

Monday 1 September 2025 at EBRBL

Almost all teams were represented, and the meeting started at 20:07.

Apologies for absence received from Black Horse.

1. Les opened the meeting by welcoming all those present and covered the above apologies for absence.
2. The previous minutes were approved.
3. Les gave his chairman's report (**attached**) and was received with polite applause.
4. Alan gave a full report (**attached**) and also got applause.
5. The current committee other than Neil were elected unopposed. Darren Thompson was nominated to fill the second Ordinary Member place which was proposed by Les and seconded by Howard. The meeting approved the nomination.

Les Berry - |Chair
Howard Smith - Secretary
Alan Bullock - Treasurer
Linda Johnson - Ordinary Member
Darren Thompson - Ordinary Member

6 The league format was discussed. Les explained the reasoning behind the league for this season being 1 division of 11 teams playing each other home and away. The only concern would be towards the end of the season with no relegation as an "incentive". This was accepted by the meeting.

Les explained that as the Elleston Trophy would only have 3 teams it would be best if the competition was dropped. Teams with a free week on the match dates could arrange Round Robin events or friendlies. This was accepted by the meeting.

7. The Mike Russell trophy is in poor condition, and the black base will not take any further engraving. We have 2 options.

1. Buy a new trophy
2. Add an extra wooden (or similar) plinth base to the current trophy.

The meeting agreed that an extra base was the best option.

8. Alan confirmed that the subs for 25/26 would remain at £45. Accepted with applause.

9. It was proposed that the league would be renamed "Barnet and Potters Bar Cribbage" with a new logo (see above). Les gave the reasoning behind this and the proposal for both name and logo was accepted by the meeting.

10. The Mike Russell cup would be of the same format as last season with the following groups drawn

Group 1 Exchequers, Jokers, Black Horse, PBCC

Group 2 Steamers, SCCC, BSCA

Group 3 Evicted, 3 Horseshoes, Builders, Legionnaires

11. AOB. The only item was regarding the awarding of certificates from this season for league and cup runners up. The certificates would be awarded to teams but if an individual player wanted one they could request it. The singles and pairs trophies for winners and runners up would be retained.

There was a short intermission between 20:33 and 20:55 to allow food and drink to be consumed.

Following the resumption the trophies and team certificates were presented to the winners and runners up.

The meeting closed at 21:03 and the floor gave a vote of thanks to the committee.

Howard Smith
Secretary

Chairman's Report 2024/25

Before I begin, I keep the previous chairman's reports starting with my first which covered the 2004/5 season. Idly reading through got me thinking about the changes we have seen in 20 years. In that year we had 14 teams playing (which increased to 15 and even 16 teams in the coming two years). Of the 14 teams, only 5 teams remain which are Chequers, BSCA, Jokers, Builders and Black Horse. Several of the venues no longer exist as pubs like the Alex, and Chequers. The Green Monks from the Monken Holt won Division One, and Barnet Con Club Division Two. The Singles competition was won by somebody called Bob Whitlam who played for the Alex – that was for the second year running. He will talk you through those victories in great detail if asked. My advice would be DON'T. The pairs competition was won by Michael Brennan and Bill Grosch from the Potters Bar Legion. The Mike Russle cup was won by the Players, beating the Builders of New Barnet, who included a young chap called Les Berry!

Alexander, Green Monks, Barnet Con Club, BSCA, Kings Head, Chequers, Jokers, Players Builders, Potters Bar RBL, Black Horse, Potters Bar Con Club, AMC, Lord Kitchener

Anyway, enough of "All Our Yesterdays"

The 39th season started, as always with the AGM and where would we be without the last minute hitch or two such as a declaration of war, deadly plague, or Jim swearing a lot. Well, last year didn't fail us, as no sooner had the fixtures been sorted than one of our most successful teams of recent years, from the Oak Hill Bowls announced their withdrawal. The cause was the sudden sad death of Barry Brennan, a loss of other players and the Machiavellian Barnet Council who forced the withdrawal of the bowls team before the season had commenced (indeed they had paid their subs for the year, which we have now returned to them).

Our misfortune was not ended though, as the Kitchener, with new "management" (if one can call it that) decided that having two crib teams, ensuring 15 or so customers a week wasn't commercially sensible, and turfed out the two teams in favour of a quiz. So much for a 30 year history! Thankfully, the Legion of East Barnet was able to host three teams, with more team name changes to confuse everyone (including me) we were set for the season commencement. I hope my letters to the McMullen management team about the situation caused the new landlord some hairy moments, although I am sad to say he wasn't sacked on the spot. I'm not sure I'll be allowed in there ever again!

With such late changes, we agreed to continue with two divisions, the premier division with just five teams.

With the demise of Oak Hill Bowls, Division One was heavily dominated by Potters Bar teams. Black Horse, the champions of last year, were favourites to retain the trophy but had a mixed season, leaving the BSCA and Exchequers fighting for top spot. The exchequers were victorious by 4 points but remarkably won only 9 games to the BSCAs 11. The difference was a number of large victories for the Exchequers – an 8-1 and several 7-2s. Remember, it's not just the win, but significant wins.

With six teams in the second Division, there were no "blank" weeks for teams. An exciting finish saw the Legionnaires pip the Jokers by just one point. Whilst the Legion won 14 games against 8, it was the Jokers who garnered 6 more legs than the Legion and nearly took first place. On the last week, Jokers managed to achieve an 8-1 win taking them to 124 points. On the same day, Legionnaires won 6-3 though, and managed to get to a winning score of 125. Phew! One face who will not be seen on the circuit after more years as captain of the Jokers than she probably cares to remember is Sally Gunning who has decided to hang up her cribbage board and pegs. Unless she changes her mind (unusual I know for a woman) we wish her well as she drifts slowly to her dotage!

A big change to the Mike Russle Cup was made with preliminary rounds to decide entry to the cup proper. This seemed to work well, and it is proposed to continue with the same format this season. The Black Horse made up for their performance in Division One and beat Steamers & SCCC to reach the final. The Exchequers continued their run of form and beat jokers and Legionnaires to take on the Black Horse in the final. The final was won in fine style by the Black Horse. The "plate" competition was won by Potters Bar CC, beating BSCA in the final.

Further success for the Black Horse ensued with the pairs competition, won by Chris Hale and John Allen who beat Neil Appleyard and Ken Allen of the Legion. The singles competition was won by Alan Bullock of the Steamers who triumphed over Ros Enright of PBCC. Like Bob, Alan will talk you through his victory in much detail if asked.

Overall, six teams in two divisions would have worked well, with promotion and relegation to keep interest throughout the season. The withdrawal of the bowlers of Oak Hill somewhat undermined Division One. With 11 teams, a one division league looks the most favourable of options, but does pose some issues of maintaining the competitive element throughout the season.

Through the Summer the friendly "round robin" events have been held at EBRBL, SCCC, PBCC and the 3HS. It has become a highly popular Summer distraction with the format providing a very social event but with a competitive element present. The opportunity to play with and against a host of different players each week has helped many to meet new friends. We will continue to support this highly worthwhile event. I would urge those of you who haven't tried the format to give it a go. A few doubters have "taken the plunge" and have thoroughly enjoyed and embraced it.

My committee has once again supported me to keep the crib league running and I thank them, on your behalf, for their efforts. Neil Appleyard has decided, after 10 years to step down from the committee. I thank him for his efforts over those years.

We plan to start the 40th year of the crib league on Monday 29th September 2025.

I have now been chairman for 21 years. I am beginning to feel it is time for another to step up and take over. I will, of course, continue this year, but would like to be in a position to hand over fully in 10 years time!

Thanks once again to the Legion for hosting the AGM and presentation night and for the food. As always, it only remains for me to offer you the best of luck for your crib season. Enjoy your Monday nights. Thank you for your continued attention.

Les Berry

Chairman

1/9/2025