

Aldershot & District Lawn Tennis Association

Affiliated to Hants & Isle Of Wight LTA

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 1st November 2023, at AVONDALE LAWN TENNIS CLUB

The Chairman, Keith Morris, opened the meeting.

Present: 48 people attended, representing 15 clubs.

1. Apologies

Brian Greig (committee), Betsy Jager & Suzanne Winship (Camberley) and Mike Mullins (Elstead).

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 2nd November 2022, have been circulated. They were accepted.

3. Matters Arising

None.

4. Chairman's Report

Keith read out his report.

The Aldershot and District League is still doing very well with 26 clubs, Summer and Winter leagues totalling 235 senior teams, over 1,000 matches per year. We remain one of the largest local leagues in the Country. We hope to run further junior leagues next summer, thanks to Brian and Alison.

The Aldershot and District League has an excellent committee. My thanks go out to Alison Fortune who is the secretary, Andrew Littlecott, treasurer, Darrell Merrick Willson, men's results secretary, Carole Lee, ladies results secretary, Cath Pearson, mixed results secretary, Brian Greig, junior results secretary, Sam Williamson, pennants and Chris Iles who maintains the website. My thanks also go to Laura Williams for the work she does regarding promotion and relegation at the beginning of each season, as well as the extra work she and Chris Iles do on the online results system. As a committee, we have had a number of committee meetings with excellent attendance.

Team players will be required to have a British Tennis membership number in order to play in matches. As usual, there is still confusion with some team captains and members being unaware of some of the match rules. Rules should be displayed in your clubhouse or if you haven't got a clubhouse, please make sure the team captains have them. It would be helpful if when there was a new match secretary or new team captain, they were given some help by the previous match secretary or team captain on what their new role entails and the online system. Please make sure that match secretary changes during the season are communicated via the website or the ADLTA e-mail. You can now submit online Summer and Winter league entries, nominations, club details, Chairman, Match Secretary and Secretary details.

There have been instances reported to the committee of very offensive language and verbal abuse during and after some matches. This will not be tolerated by the committee. Furthermore, the committee are volunteers and work very hard in their own time. I will not tolerate any abuse or bullying, be it verbal or written, to any member of the committee.

I have been on the ADLTA committee for over 35 years and Chairman for 13 years. I was hoping to step down at this AGM but even though we have asked for someone to step forward, no-one has. In view of this, and to maintain continuity, I will continue in this role for a maximum of one year. I would, however, like to reiterate

that we need to find someone to take on the role of Chairman. If anyone has questions or is interested, please contact me on 01252 715711.

There is a strong possibility that Chris Iles will be moving up North in the near future. As such, we will require a new member on the committee who can do the online work. Ideally, whoever this person is, we would like them to shadow Chris before he moves. If you are interested, please contact him on adlta@outlook.com

I would like to personally thank all the volunteers in your clubs who do so much. My thanks also go to Avondale Tennis Club for hosting the AGM.

I wish you all success in 2024.

5. **Treasurer's Report**

Andrew presented the accounts for the year. Comparison with last year's figures is not straightforward due to the move to a November AGM and issues surrounding LTA invoices, however our finances are stable.

There were no questions from the floor regarding the accounts.

Andrew thanked Peter Hill for auditing the accounts.

6. **Election of the committee**

Keith asked if there were any volunteers to join the committee. There were none, however if anyone wished to talk about joining after the meeting they would be welcome to. Keith reported that the committee were happy to continue.

Keith Morris	Chairman
Andrew Littlecott	Treasurer
Alison Fortune	Secretary
Chris Iles	ADLTA website
Carole Lee	Ladies League Secretary
Darrell Merrick-Wilson	Mens League Secretary
Cath Pearson	Mixed League Secretary
Brian Greig	Junior League Secretary
Laura Williams	Online lead
Sam Williamson	Pennants

Proposer	Paul Treacy (Avondale)
Secunder	Alison Jameson (Avondale)

The committee was unanimously voted in, on bloc.

7. **Election of Auditor**

Peter Hill is prepared to continue as Auditor.

Proposer	Carole Lee
Secunder	Sam Williamson

Carried unanimously.

8. **Presentation of Trophies**

Paul Treacy and Jane Dow collected trophies for Avondale, Mens A & Mixed A summer 23 winners and Mens A winners Winter 22/23. Paul Adlam collected trophies for Brightwell ladies A for both the summer 2023 and winter 2022/23. Winter 2022/23 mixed won by Camberley A was not presented but was taken for Camberley by Laura Williams.

9. Proposals

1 New wording for rule G17

Current rule G17: In bad weather, both teams must turn up to play, unless advised otherwise by the home team.

Proposed rule G17: In bad weather, both teams must turn up to play, unless advised otherwise by the home team. An acknowledgement of the cancellation, due to bad weather, from the away team must be received by the home team for the cancellation to stand.

Proposed by the committee

Keith read out the proposal, which was generally greeted with approval. The only queries surrounded what form the acknowledgement should take, phone, email, WhatsApp. The committee had not stipulated the form of acknowledgement to be used so clubs were free to use whatever they wanted as long as the acknowledgement was received.

For All
Against none
Abstentions none
Proposal carried.

2 New wording for rule G12

Current rule G12: In the event of a team conceding two or more walkovers during the season, the Committee shall give serious consideration to making all the matches of that team void.

Proposed rule G12: In the event of a team conceding three walkovers during the season all matches for that team shall be made void.

Proposed by the committee

Keith read out the proposal. Paul Adlam (Brightwells) asked why the committee were proposing the change. Keith stated that it was just to make the rules clearer. We have previously allowed clubs 2 walkovers and on the third occasion made their matches void after consideration. This won't now be the case the rule is clear and simple.

For Majority
Against None
Abstentions 3

3 Nominated players

If one nominated player does not play any fixtures for their nominated team for the entire season then that player cannot be nominated for any team for the following season.

If two or more nominated players do not play any matches for their nominated team for the entire season then that team will be deducted 5 penalty points for every unplayed nominated player at the end of the season and additionally those players cannot be nominated for any team for the following season.

Proposed by the committee

Darrell Merrick-Wilson read out the proposal and explained why the proposal was being put forward.

Essentially some clubs are nominating players who do not play any matches for the entire season. Players do get injured or leave clubs but for 5 out of the 6 players in summer and 3 out of 4 players in winter to be nominated and not play a single game this is not fair. By doing this some players can play lots of matches for lower teams before being tied to a particular team.

Frimley were against this as it could penalise smaller clubs with a small pool of players and currently they have some leeway.

Nigel Hill (Farnboro) asked how it would be policed, an end of season check will show if this has happened. Paul Adlam (Brightwell) agreed with the gist of the proposal but was slightly concerned about the wording. If someone was injured just before the start of the season would this rule them out for the next? Darrell reiterated that players would not forfeit playing tennis the following season they just couldn't be a nominated

player. Penalty points would only be incurred if 2 nominated players in the same team do not play any matches and they would still be able to play the following season but not as nominated players. Surrey Sports Park were not in favour as they struggle to know who is available each season.

For	Majority
Against	2
Abstentions	4

- 4** The league standings calculation should be Rubbers, then Sets, then Games in the event of a tie in the league.

Proposed by: Lai-Gain Simmons, Wrecclesham
Seconded by: Diane Pettitt, Wrecclesham

Wrecclesham were asked to explain their proposal. Their proposal had stemmed from last year's AGM discussion on league standings calculation. The current rule G15 states that "In the event of a tie on points in any division, promotion and relegation issues shall be settled on games won." There was some confusion. It was decided move onto discuss proposal 5 also regarding rule G15.

5 Changing rule G15

Current rule G15. In the event of a tie on points in any division, promotion and relegation issues shall be settled on games won.

Proposed rule G15. In the event of a tie on points in any division, promotion and relegation issues shall be settled on sets percentage then games percentage.

Proposed by the committee

Chris explained that if there is a tie on match points then the number of games won is used to decide positions in a division, these could determine whether a team is promoted, relegated or stays in the division.

The suggestion here is to move to percentage sets won, the idea being that winning "better" is rewarded, i.e. a 2 sets to nil win is better than a 2 sets to 1 win. If teams are equal on match points the number of games they have won counts. If they have played more games because they have played more sets then a team could finish higher than another even though they have lost more games. In the sets won then games won calculation loses are not considered. Hence the suggestion to move to games percentage.

There was a question from the floor about walkovers or retiring mid match due to an injury for example. You would lose points as normal in a match if this happened.

Keith Morris stated that this was scoring system was used up until the AGM in 1999 when it was changed to the current system.

It was acknowledged that there could always be anomalies whatever system was used.

For	26
Against	8
Abstentions	10

As proposal 5 was carried there was no vote for proposal 4.

6 Penalty points in the event of a walkover

In the event of a no-show, the winning team will be awarded an extra 2 points overall (not 2 extra points per set). Therefore, in the summer league, the team awarded the walkover gets a 9-0 victory plus 2 extra points i.e. 11 points for the win. In the winter league, the team awarded the walkover gets an 8-0 victory plus 2 extra points i.e. 10 points for the win.

The defaulting team gets deducted one penalty point overall.

Proposed by: Lai-Gain Simmons, Wrecclesham
Seconded by: Diane Pettitt, Wrecclesham

Keith read out the proposal. This second proposal from Wrecclesham also stemmed from the league standings discussions at last year's AGM. Walkovers can distort the results of a division, but by reducing the points a team is given if they receive a walkover this distortion could be reduced. However, discussion from the floor pointed out that this disadvantaged the opposition as they may have got more points had they been able to play the match and would benefit the team giving the walkover. There was some concern that clubs

with teams in the same division could use this to manipulate the final division results. Keith reminded clubs that if they had teams in the same division their matches were scheduled (via the Fixtures Document) to take place before the end of the season.

For	1
Against	Majority
Abstentions	3

7 Trial change to the summer format

Matches in the Summer League 2024 be comprised of just two pairs per team in all Divisions for Ladies, Mens and Mixed teams.

Each pair to play two sets against the opposing teams' two pairs with a Championship tiebreak in case of the score being one set all in any one rubber. Total sets played, per couple, would be four with the potential of two Championship tiebreaks.

Should bad light (or lack of floodlights) stop play the match can be deemed complete if three rubbers are complete and at least one set of the fourth rubber is also complete. The scoring of the incomplete set and potential championship tiebreak would be split 1-1.

Matches to be played on weekday evenings starting at 6.30 p.m.

This to be trialled for one season in 2024 and then clubs asked for feedback. A vote to be taken at the AGM in 2024 on this continuing or reverting in subsequent years.

Proposed by: Sue Osbourne, Worplesdon
Seconded by: Sarah Hamilton, Worplesdon

Sue Osbourne presented the proposal and their reasoning.

During the Summer league season we, at Worplesdon, were able to ensure that we had three courts available for each home match (with the exception of one date).

In most cases members of the opposing teams arrived and were very pleased that this was the case as it ensured:

1. the probability of continuous tennis (subject to length of sets)
2. the fact that they were unlikely to be sitting out too long and getting cold
3. the fact that the match was likely to finish in good time.

There have been many occasions in the summer leagues over the years when teams have arrived to find only two courts available. This has meant that team members have sat out for long periods of time and therefore got cold and has meant an imbalance of preparation for the next set. The finish time has been 10.00 p.m. and slightly later on occasions.

We have found it very difficult to get members, particularly who work, to play away matches, especially when they know only two courts are available, and therefore it will be a late finish.

This proposal generated much discussion and the main points raised are summarised below.

Paul Treacy (Avondale) stated that with no more court space less players would be playing league tennis.

Paul Adlam (Brightwell) said there would be more tennis for less people, the current format can be used to help juniors move up but there won't be room for them in teams with the number of adults wanting to play. If clubs have enough court space for more teams they would need more captains too.

Generally larger clubs would not be able to offer league tennis to as many players with only 4 in a team and with limited court space they could not simply field more teams to include the same number of players.

The length of time a match of this format would take compared to the 9 set format especially if the sets were very close was queried. Time restricted floodlights could go out and clubs without floodlights couldn't enter. Another comment was that the lack of floodlights in the summer shouldn't make too much of a difference but long tight matches may require them particularly at the start of the season.

Andrew Littlecott commented that in the winter with a third set championship tie break matches can take a long time, 1 pair may have to wait so continuous play doesn't always happen. In the winter mixed league there is no championship tie break so matches don't finish too late.

This format could mean matches finish too late for juniors to play, sudden deuces or 2 sets without the championship tie break might be better. The winter mixed start time of 6:30pm is often more like 7ish, a 6:30pm start time will need to be adhered to more rigidly.

With the 6 player format, 4 players must be present at 6:30pm which means there is the flexibility for one pair to arrive later especially helpful if there are travel disruptions. It was noted that matches rarely start on time at 6:30pm, this does not help with the completion of the match.

Surrey Sports Park felt 1 set matches were unfair and the 2 set format would allow players to “get into the match” and probably produce different results.

Camberley have moved some of their teams to another league that uses this format as they prefer it.

Smaller clubs can struggle to put out teams of 6, the smaller teams would help them.

For	26
Against	19
Abstentions	3

Summer 2024 will trial the new format.

8 Time scales

Match secretaries to receive fixtures earlier than they do currently, perhaps at end of previous season so it does not impact school holidays. As, when fixtures were agreed in person, there should be a week for arranging and then 1 or 2 weeks for any amendments and for fixtures to be input to the tournament software at least one month prior to start of new season. This will allow captains to organise their teams with plenty of notice, especially for the start of the season.

Proposed by: Julie Summers, Brightwells
Seconded by: Paul Adlam, Brightwells

Keith read out the proposal and stated that for this winter season entries had had to be in by 31st July and information was made available to match secretaries on 5th August.

Brightwell felt that organising the winter league in August when people were often away on their summer holidays was not a good idea. When fixtures were organised in person (in September) there was a week in which amendments could be made then that was it. Brightwell did not want to bring back the meeting in person.

Paul wondered why we couldn't be organising one season whilst playing another, for example entering teams in June. Some clubs said didn't know how many players they had who wanted to play winter tennis in June and they needed time. Lai-Gain (Wrecclesham match sec) said she needed time to finish one season before starting another. Darrell pointed out that online there is a 3 week window from the dummy date to the season starting.

Keith asked for a show of hands from match secretaries attending and asked for any comments from them. Alison Jameson (Avondale) commented that she was new to the role but had received the match set up info by 3rd August and that had been plenty of time.

Paul commented that 2 or 3 weeks was not enough notice as some players already had commitments at the start of the season. It was pointed out that match secretaries can tell players the first few fixture dates before they go online if necessary. It was accepted that there might be the odd change in case of a mistake which fixture secretaries, not captains should rectify.

For	3
Against	Majority
Abstentions	2

10. AOB

Darrell, ADLTA now have an Instagram account, @adltauk.

Keith thanked Avondale for hosting.