

The 2008 Annual General Meeting was held at the Civil Service Club in Exwick, Exeter, on Monday June 2nd with a 7.35pm start.

Clubs Present: The following clubs signed the attendance register: Alphington, Beacon Knights, Buckland Athletic, Central, Countess Wear, Crediton Saints, Crediton Youth, Cullompton Rangers, Culm United, Dawlish, Exmouth Town, Exwick, Heavitree Youth, Hemyock, Honiton Town, Kentisbeare, Lypstone, Ottery St Mary, Newton St Cyres, Phoenix Club, Pinhoe Spartans, Sidmouth Town, St Martins, Stoke Hill, Thorverton, Topsham Town, West Exe Youth, Whipton Youth, Exmouth Amateurs and Sidbury Rovers.

Also in attendance were The Chairman, John Penkethman and the Secretary Steve Birley, as well as two representatives from the Devon FA, Dave Keast and Rowena Price.

Apologies for absence were recorded from: Tiverton Town, Twyford Spartans, Des Furness, Broadclyst, Feniton, West Hill Wasps and Tedburn St Mary.

In terms of member clubs neither present nor sending apologies, that list is Bradninch, Moors Youth and Newton Town.

The meeting was opened by the Chairman who welcomed a healthy turn out and introduced the Devon FA visitors saying that once the meeting business was cleared there would be an opportunity for a question and answer session with the County personnel.

Election of officers: There were no proposals for changes to any of the key personnel and so Chairman John Penkethman, Treasurer Lynda Penkethman and Secretary Steve Birley were returned for another year unopposed.

On the subject of Age Group reps for the NON COMPETITIVE age groups the Chairman announced that with each current age group Rep willing to continue all that was required was a rep for the new Under 8 sides and that would need to be drawn from one of the member clubs when applications were in for next season.

The Chairman also felt that it might be a good time, if the Under 13 section proposal got the green light later in the meeting to perhaps dispense with individual age groups for the competitive age groups and seek to appoint a Registrations Officer and an Appointments Officer.

Treasurers Report:

There was a balance this time last year of £6,399.50 and the balance at this time is now £8,190.26. The Chairman did ask if the League required such a 'glossy' year book and asked if the printing/production cost could be reduced for this time³ next season. He also reported a healthy take for the Finals Day and confirmed that a donation had been made to Crediton United following the Finals Day held there. The cost of Trophies this year had been £3,060 whilst Referee costs for the season were £345.00

Matters Arising:

1. UNDER 10'S TO BECOME COMPETITIVE - Thorverton put forward a considered reasoning for the introduction of competitive football next season, it got some support, but greater support came for the continuation of how it is at present, played on a friendly basis and the motion was unanimously defeated by a show of hands (it was later to emerge that the Devon FA would not have been in favour of competitive football at Under 10 in league format).

2. GOAL SIZE FOR UNDER 11's – There was much debate on this subject and the FA rule book was quoted before the meeting agreed that next season (2008/09) ALL Under 11 goals shall be the one size of 16x7. Nigel Doe (Honiton Town) is happy to work with clubs towards the supply of these goals (he can do so at £158.50 each = £317.00 for a pair) , these being the match quality version NOT THE RECREATIONAL QUALITY and it was also said that for those clubs who might buy them as a 'one off' then at the end of the season they could perhaps sell them (with the League's help) to a fellow member club). This motion to play with 16x7 ACROSS the age group was voted on by a show of hands and it was unanimous in favour of the motion. (Dave Keast of Devon FA spoke at this stage about the Football Foundation funding possibilities and h encouraged clubs to contact the county FA to see if any help could be forthcoming.

3. WHY DOES THE LEAGUE PLAY 9ASIDE AT UNDER 11 – This question was raised from the floor and Dave Keast did say that 9aside can be sanctioned for Under 12, 13 and U14 by the County FA. The meeting debated this matter for a while and the matter was closed with the League continuing to adopt the 7aside to Under 10, 9aside for Under 11 and thereafter the 11 aside game.

4. PLATE COMPETITIONS – ARE THEY STILL NEEDED/DESIRED ACROSS THE AGE GROUPS – This matter was discussed in detail and it was voted on with regard to keeping the format AS IT IS AT PRESENT – ie with ONLY 1st Round losers making the Plate and the Plate Competitions being run on a single matchday although it was agreed that the Clubs/individuals who took on the task of running the respective Plate Competitions would have the flexibility to deliver similar to the superb effort made by Culm United in the past seasons Under 10 Plate Competition.

5. CUP FINAL AND PLATE FINAL VENUE – the question of where these should be held was discussed given the outstanding way that Crediton United had looked after the League this year. It was ultimately decided that the League should seek to ask Exeter City for permission to play the 2009 FINALS only at St. James park with the age group PLATE FINALS going to Crediton United.

(at this stage there was universal praise afforded to Crediton United Football Club for their efforts on Finals Day)

6. TROPHIES – The chairman told the meeting that the rule book would need tweaking with regard to the handing out of trophies in that he has never asked for additional funding beyond 14 trophies when often a far greater number are handed out - the Chairman is to use his prerogative to alter the wording accordingly.

7. SUBSTITUTES – The matter of substitutions was not debated after the FA rule book was quoted regarding the allowance of 11 v 11 with 7 subs, thus an 18 player squad being sanctioned by the FA.

8. THE INTRODUCTION OF AN UNDER 13 SECTION – The Chairman again opened this matter by saying, quite passionately that he was deeply upset with ‘some of the things apparently being said’ in various quarters regarding the motivation behind the EFL introducing an Under 13 section. He repeated yet again that the ONLY reason the League was seeking to introduce this age group was BECAUSE THE MEMBER CLUBS (THOSE PLAYING UNDER 12) had themselves requested that the EFL provide this form of football. Heavy debate followed, a reasoned argument against the introduction came from both Central and West Exe and after much debate the matter went to a vote. This vote went –

AGAINST THE INTRODUCTION OF UNDER 13 – 5 CLUBS

FOR THE INTRODUCTION – 19 CLUBS

As a result of the vote the League is to proceed with the introduction of an Under 13 League for next season.

Dave Keast of Devon County FA was asked what the County FA’s view was on this matter and he said that as long as the Leagues rule book was in order and submitted to County then there would be no objection to the League running an Under 13 section next season (2008/09).

9. FORMATION OF A LEAGUE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – this had been one ‘concern’ raised in the debate as to the introduction of an Under 13 section and the Chairman said that moves were being made to recruit individuals to particular posts to help with the overall management of the League and announcements would be made in due course. In the meantime he did ask that people interested perhaps go away, think the matter over and subsequently contact the secretary if they are willing to stand for the Committee. Nigel Doe (Honiton Town) stated at the meeting that he would be happy to join the Management Committee).

10. DIVISIONAL MAKE UP FOR NEXT SEASON – The meeting discussed this matter and Norman Minto reminded the members that at the previous years AGM it had been decided that ‘promotion and relegation’ would apply between Red and Blue Divisions and the most appropriate way to arrive at three Divisions of approximately TEN Clubs each would be to follow the previous AGM, move the bottom four up and down between RED and BLUE and then take the First Ten Clubs, the second Ten and the third Ten to arrive at the Under 13 Divisions for next season.

With the Under 11’s and Under 12’s for next season it was agreed to hold a Managers Meeting. These will take place on MONDAY JULY 7th (it had been hoped to hold them over two Monday nights but the room at the Civil Service Club is unavailable and so we will address the matter on ONE night. So the Under 11 Managers for next season will meet between 7.15pm and 8.15 pm on July 7th and the Under 12 Managers will meet at the same venue between 8.15pm and 9.15 pm and at this meeting the respective Divisions will be made up.

11. REFEREE’S FEES FOR NEXT SEASON – It was agreed that the minimum fee for a referee for next season should be £20 in line with other Youth Football.

12. TEAM FEES – The fees for teams playing in the League next season would remain at the £35 they had been for the past season.

13. MOTION FOR A RULE CHANGE TO RULE 5 (PLAYERS SIGNING FOR A CLUB RATHER THAN A TEAM WITHIN THE CLUB) – Heavitree Youth put forward a reasoned argument for a change to this rule as there were many clubs who perhaps, owing to limited numbers, would find life easier if a player was signed for THE CLUB rather than A SINGLE TEAM WITHIN THE CLUB, but after debate and a vote the motion was defeated and Rule 5 remains unchanged.

14. NEW TEAMS JOINING THE LEAGUE – New teams now had the chance to introduce themselves, CLYST ROVERS (U11), SIDBURY ROVERS (U12) and EXMOUTH AMATEURS (U9) all stood to explain who they were. The meeting was also advised by the Secretary that IPPLEPEN (U13) and NEWTON ABBOT 66 (U10) were also joining and he was also aware of a number of other 'new sides' being formed by current member clubs.

15. DATE FOR THE PRE-SEASON MEETING – The date for the annual pre-season meeting was set and it is to be held at the Civil Service Club Exwick on Monday August 18th with a 7.30pm start. At this meeting the Cup Draws will be made and the handbooks handed out.

There being no further business the meeting was concluded at 9:45pm when the floor was given to Dave Keast and Rowena Price from the County FA – one interesting fact to emerge from this was regarding the ID card's, THEY ARE HERE FOR KEEPS AND ALL CLUBS MUST ADHERE – the Magazine that County had sent to ALL Clubs earlier in the season carried details and Managers/Coaches need to be aware that no card/no play may well apply. The County also wished to stress that NO COMPETITIVE FOOTBALL what so ever can be played at Under 8 level next season (2008/09) – the Chairman asked if it was likely this would be lengthened in future years to include older age groups but was told there was no indication at this time that would be so.