

ENGLISH TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT THE KENT ROOM, CAXTON HALL, LONDON, SW1, ON 24th APRIL 1948

PRESENT: Hon Ivor Montagu (in the Chair)
A K Vint (Hon Treasurer), W J Pope (Hon General Secretary)

Representatives from the following County Bodies, Leagues, and Directly Affiliated Clubs:

Essex County, Kent County, Hampshire County, Herts County, Lancs County, Middlesex County, Durham County, Acton League, Altrincham, Aylesbury, Barnets, Barrow, Birmingham, Bolton, Bristol, Bury, Canterbury, Central, Cheltenham, Croydon, Cumberland, Darlington, Dartford & North Kent, Film Renters, Gloucester, Hastings, Leatherhead, Leicestershire, Liverpool, London Civil Service, Manchester, Medway Towns, N Middlesex, Northumberland, Nottingham, Oldham, Oxford, Philadelphia, Radcliffe, Reddish, Rochdale, Rumford, St Helens, Southampton, South London, Scunthorpe, S Devon, Staines, Staines Youth, Stockport, Sunderland, Stanley, Swindon, Sittingbourne, Watford, Wembley & Harrow, West London, Widnes, Willesden, West London, Wolverhampton, Woolwich, Worcester, Yiewsley, British Workers Sports, London Transport (Central Buses), Albion Club, Bank of British West Africa, Harrow TTC, India & Millwall Docks, Lowther TTC

Members of the National Executive Committee (NEC): Miss L Ferguson, Messrs. J M Rose, E Reay, D H Thompson, F G Mannooch, G R Harrower, W Stamp, E Worsley, R C Mortlake Mann and C Richards.

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and read a letter of apology from the President - Mr Oldroyd - who was unable to attend owing to ill-health.

MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM: The Minutes of the previous AGM held on the 20th April 1947, as circulated, were adopted and signed as correct by the Chairman.

RESULT OF THE POSTAL BALLOT: The Chairman suggested that item 8 on the Agenda should be taken first and, this being agreed, the result of the postal ballot for the election of the Officers and the members of the National Executive Committee was announced as follows:

For Chairman	Hon I G S Montagu	(Unopposed)
For Secretary	W J Pope	(Unopposed)
For Treasurer	A K Vint	(Unopposed)
<u>For the NEC</u>		
Midland Region	M Goldstein, A A Wall	
North-West Region	E A Worsley, W Stamp	
Southern Region	F G Mannooch	
London Region	G R Harrower, W Luff	
South-West Region	D H Thompson, T I Gill	(tie)
Eastern Region	C Richards	(Unopposed)
Yorkshire Region	L E Forrest	(Unopposed)
North-East Region	E Reay	

In accordance with the regulations laid down at the last Council meeting, it was agreed that there should be another election in the South-Western Region.

REPORT OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: The Report of the NEC had been circulated and the Chairman suggested that the items should be taken seriatim. This was done and the following alterations were made in the Report:

Page 3: The runner-up in the Mixed Doubles of the Championships should read "B Vana & Mrs V Pokorna"

Page 3: In line 6 of last paragraph delete "and Miss L R Barnes"

Page 7: Item 19. Add "A J Wilmott, Secretary Equipment Committee"

Item 10 - Incorporation: The Treasurer explained that about 10 years ago the Annual General Meeting of the Association considered the question of the Incorporation of the Association. The NEC had then carefully considered the problem of the legal status of the Association and obtained legal opinion on the position. In order to become incorporated a Memorandum and Articles of Association would have to be prepared and our

present rules based on an unincorporated body, would have to be revised. The NEC now felt that the time had come to go forward with the matter. Mr Vint also explained that we had a three years' option on the tenancy of the Office and the NEC had decided to take up the option and renew the tenancy if this was possible at a reasonable rent.

Item 14: The Chairman said he would like to say a few words on the question of the junior game. At present, we could claim to be the only unbeaten country so far as Juniors were concerned. He commended the work done by some Leagues in the country in encouraging the juniors and particularly mentioned Yorkshire and Torquay. In mentioning these two Mr Montagu said he knew that there were other centres doing the same sort of work and hoped that it is kept up and that it spreads. He further hoped that all Leagues would join in encouraging this development and in organising all means of developing the juniors. We shall then begin to build up a very high level in the years to come. The development of junior girls had not been so successful as that with the boys and he hoped particular attention would be given to the girls' game in future so that we should hold the position we have now attained.

A delegate from Wolverhampton asked for some guidance from the Committee in the way of tips and hints in the coaching of juniors, and mentioned that the Central Council of Physical Recreation were trying to do something in the Midlands about coaching. Mr Montagu said we were in touch with the CCPR about coaching schemes, and so far as experience was concerned, suggested that Mr Forrest and Mr Gill should write articles in the Magazine giving their opinion of the reasons for the success their juniors had attained. Mr Montagu himself thought that if a youngster is promising every effort should be made officially so that he or she should get a fair share of the table. Mr Gill said he felt that it was very important that the senior players should be willing to play regularly with the Juniors.

Mr Beard of Romford said that many towns are forming Junior Leagues which are unaffiliated and it was very difficult to run a successful affiliated Junior League, when there were unaffiliated Leagues in the area, to which they paid no fee. He suggested we should reduce the Youth affiliation fee to the lowest possible in order to get them affiliated. Mr Gill felt that there should not be a separate Junior League and that Juniors should play in Senior Leagues in order to gain experience. A delegate asked whether the Association was doing anything about official coaching. Mr Montagu said that the financial position made it impossible for the Association to bear the cost of coaching at the moment. He mentioned that Yorkshire had appointed a particular senior player to go around the district and coach youngsters.

Item 15: The Chairman drew special attention to the date and venue of the Semi-Finals and Finals of the Wilmott Cup and J M Rose Bowl competitions and appealed to the London delegates present to do everything possible to assist in seeing that there was a good attendance.

Item 20: Several members expressed the opinion that the Villa ball had been very poor this season and Mr Turner of Dartford & North Kent League said that he had sent one back to Spalding's and had received a reply to the effect that if he would write to them again they would let him have another in its place. Mr Montagu asked for the letter to be sent to the Office so that the matter could be investigated.

The adoption of the Report and the Addendum to the Report was then moved, seconded and carried unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Mr Vint submitted two accounts, one for the Receipts and Payments Account up to 19th April 1948 and one for the World Championships. He explained some of the items and with regard to the English Open said that, owing to circumstances over which we have no control, we are faced with a loss of about £264 instead of a profit as we had hoped. He touched on many items in the income and expenditure side of the account and said that the items of administration expenditure give some indication of the amount of the work carried out in the year. It was a great disappointment to him personally that there is a deficiency on the year's working as this had only happened once previously during the time he had been the Treasurer of the Association. Taking also into account the World Championships deficiency, it would affect very seriously the working balance of the Association. Mr Vint mentioned the late payment of affiliation fees by Leagues and said the NEC felt that it will now be necessary to press for an earlier payment of affiliation fees, which should be made in accordance with the Rules.

So far as the World Championships were concerned he was reasonably satisfied with the result, having regard to all the circumstances, and he thought that the loss would be in the region of £200-300. Taking into account the fact that normally, when we send a team abroad, it costs about £300, he thought that the result would not be too bad, especially as we had budgeted for a loss when we first accepted the Championships. He mentioned that the dress for the team had cost about £100. Mr Vint then dealt with future prospects and said that during

the course of the next year or two there are many factors which made the position very uncertain. We had encouraged County administration and as they increased so would the demand on the financial position in the way of rebates. The Handbook was now limited owing to paper restrictions but, here again, as the Association grows and the number of Leagues grows, so would the cost of the handbook become greater. There would also be an increase in international matches and now that the Junior side had been developed, there would be more Junior Internationals. All this, of course, increases the expenditure of the Association. However, although the work had been disappointing from the £ s d angle, the prestige we have gained compensates for this, but we must go carefully into the matter of future income and expenditure. He himself, as Treasurer, was disappointed in the result of the year's working, but he was confident that with careful administration we should pull round.

Mr Beard of Romford queried the difference in the travelling expenses to Manchester for the English Open and the amount of travelling expenses in connection with the World Championships. Mr Vint explained that in connection with the World Championships we were not responsible for the fares of any players competing in this country other than those of our own players who represented England. The major part of the travelling expenses for the World Championships related to the amount paid to the London Passenger Transport Board on account of tickets from Wembley to London and vice-versa, which we had to pay for the foreign competitors. In the English it was not a question of fares from London to Manchester, but the fares we had to pay for the foreign players we had invited to the Championships from Prague etc.

Mr Tarrant of Swindon commented that the ball rebate for this season was smaller than last season. The Treasurer explained that this had not all come in yet for the 1947/48 season. Mr Gill of Torquay queried the figures of expenditure in connection with the visit of the Swedish Juniors. Mr Vint explained that this was due to the fact that at their last meeting the NEC had decided that we should refund the amounts that some of the Leagues had paid for fares. Mr Kurzman asked whether there was any more money to come in from the World Championships programme. Mr Vint said that the programme had been brought up to date with a supplement containing a complete record. Mr Pope said that we had approximately 5,000 copies of the Souvenir Programme available for sale and it was proposed to sell them to Leagues for 1/6d if they were ordered in quantities of 12 or more.

Mr Rowley of Worcester asked if the Committee thought that the amount spent on players' clothes was justified. The Treasurer replied that in previous World Championships our players had compared unfavourably with other nations so far as dress was concerned. This time the NEC had decided that our players should be a credit to us and we had received many congratulations on the appearance of our players. Mr Swayne of the Central League said he was most disappointed by the attendance at the Championships and felt that more attention should have been paid to the public. Why was it that, having been told seats were sold out, the Arena on the Saturday night was not full? Mr Vint said the NEC now realised that they had made a blunder when they decided on season tickets, but this was recognised too late. We budgeted on selling 5,000 season tickets which had to be printed, and in that way we froze 5,000 seats. Actually we sold between 300 and 900. At the time we really thought we could sell 5,000 season tickets, but came up against several problems, the main one being the abolition of the basic petrol. We also did not realise that our ordinary club players could not afford to pay 25/-, and on top of that their fare to Wembley from London and the outside suburbs. It was not until after Christmas that we realised the serious position and it was then too late to retrieve the position.

Mr Hodge of Bristol felt that the Finals of the individual events should not have been played mid-week. Mr Vint explained that we were in the hands of Wembley. The only dates we could get was from the Wednesday to the Wednesday, and in a World Championships, of course, the team events must be played before the individual events. For the Finals night, however, we were completely sold out. Mr Cobb of the Central Buses felt that Wembley had not advertised the event as much as they should have done. Mr Kurzman felt that the season ticket idea should not be abolished as he thought we should give people who wanted to see the whole of a Championships the chance to do so at a reasonable price.

It was then moved, and seconded, that the balance sheets and the Treasurer's report be adopted, and this was carried unanimously. Mr Carrington thought a vote of thanks should be passed to the Committee for the way in which the Championships were run, especially having regard to the financial result. This was seconded and carried unanimously.

REPORT OF THE ITTF: Mr Montagu said that, according to the Swedish Table Tennis Journal, the 1948/49 World Championships were fixed for February 4th-10th in Stockholm. If this was confirmed we would try and

run the English Open with the Finals on the 119th February 1949. He said that in October we were hoping to have a reciprocal visit from the Czechs and that 4 men and 2 women players and a non-playing Captain would be coming. They would split into two parties to tour the country and as soon as we had definite information we would circulate the country. It was possible that the visit might extend into three weeks, but it would definitely be for two weeks. It was hoped to arrange it in the same way as our tour in Czechoslovakia - they would play a local team of the district, town or County and they would also give exhibitions. Sweden has invited us to send a team of men players to Sweden in November. We were hoping to arrange another junior tour with possibly France or Holland next season. Also next year we would be sending a junior team on a reciprocal visit to Sweden prior to the World Championships. We have held the first Conference of the Home Countries which had been quite successful. The ITTF Congress had given an interpretation of the new service rule as follows: "The free hand, maintained flat in a horizontal plane throughout the service, must release the ball by being lifted up or dropped away in a vertical plane (up or down). The hand must not turn over or move sideways." This will be included in next year's Rules under "Knotty Points".

Rule 10 - A Good Service - Paragraph 3 (page 101 of the Handbook) It was decided that instead of the ball and racket being behind the end line etc, this only applies to the ball. It was agreed that the uniform age for juniors in National Open Championships and international matches shall be that players under 17 on June 30th shall be entitled to play as a junior during the whole of the following season. It was agreed, on the proposal of the USTTA, to ask every Association to hold at least one tournament with players wearing white clothing, and report to the next Congress.

Swaythling and Corbillon Cup competitions: The number of countries taking part in these competitions had made it necessary for regulations to be laid down and for groups to be formed and for this nations have been ranked. A Ranking Committee has been set up and one will be formed at each Congress to rank for the following season's Championships. England was ranked No 4 of the first group in the Swaythling Cup and No 1 in the Corbillon Cup. Additions to the Federation were Greece, Italy, Trinidad & Tobago, and applications for affiliation were received from South America, Malta, and Ceylon. The application for affiliation from South Africa was refused because they did not confirm to the Constitution, Article 2, (ITTF Handbook page 4) regarding the colour bar. Mr Montagu mentioned that in future World Championships one official (special line judge or table steward) would be appointed to watch the side of the table opposite to the umpire for edge balls.

After Mr Montagu had explained what had been said about the alteration to Rule 10 - "A good Service" - a resolution was moved, seconded and carried unanimously that the alteration should be adopted and included in our rules. It was also agreed that we should accept the interpretation under "Knotty Points" relating to the new service. Mr Turner of the Dartford and North Kent League said he appreciated it was necessary for the Association to make a profit out of the Czech tour, but suggested that Leagues also wanted to make a profit.

The ITTF report was then adopted unanimously.

The Secretary then presented Mr Montagu with a picture of school-children playing table tennis at the Summerhill School. He said that our Chairmen had expressed a wish to have this painting to present to the Arts Exhibition of Sports in connection with the Olympic Games and a number of his friends, had decided to contribute to the cost and present him with it as a sign of their appreciation of the work he had done for the game. Mr Pope said we all appreciated that Mr Montagu had been the inspiration of the game in this country and abroad and said he could go back to when our Association was formed. He was the live wire and the organising genius who had formed the Association and was with him in Germany in 1926 when the ITTF was formed. Mr Montagu was responsible for this and anyone who had seen him conducting an ITTF Congress - interpreting the speeches for foreign delegates and transferring the English speeches to the foreigners would appreciate that without Mr Montagu the ITTF could not last. He had been responsible for drafting our Constitution and that of the ITTF, and the Rules of the Game were largely his drafting. He was very proud and pleased to be asked to make the presentation on behalf of the group of friends who felt that a tribute should be paid to Mr Montagu's work, and handed the picture to Mr Montagu with the good wishes of all Table Tennis players. Mr Montagu thanked the donors for the gift and said he hoped it would be accepted by the Olympic Games Committee for display.

PROPOSED ALTERATION TO THE RULES OF THE GAME

Rule 10 - A Good Service

By the West Bromwich TTA: Delete all words in brackets in lines 6 to 11 and substitute: "in the delivery of the service the ball must be thrown into the air from the open hand".

The West Bromwich delegate was not present and there was no delegate to move it. It was thought that the

new interpretation of the rule would cover what West Bromwich had in mind.

PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION

Rule 3

By the Northumberland TTA: Before "local Associations" in line 2 insert "County Associations".
Withdrawn in view of the fact that all the Rules of the Association were coming up for review as the result of the proposed incorporation.

Rule 4

By the Bristol TTA: Add to the Rule "Direct affiliation to be accepted only after approval by the local controlling authority".

Withdrawn after assurance had been given that the local controlling body would be consulted before an affiliation was accepted.

By the Northumberland TTA: Before "local Association" in line 1, insert "County Associations".
Withdrawn in view of the fact that all the Rules of the Association were coming up for review as the result of the proposed incorporation.

Rule 5

By the Bristol TTA: Delete "without" in line 6 and substitute "after"

This proposal was moved by the Bristol delegate, but there was no seconder. It was explained that there was no objection to an explanation being given to a League, but there might be a local position involved.

By the Northumberland TTA: Before "local" in line 3, insert "County Association".

Withdrawn in view of the fact that all the Rules of the Association were coming up for review as the result of the proposed incorporation.

Rule 6

By the Bristol & Lincolnshire TTAs: In clause (a), delete "7/6d" in line 1 and substitute "5/-"; delete "2/6d" in line 6 and substitute "1/6d".

The Bristol delegate agreed to withdraw this proposal and as there was no delegate from Lincolnshire, it was not seconded.

By the Northumberland TTA: In clause (a), before "local" in line 1, insert "County Association"

Withdrawn in view of the fact that all the Rules of the Association were coming up for review as the result of the proposed incorporation.

By the Bristol TTA: In clause (b), delete "15/-" in line 1 and substitute "12/6d".

This proposal was withdrawn by the Bristol delegate.

By the Lincolnshire TTA: In clause (b), delete "15/-" in line 1 and substitute "12/6d".

Not moved in the absence of the Lincolnshire delegate.

By the Northumberland TTA: In clause (b), before "local Association" in line 2, insert "County Association".

Withdrawn in view of the fact that all the Rules of the Association were coming up for review as the result of the proposed incorporation.

By the Bristol TTA: In clause (c), delete "5/-" in line 1 and insert "4/-".

Not seconded and therefore not put to the meeting.

Rule 7

By the Bristol TTA: Delete "15th October" in line 2 and substitute "31st October".

Seconded by a member of the Executive Committee and carried.

By the Bristol TTA: Delete whole of section beginning "Affiliated local Associations in line 3.

Seconded by the Oxford delegate but, after discussion, and an explanation by the Treasurer, mover and seconder agreed to withdraw the proposition.

By the Northumberland TTA: Before "local Associations" in line 3, insert "County Associations)

Withdrawn in view of the fact that all the Rules of the Association were coming up for review as the result of the proposed incorporation.

Rule 8

By the Bristol TTA: Add to end of Rule "and 6 copies for the Officers of Associations and Leagues".

Seconded by the Torquay delegate and, after it had been fully discussed, it was withdrawn on an undertaking being given that two copies would be supplied to each league and County Body Secretary.

Rule 12

By the Lancashire TTA: In clause (a), after "General Secretary" in line 4, delete the word "eleven" and substitute "twelve"; in clause (b), after "Southern" in line 12, delete "one member" and substitute "two members".

These proposals were supported by the NEC and carried unanimously.

Rule 13

By the Bristol TTA: Delete "30th June" in line 2 and substitute "30th April" and add to end of Rule "and shall be presented to the Annual General Meeting".

By the Lancashire TTA: Delete "30th June" in line 2 and substitute "30th March"; delete "annually" at end of Rule and substitute "at the Annual General Meeting".

Rule 15

By the Bristol TTA: Delete "last week in April or the first week in May" in line 2 and substitute "first week in June"; delete all words after "National Executive Committee" in line 3 up to the word "date": in clause (a), after "Agenda" in line 2, insert "and copy of audited statement of accounts and balance sheet".

These resolutions under Rules 13 and 15 were fully discussed and the Treasurer explained the difficulties of the position. It was then agreed that the proposals should be withdrawn on an undertaking being given by the Executive Committee that the question would be dealt with when incorporation was being considered.

Rule 15

By the Bristol TTA: In clause (d), add to end of clause "any County Body, Association or League may, however, demand a block vote".

The Chairman explained the difficulties of the position and this resolution was withdrawn.

In clause (f), delete whole section; in clause (g) delete "or by proxy" in line 2.

The proposed alterations to clauses (f) and (g) were defeated by vote after the whole question of the difficulties of some Leagues in sending delegates was discussed. The suggestion was made that the time had come when the question of pooling the expenses by Leagues should be considered.

By the Northumberland TTA: In clause (h), before "local" in line 1, insert "County Association".

Withdrawn in view of the fact that all the Rules of the Association were coming up for review as the result of the proposed incorporation.

By the Bristol TTA: In clause (j), delete "but only on the nomination of the NEC" in lines 2 & 3.

This proposal, after discussion, was defeated.

Rule 17

By the Northumberland TTA: In clause (h), but where a League has clubs in more than one County, the respective Counties shall be entitled to the refund".

This proposal, after being opposed by the Executive Committee, was withdrawn.

By the Lancashire TTA: In clause (h), delete "1/-" in line 1 and substitute ""1/3d"; delete "6d" in line 2 and substitute "9d".

This proposition, after being discussed and opposed by the Treasurer, who suggested it should be postponed until next year, was put to the vote and defeated.

By the Bedfordshire TTA: In clause (h), delete "6d" in line 2 and substitute "1/-"

In the absence of the Bedfordshire delegate, this was not moved and was not, therefore, put to the meeting.

Rule 20

By the Lancashire TTA: Delete all words after "Federation" in line 4 and substitute "without the sanction of the County Secretary concerned and of a member of the National Executive Committee, which sanction must be notified to the Honorary General Secretary within seven days and not less than fourteen days before the date of the event.

After discussion this resolution was adopted on the understanding that the new Registered Players Regulations will cover the point so far as playing on affiliated premises is concerned.

Rule 25

By the NEC: In clause (d), delete all words after "except" in line 2 and substitute "in accordance with conditions which the NEC may lay down from time to time.

This proposition, moved by Mr Mann on behalf of the NEC and seconded by Mr Gill of Torquay, was adopted.

Rule 26

By the NEC: Add additional clause (e) "The age for Juniors, shall be that a player under 17 on July 1st, shall be entitled to compete in Junior events of the subsequent season".

This resolution, moved by the Chairman, was carried unanimously.

Rule 27

By the Northumberland TTA: Before "local Association" in line 2, insert "County Association".

Withdrawn in view of the fact that all the Rules of the Association were coming up for review as the result of the proposed incorporation.

RESOLUTIONS FROM LEAGUES

Proposed by the Bristol TTA: "That Registered players should be entitled to payment for loss of remunerative time at work when taking part in a representative match or open tournament".

After discussion and the words "open tournament" deleted, it was agreed that the matter be referred back to the NEC, asking them to bear in mind that the general opinion was that the meeting was in favour of the resolution, as it affected International matches and especially the participation of Juniors in these events.

Proposed by the Bristol TTA: "That the Association shall nominate Registered Players to participate in all recognised open tournaments". After it was agreed that the word "nominate" should be deleted and "encourage" substituted, this resolution was agreed to.

Proposed by the Bristol TTA: "That the limit of £3 set on a prize or reward in the regulations for Registered Players in an invitation or open tournament shall be increased to £6". Mr Montagu said that £3 was the figure decided upon by the International Table Tennis Federation. If it was decided that £6 should be substituted for £3 he suggested that the resolution should read that this should be recommended to the next meeting of the ITTF. This was agreed to and the resolution was then adopted.

Proposed by the Northumberland TTA: "That the system of playing five ties in the J M Rose Bowl competition shall be altered to the best of nine ties." The Chairman explained that the question of rules for this competition was a matter for the Trustees of the competition. If the alteration was agreed, it should read as a recommendation to the Trustees, and this was then moved, seconded and adopted.

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT: Mr Oldroyd, on the proposition of the NEC, was unanimously re-elected.

VICE-PRESIDENTS: It was agreed that the present 24 Vice-Presidents be re-elected. Mr Waugh of Northumberland agreed that these nominations should be in the hands of the NEC, but suggested that Mr J M Rose, now that he was no longer on the NEC, and having regard to his long service to the game, should be appointed as a Vice-President. He suggested that this nomination should be considered at the forthcoming SGM.

ELECTION OF AUDITORS: It was agreed that Messrs Spain Bros should be again elected as Auditors to the Association.

OTHER BUSINESS: Mr Kurzman said he thought the system of election of members of the NEC should be reviewed next year. He thought that the development of County Bodies had presented a new problem and that the regions laid down in Rule 12 (b) should be adjusted, so that there should not be two members from the same County Body on the NEC.

The Central League delegate thought that the Agenda for the AGM should be circulated in good time before the meeting so that amendments could be put forward. The Chairman replied that this was a question for an alteration to Rule.

The Reddish delegate thought that general matters relating to the affairs of the Association should in future be dealt with first at the AGM and that the various reports should be dealt with afterwards. Consideration should also be given to the time of the starting of national meetings so that ample time should be given for the discussion of all matters.

A resolution thanking the Chairman for the conduct of the meeting was carried unanimously and brought the meeting to a close.