

Mid-Sussex Times 18<sup>th</sup> August 1914 page 6

**MID - SUSSEX FOOTBALL  
 AND THE  
 EUROPEAN CRISIS.**

**IMPORTANT DECISION BY THE  
 LEAGUE.**

**SPECIAL MEETING AT HAYWARDS  
 HEATH.**

"To consider whether the present state of the nation's affairs does affect or should be made to affect Mid-Sussex League Football" a special general meeting of the Mid-Sussex Football League was held at the Station Hotel, Haywards Heath, on Friday evening. Mr. J. A. WELLS (of Crawley) occupied the chair, supported by Mr. C. J. Armstrong (Hon. Secretary) and a large number of Club representatives.

By postcard the Hon. Secretary had previously put the matter before the Clubs from three points of view—(1) Considering the great draw by the authorities on men in every sphere of life, is it possible to raise teams during the coming season? (2) If it is possible, will not the large amount of money subscribed and being subscribed by the public for national uses probably mean much less financial support to football? (3) In such case, will clubs be financially able to meet their match obligations?

Mr. ARMSTRONG stated that he had written to the Railway Company asking whether any cheap tickets would be available for footballers this season, and the reply said they hoped nothing would prevent them issuing the same.

The CHAIRMAN asked for the views of the different Clubs on the matter, and they were then expressed.

Mr. E. J. S. PUGHE (Burgess Hill) said he had a proposition to bring forward from his Club to the effect that the League should shut down until Christmas, at any rate, that a meeting be called in December, and that, if thought advisable, each Division should be divided into two parts, the matches played off and the winners of the two parts play for the championship.

It was stated that that was also the feeling of the Newhaven Club.

Hassocks, Cuckfield, Brighton Training College (whose ground is occupied by soldiers at the present time), Crawley, Horsham and Haywards Heath stated they were unable to run, at least, until Christmas. Subscriptions—or the lack of them—was the stumbling-block in many instances, particularly at Haywards Heath, the Secretary (Mr. A. J. LEE) saying that where he had £30 last year he had not got a shilling this year.

Hove were specially anxious to run. It appeared that they were not dependent on outside subscriptions for their funds, the members subscribing well themselves and paying their own railway fares, and they seemed rather scornful at the fact that the country clubs could not do the same. It was pointed out to their representatives, however, by the CHAIRMAN, that their members were generally of a higher standing than those of the country clubs, and what they could afford to do others could not.

Ardingly (represented by Mr. L. KEIN HETT) were in favour of making a start and St. Margaret's Athletic (Brighton) held the same view.

Mr. ARMSTRONG had written to the Secretary of the Sussex County Football Association on the matter, and the reply stated that he would have liked to have seen the F.A. postpone the opening of the season for a month, but as they had not done so he did not think they could do anything but fall into line and make the best of it.

Hove suggested the formation of a Preliminary Division for the Clubs who were willing to play.

Hurstpierpoint, Lindfield and Plumpton wished to run. At Plumpton they were "well able to get the money and the players." The other delegates thought them rather lucky!

"If we in Burgess Hill," said Mr. PUGHE, "play football before Christmas at the very earliest we shall certainly be sure of losing a great deal of support."

The CHAIRMAN said the war would give an excuse to a lot of people they had to draw subscriptions from, and those who were in the habit of coming forward and putting down their guineas would not do so. That was the case with Crawley.

Three Bridges were situated in a like position to Crawley.

The Plumpton representative urged that there must be some left at home to work, and they ought to have the recreation if it could be got for them. The chief supporters of his Club were all willing to give their usual subscriptions.

Friendly matches were suggested. Newhaven and East Grinstead were favourable to this, but Burgess Hill was opposed to any football at all while the present state of affairs continued. The CHAIRMAN, too, thought they ought not to play football in this time of war.

Mr. M. W. T. RIDLEY (East Grinstead): "I beg to take exception to that." He went on to say that it seemed to him they all had a certain duty to perform. The soldiers had to do the fighting, and they, in their turn, had something to do in keeping the public mind off, perhaps, the worst sides of the question. It would be a fine thing to play, at any rate, in the case of those Clubs which could manage to do so. Much depended, he agreed, on the course which events took.

Mr. CANNON (East Grinstead) said it was evident that the question of winning matches this season must be a very secondary consideration. He thought, however, that in getting a certain amount of football they were doing a little bit to help those who inevitably must undergo some hardship and distress in the near future. It would certainly not be an unwise suggestion to form a Mixed League for this season, because all the teams had been affected by the calling up of the Territorials, &c., though some had been hit harder than others.

Mr. HETT thought friendly matches could be played until Christmas.

It was pointed out that that could be done independently of the League.

Mr. RIDLEY moved that a meeting of the League be called in three months' time—November 16th.

Mr. PUGHE seconded.

Mr. PRATT (Plumpton) proposed an amendment that the meeting be held in two months' time.

Mr. WAKELEY (Hove) seconded.

The amendment was put and lost, only four voting for it, and the original motion was carried.

The CHAIRMAN expressed the hope that by November the war affairs would be brought to a head and that then they would be able to play football again.