

ESSEX COUNTY BOWLING ASSOCIATION

(Group 4)



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Minutes of ECBA Group 4 AGM **Held 19th October 2021**

1. The meeting was opened at 19:30 by the Chairman *Alan Warner* whom after thanking those present for attending thanked Romford BC for their hospitality and the use of their venue. He went on to mention that the current ECBA President *Mr. A.W. (Sandy) Dron (Upminster B.C.)* is to be followed by *Mr. D.J. (Dave) King (Romford B.C.)* at the end of his tenure. "Back to back ECBA Presidents from Group 4"!
2. Apologies were received from: *Terry Patrick, Carl Stott, Dennis Mills, Ricky Watson and Richard Strauss*. These were logged in the attendance book.
3. Minutes of the previous AGM (15th October 2019) have been available on the website and were also sent out with the AGM agenda. Though a spelling mistake was pointed out the minutes were approved and signed.
4. Matters arising: It has become necessary to create the new position of Webmaster for the group. *Alan Warner* explained that he had been running the website since its inception, paying for the site from his own funds.
With *Alan* stepping down from the Chairman's position this year someone needs to run the website and the Group needs to take on the cost of doing so. *Alan* is happy to carry on running the site and has found a hosting service that is considerably cheaper than that engaged in the early days.

The Group 4 site has been set up on the new servers and has a new address:

www.Group4bowls.uk

Change of the web address is due to the setting up of a new domain name to save further expenditure. With these changes the expenditure on running the site for the next two years will be around 25% of that required by the original hosting service. *Alan* expressed his thanks to *Conway Fleming* for his help with the new site.

The membership voted to create the position of Webmaster. *Alan Warner* has been proposed and all thanked him for his past work and transferring the site to the new servers.

5. The Secretary's report, having been previously circulated brought up discussion on proposed changes to the Ashford Cup – Inter-Group Competition. Extract from the Secretary's report below:-

There are changes afoot in the Ashford Cup Competition.

The thinking at the moment is to include badged players in the squad, 1 per rink allowed. These badged players should be those that have progressed to their badge through the Ashford or county competitions over the last few years (2022 would include those that earned their badge in 2019 due to the 2020 "Pause"). There has been discussion proposing any badged player in any position, fears are that an essentially unbadged rink come up against a Middleton Skip (Like they would agree to play).

Discussions are ongoing regarding this scenario, should we allow a badged player to Skip or should they be limited to the number 3 position as support, effectively taking on a rink in a mentorship rôle.

The thinking behind this is that the two largest groups seem to get to the finals every year (with group 3 winning the competition for the last three years (first time in the Ashford history)).

Group 4 initially proposed these limits and a notice of proposal is being prepared for the ECBA AGM on 13th November at Falcon IBC 15:00. Personally I feel that the above limitations would uphold the tradition of the Ashford Cup in that unbadged players get an opportunity to shine. Yes I do know that badged players were part of the competition in the past and could play in any position, only being positively indicated on the score cards.

That said, my personal feelings are irrelevant, resistance is futile, it will happen. Does group 4 vote for limitations or accept badged players in any position? **You Group 4 Clubs must decide on our position.**

It was suggested that the 2 year limit for eligibility to play was pointless and if badged players were to play they should be limited to the number 2 position where their greater experience would not play such a pivotal rôle but they could still be involved in rink strategy.

Anecdotally it was said that one group may not be able to assemble a squad if they were not allowed badged players.

It was asked if willing badged players needed to be indicated on the Group 4 nomination forms. The selectors advised that it would not be necessary.

Dave Jarrold, St Chad's B.C. delegate and ECBA Media Officer explained that changes were still in the proposal stage and needed to be voted on at the ECBA AGM. It is envisioned that changes would undergo a 2 year trial period and be revisited once the results of any changes could be evaluated.

A view was expressed that 2 years down the road groups would have to be playing more experienced badged players to bolster every rink just to have a chance of winning.

Should badged players be included in the trials?

A consensus was reached, being that Group 4 are not at all keen on the idea and have no need to include badged players in the G4 Ashford Squad. Ideally we would like to see badged players limited to lead or the number two position. Group 4 are not against the idea per se but feel that it does dilute the spirit of the competition. However we would not wish to penalize any group which struggles to assemble a squad.

It was pointed out that Group 4, if all clubs attend the ECBA AGM, have a substantial number of votes and could be influential in a vote on any amendment to the proposition.

6. Green Testing for next season will, initially, be scheduled for the same week and day as last season with just the date marching on with the year.

Two of our team of green testers have decided to step down after last season's testing. *Geoff Carvosso* and *Alan Jenkins* have informed group that they will no longer be able to carry out green testing duties. Thank you Gentlemen for your past service, you will be missed.

Geoff has recommended *Trevor Plank* as a viable candidate for green testing. *Trevor* has moved out of the group 4 area but as County and Area Coach (coaching areas do not align with group structure) *Trevor* may still be interested in testing as a way to "Touch base" with a number of clubs in his area. Secretary to contact *Trevor* regarding testing.

We have two new volunteers for the vacant posts in the persons of *Chris Bryan* and *Colin Morton* both of Romford B.C. Both are very experienced and are known to most in group 4.

Thank you Gentlemen for stepping up to the task.

In addition we have *Alan Warner* and *Dave Farquhar* whom with experience of green testing at their respective clubs at the bowling end of the process also accompanied green testers in the 2021 season's tests. With their positions as Chairman and Secretary they are fully conversant with the process and paperwork involved.

There has been dissent over the testing at Harold Hill B.C. for the 2021 season. Subsequent to testing the club it's-self decided to withdraw their green from County, Group and Association leagues and competitions.

HHBC asserted that the condition of the green had deteriorated after testing but it was never good due to lack of maintenance by the council during the closed season (lack of access due to the Covid 19 pandemic was quoted to them).

Unfortunately the lead tester was overheard saying that "He did not want to fail any rinks on the Chairman's green for fear of prejudicing his chances of selection for group competitions".

Our Chairman *Alan Warner* has repeatedly stated that although his opinion may be sought regarding selection (as are others). The Selectors decide on squads and rinks, he would never interfere in such a petty way. HHBC have stated that they want the truth, if nothing else the report can be presented to the council as evidence of remedial work that needs doing. They (HHBC) have requested an alternative green tester for the 2022 season.

It was suggested that green testers were not all working to the same criteria and a guidance sheet should be issued.

It was pointed out that a guidance/tick sheet was filled out for each rink on each green with space for general condition of green along with observations and recommendations.

It was pointed out by one of our regular testers that testing was not as thorough as it was in the past with only one colour tested on each rink as opposed to all colours. With some clubs having 5 colours on each rink the requisite amount of time to test all would make it impossible to keep to the schedule.

It was suggested that the new Chairman convene a meeting of testers in February to ensure standards are maintained throughout testing. He (*Dudley Payne, proposed*) agreed, stating that he worried that clubs prepare for testing but become “Less vigilant” during the rest of the season.

7. *Phil Hensher*, Group 4 Treasurer pro tem (proposed as permanent Treasurer), handed out the examined accounts spread sheets and walked officers and delegates through them. Accounts were approved.

Phil explained that there were some objections to the shirts approved by Group 4 with some players choosing to buy orange shirts from alternative suppliers. Consequentially we have a range of colours from the original orange to almost red throughout the squads.

A new design of shirt is being looked at which would be predominately white with orange panels and collar, group 4 badge to be incorporated. *Conway Fleming* to be involved with the final design. It has been intimated that “At the moment we look like a rabble on the green”.

The Chairman *Alan Warner* thanked *Phil* for standing in after the unexpected resignation of our previous Treasurer and all the work that he has put in attending and representing at group matches.

8. *Conway Fleming* reported that there were a fair number of cancellations and postponements in the 2021 season. He thanked everyone for their patience with special thanks to all those that have stepped up to the mat, often on short notice, when matches have been rearranged.

Conway also expressed some disappointment with the lack of communication once a County Match was offered. He should not be having to chase people for an answer.

9. *Chris Bryan* reported that the ECBA Competition Secretary *John Tully* was pleased with the way things went though there were a few problems where some players reached the final stages of multiple competitions. Everything is ready for next season.

Conway Fleming explained that most competitions next season, barring singles, will be 18 ends.

Dave Jarrold added that last season’s experience showed that the substitution rules need looking at, currently they only allow for one substitution. Though extensions are at the Competition Secretary’s discretion, if one player is involved in multiple finals an additional substitute should be expected.

Chris Bryan pointed out that the draws were no longer in the handbook but competitors have to buy one anyway.

Dave Jarrold – Everything can be found on the portal these days – Maybe it’s time to do away with the handbook. The Group 4 and some club secretaries held the opinion that it was still a useful reference source and their copies were in constant use.

10. With *Ricky Watson* unable to attend *Alan Warner* thanked Kings Chase B.C. for hosting the Finals Day saying “All were played and we had a super day”.

There is still an outstanding Champion of Champions match to be played from some time ago, individual trophies for that year are still in *Alan’s* possession.

Alan thanked *Ricky* for all his hard work along with *Dave Farquhar* and all the Romford B.C.

players that rallied round at short notice to complete rinks for the Group 4 v RBA Jim Morris Cup.

11. Election of Officers...

Dudley Payne (Kings Chase) proposed as Chairman.
Philip Hensher (Romford) proposed as Treasurer.
Colin Morton (Romford) proposed as Group Selector.
Alan Warner (Harold Hill) proposed as Webmaster.

Those listed above were proposed, seconded and voted into office by majority vote of the delegates. With no other proposals received and none from the floor, all other officers agreed to carry on in their positions for the coming season.

The Group 4 committee is therefore made up thus...

Position	Name	Club
Chairman	<i>Dudley Payne</i>	Kings Chase
Group Secretary	<i>Dave Farquhar</i>	Romford
County Selector	<i>Conway Fleming</i>	Kings Chase
Assistant Secretary	<i>Chris Bryan</i>	Romford
Croup Competition Secretary	<i>Ricky Watson</i>	Rainham
Group Treasurer	<i>Phil Hensher</i>	Romford
Group Selector	<i>Terry Patrick</i>	Haynes Park
Group Selector	<i>Conway Fleming</i>	Kings Chase
Group Selector	<i>Dave King</i>	Romford
Group Selector	<i>Russell Gurnett</i>	Romford
Group Selector	<i>Colin Morton</i>	Romford
Webmaster	<i>Alan Warner</i>	Harold Hill
Financial Examiner	<i>Dennis Mills</i>	Clockhouse

Alan Warner handed over the Chairmanship to *Dudley Payne* whom thanked *Alan* for the sterling work during his tenure and wished him well in the Webmaster position.

Alan wished *Dudley* well in his new position and expressed his thanks to the committee, delegates and players of Group 4 for their help and support over the years. He also explained that the shields are prepared up to and including the 2023 season along with the outstanding trophies for the Champion of Champions competition. There are also 950 ECBA Group 4 score cards to be picked up.

The meeting was closed at 20:25