Culcheth/ Lymm (1) and newly-promoted Padgate (2) were all playing in the first team regularly. Wigan-Knights, Culcheth, Padgate, Atherton, Penketh, Formby, Northwich and Central all had juniors playing for their teams in lower divisions and/ or the Richard Furness 500 league. Full credit to all of these clubs for helping their juniors to develop, and also to Grappenhall Chess Club for teaching most of them how to play Chess in the first place.

Returning of Results

Many thanks to Jonathan Smith (Culcheth-Lymm) and Bernard Bedworth (Winwick) for returning 100% of their results within 24 hours. Penketh B, Skelmersdale, Padgate A, Widnes A and Atherton A and B teams returned all their results within the 3 days specified in the rules.

On the downside, Penketh A, Central A, Wigan/Knights B and Culcheth C could all do with speeding up for next year. Also, 55 results in total out of 288 (19%) were returned after the 3-day deadline – a percentage that can surely be improved upon given that all the team Captains have email and a telephone !

Division 1

Newcomers to the division, Culcheth-Lymm A, got off to a great start, with Atherton A and holders Widnes A making a good contest of the league title. Culcheth-Lymm needed to win or draw against Widnes in the final game of the season to win the title, and in the end they gained a 3.5 – 2.5 victory to become WDCL League Champions for 2010.

Penketh A were relegated.

Default Statistics :

18 boards in the 3 matches defaulted : Penketh A (2), Central (1)

3 boards double-defaulted : St Helens A (3), Northwich A (1) Penketh A (2)

21 out of **252** boards defaulted (8%)

No boards were defaulted when lower boards played.

Division 2

A highly-contested division with last season's runners-up, Padgate A holding off strong challenges from Wigan/Knights A and Atherton B to take the title and gain promotion to the WDCL First Division. Runcorn were relegated.

Default Statistics :

6 boards in the 1 match defaulted : Runcorn

3 boards double-defaulted : Ormskirk A (2), Padgate A, Runcorn, Winwick A, Atherton B (all 1)

4 boards defaulted: Runcorn (2), St Helens B (1), Atherton B (1)

13 out of **252** boards defaulted (5%)

1 board was defaulted when lower boards played (Runcorn)

Division 3

Another close contest here, this time between holders Northwich B, Widnes B and Padgate B. Padgate B took an early lead, but faltered in the closing stages and Northwich B came through to retain the Division 3 Championship.

Ormskirk B could be relegated, depending on how many teams enter divisions 3 and 4 next season.

Default Statistics :

6 boards in the 1 match defaulted : Ormskirk B

1 board double-defaulted : Padgate B, Penketh B

10 boards defaulted: Padgate B (3), Penketh B (1), Widnes B (2), Culcheth B (3), Northwich B (1)

17 out of **180** boards defaulted (9%)

6 boards were defaulted when lower boards played : Padgate B (3), Penketh B (1), Northwich B(1), Culcheth B (1).

Division 4

Division 4 saw Wigan/ Knights B run out worthy winners from Winwick B and Skelmersdale.

Good to see a relatively small number of defaulted matches in a division where it is less easy to bring players in from lower teams.

Default Statistics :

5 boards in the 1 match defaulted : Formby

1 board double-defaulted : Skelmersdale, Formby

3 boards defaulted: Skelmersdale (1), St Helens C (1), Culcheth C(1)

9 out of **150** boards defaulted (6%)

2 boards were defaulted when lower boards played : Skelmersdale (1), St Helens C (1) (incorrect away post-code in the handbook !)

Total Defaults (all divisions) : **60** out of **834** (7%)

More than half of these defaults were due to full-match defaults, which is something that needs addressing at the AGM. Seven percent can surely be bettered next year !

Summary

Despite one or two problems this season, the league has maintained its reputation for being one of the friendliest around, with both pre and post-match banter a frequent occurrence, as are compliments on external successes. In addition, the new website is much improved and enables all the league members to keep up to date with developments.

Hopefully, next season, with a modernisation of our rules, and a continuing positive attitude, the league will go from strength to strength.

Well done to all the league's members on a successful season.

Judy Brown June 2010