

Tournament Secretary's Report to the 2014 AGM

A summary of the 2014 Frome Congress results is given below/overleaf.

This was the 25th Congress and we were able to celebrate it with an enhanced prize fund thanks to a very generous donation from a very good friend of the Congress.

The Congress ran well and without any significant problems, although it is always a bit nerve-racking when half the entries in the Open come in the last 2 days before the event. This year we had on-line entry for the first time and about a third of entries came in that way.

The Congress is very much a team effort and the work put in behind the scenes' by Gerry Udell and by the volunteer controllers Kevin Paine, Chris Purry and Jerry Humphries should be recognised and applauded. This year we also had help on the final day from Geoff Gammon from Bristol.

However, the Congress does rather urgently need new blood in the organising team as neither Gerry Udell nor I will be doing it for another 25 years. So if there are any volunteers out there...?

I'd like to say something about numbers. We really need a minimum of about 150-160 to remain financially viable. Numbers in the Minor, Intermediate and Major sections are fairly stable, regularly approaching 40 or more in each case. However, an increase in the numbers entering the Open is needed. Entry to the Open from the stronger Somerset League clubs is extremely disappointing (no entries from Taunton in the last 4 years, for example). If the Congress is not adequately supported, then at some point it will fold and may not be resurrected.

The hope was that the increased prize fund this year would encourage a significant increase in numbers from last year's rather low entry. Numbers were up, but not by as much as we hoped. I think that there is perhaps a problem in having the Congress on the adjacent weekend to a 4NCL event and that this may adversely impact the Open especially. Also, this year there was a clash with a Mind Sports International event which was ineptly arranged late in the season for the same weekend in Bristol.

We are proposing to move the Congress back by a week next year. This will put it two weeks after the early May Bank Holiday weekend (4 NCL) and 2 weeks before the late May Bank Holiday (Cotswold Congress). It will also mean it will not be the day after the General Election (in 2010 numbers dropped by about 20 compared to 2009 and 2011). MSI will be emailed directly with notice of the date as it seems they don't look at the ECF Tournament Calendar.

Results for Twenty Fifth Frome Congress May 9th-11th 2014

145 players entered and winners were:

Open :-

First: (4.5/5)	Paul Byway (Hertford)
Second Equal (3.5/5)	Carl Bicknell (Horfield and Redland) Barry Morris (Bath)
British Championship Qualifying Place	Paul Byway
170 - 180 Grading prize (2.5/5)	Theo Slade (Barnstaple)
Under 170 Grading Prize (3.5/5)	Stephen Appleby (Gillingham & Shaftesbury)

Major (U170):-

First (4.5/5)	Tim Woodward (Trowbridge)
Second Equal (3.5/5)	Paul Jackson (Coulsdon) Karl Biswas (Oxford City) Mark Littleton (Wimborne) Ivor (Annetts (Tiverton)
145-155 Grading prize (3/5)	Alan Papier (Bristol & Clifton) Paul Tew (South Wales) Roger Knight (Yeovil) Mark Leonard (Trowbridge)
Under 145 Grading Prize (3/5)	Tim Chinnick (Hanham)

Intermediate (U140):-

First (5/5)	Jamie Macdonald (Wimborne)
Second equal (4/5)	Thomas Cooper (Trowbridge) Max French (Frome) Keith Bateman (Salisbury)
120 – 130 Grading Prize (3.5/5)	Greg Willett (Bath)
Under 120 Grading prize (3/5)	Joe Clapp (Norton Radstock)

Minor (U115):-

First Equal (4.5/5)	Stephen Crockett (Redditch) Matthew Hutt (Wiltshire) Frank Cheeseman (Sportsman Kent)
90 – 105 Grading Prize (3.5/5)	Gary Woods (Norton Radstock)
Under 90 Grading prize (2.5/5)	Keith Sherlock (Yeovil)

Somerset Trophies

Denys Bonner (*Highest placed Somerset player in the Open*): Barry Morris (Bath)
Leon York Memorial (*Highest placed Somerset player in the Major*): Tim Woodward (Trowbridge)
Roy Hossell (*Highest placed Somerset player in the Intermediate*): Thomas Cooper (Trowbridge)
Cyril Chapman (*Highest placed Somerset player in the Minor*) Ivan Stringer (Yeovil)
Jean Mackereth (*Highest placed ungraded Somerset player in the Minor*) Martin Maber (Taunton)

Team Competition

Bath (Peter Cusick, John Leon, Greg Willett, Barry Morris)