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CHESS SCOTLAND

AGM 2015

Director Reports 2014/15

President

This is my final report at the end of my 3 year term of office as President of Chess Scotland.

It has been another year which has seen positives for Chess in Scotland. Again, the encouraging feedback I receive as President outweighs the negativity which is always encountered around the margins of Chess Scotland.

To begin with, I would like to thank Steve Mannion Senior for chairing the 2014 AGM at short notice. I was unable to attend due to a family bereavement.

It is with regret that Chess Scotland notes the passing of the long-standing Glenrothes Congress but encouraging to note the introduction of new congresses for the season ahead under the tutelage of David Congalton, Chess Scotland Financial Director.

Continuing on a positive vein, I would like to offer my congratulations to Andrew Burnett and Clement Sreeves on achieving the FIDE Master Title. Also to others who have recently achieved Title Norms - it can only be a matter of time until Chess Scotland sees a raft of new Title holders. The foundation of many of these successes is due to the huge amount of work put in by the various junior chess organisations to promote the future of the game. This culminated in Kai Pannwitz winning the U-14 European Boys Championship in September, 2014 - a magnificent performance .

I was involved in the process that saw Karen Howie appointed as the new Membership Secretary, following interview, and she took up post on 1st April. I would take this opportunity to offer my thanks to Dick Heathwood for the sterling work he carried out as Karen's predecessor.

President

Progress has been made in dealing with the CS Archives and I await a meeting with a representative of the Glasgow Chess League to decide what is to happen with their archives which are stored alongside ours.

Much of my time in 2015 was spent working on the New Constitution and I would like to thank my fellow Working Party members and Moderators for their sterling efforts which culminated in the SGM held on 14th July.

Away from this, I was able to attend an NEJCA event which allowed me to present the Young Player Of the Year awards; also I undertook the training required to become an additional PVG Signatory for Chess Scotland.

It is unfortunate that, despite a full and frank discussion last year, personal opinions of a critical and negative nature still continue to be aired on the (Open) forum section of the Chess Scotland Website. Attempts to undermine the organisation and/or discredit individuals do nothing for the image of Chess Scotland!

It was a fine end to the season with the Scottish Championships being a great success in new premises, which were a hit with the players. This shows what can happen when members of Chess Scotland work together to promote the image of CS in other people's eyes. This continued success is a huge tribute to Alex McFarlane and his team.

I will not name the individuals who have been of a great support to me throughout the trials and tribulations of my Presidency as some may find this embarrassing - I can only say thank you so much, you are the people who make Chess Scotland a successful organisation!

I offer good luck to my successor whoever it may be

I would like to start my 2014/15 report with a note of thanks for all the hard work done by all the Directors this year. To all the Arbiters, Tournament Organisers and people that go along to clubs and tournaments to help, you have my thanks and admiration.

Whilst on the subject of thanks, I would like to pay tribute to Dick Heathwood who stepped down as Membership Secretary after 6 years and Standards Chair after 3. Dick has had a thankless job to do and we do appreciate all the hard work he has put into it.

It would also be very remiss of me to not pay tribute to our outgoing President, Hamish Glen. It has been a very hard three years for Hamish and this is something I will come back to later. I know at this years AGM he will be able to sit back with a sense of satisfaction that he did it!

Hamish and I have had our ups and downs, this is a normal Exec / President relationship ,if we are agreeing with each other all the time, we are doing it wrong! I hope Hamish will look back on the good aspects of his presidency (Commonwealth Games etc) and gloss over any of the bad ones! I wish Hamish all the best in whatever he wishes to do next.

This year has been a very interesting one for me. I am now more involved with FIDE, through the Anti Cheating Commission. We are looking in the future for Federations to have their own commissions to deal with domestic games. I really want Scotland to be at the forefront of this and it is something I will speak with the new Standards Chair about.

One amusing aspect this year has been Karen joining the team. I now have to watch my Ps and Qs at meetings! I am pleased to see Karen getting involved. She has wanted to do so for a while as she sees the enjoyment I get out of it.

I have maintained contacts with the ECF and ECU and was invited by the ECU President to go to the Glorney this year. Unfortunately I was unable to due to the timing.

One thing that both dismays and frustrates me is the continual criticism of Directors and Officials. People seem to forget, we are volunteers we get nothing out of this other than a sense of accomplishment. We are human and will make mistakes. We have several vacancies at the moment. Think you can do better? Why not volunteer and put yourself in the firing line.

One area that has gone horribly wrong this year is Junior chess. Due to a double booking the Primary Individual had to be moved. Three days before we were due to go, we received a message that there was not enough staff to cover the weekend and our booking was cancelled. These are events completely outwith our control and we cannot apologise enough for them. Karen, David Congalton and I are attempting to find somewhere reasonably priced that we can run the Primary Individual in September or early October. The people that should have qualified in June will be invited again. It is important that the children who should have been able to play, are given their opportunity.

This year, we held probably one of the best Scottish Championships to date. We could not have done that without the financial assistance from the Benefactor and I cannot thank them enough.

Coming up this year, we have the decision on whether bridge can be classified as a sport. That is of great interest to us as it gives us a way in if the court ruling is upheld. That being the case, we have another avenue for funding.

Executive Director / FIDE

This years AGM sees two candidates for President. For the first time that I can remember, we have a real election by two people. This is not one person trying to take out another, but two people who are interested in making a difference. I am looking forward to this AGM.

The number of vacancies is a concern but we have things in place to make sure everything is covered. Hopefully going forward the right people can be found for the roles.

I'll finish off with my usual plea. Please get involved, be it at local, regional or national level. We are crying out for people to help out at all levels. If you want chess to continue and flourish, it is going to take us all pulling together to do it.

Here's to 2015/16. Hopefully a very good year.

An extraordinary year supported by some extraordinary people is how I would sum up the last year.

A huge number of people have contributed to allow Chess Scotland to do so much with so little. Chess Scotland has been fantastically well assisted by financial donations during the year, some of them extremely generous.

Chess in Scotland has been supported by individuals like the anonymous benefactor of the Commonwealth and Scottish Championships, the anonymous funder that contributed to the hosting of the Glorney, the SJCAET who also contributed to the Glorney and helped fundraise, those who made donations to the Glorney fundraising appeal, anonymous contributors to the expenses of the Olympiad team and the anonymous donor who assisted towards the expenses of the 2300+ team which participated European Seniors.

If I have forgot anyone please accept my apologies. The contributions have been staggering and show what chess means to members. Chess Scotland is grateful to all those who made financial donations and contributed to such an extraordinary year.

We are also grateful to the myriad of people who gave their time during the year to help make a success of so many events, as well as those at regional and club level who do the hard work in their areas for the benefit of chess locally and, as a consequence, nationally.

With people making whatever contribution they could we were able to do all of the following:

- ◆ Run the Chess Scotland Grading System.
- ◆ Produce six quality chess magazines.
- ◆ Produce the Chess Scotland Grading list.
- ◆ Produce the Chess Scotland rules book.
- ◆ Provide a website giving news, a calendar of events, live online grading and other information.

Finance Director

- ◆ Provide the PVG scheme for arbiters, coaches and chaperones
- ◆ Provide support for clubs and associations through such things as the insurance scheme.
- ◆ Run the Chess Scotland Grand Prix
- ◆ Provide arbiter support to events throughout Scotland.
- ◆ Provide equipment for events throughout Scotland.
- ◆ Provide live boards for events throughout Scotland.
- ◆ Run the Commonwealth Championships for the first time, incorporating the Scottish Championships.
- ◆ Successfully host the 2014 Glorney and Gilbert International chess event and provide free accommodation for all 20 Scottish participants, coaches and officials.
- ◆ Send a team to the 2014 Chess Olympiad in Tromso, Norway.
- ◆ Provide support to our team in the World Seniors Team Championship 2014 in Vilnius, Lithuania.
- ◆ Provide support to our participants in the World Individual Seniors Championship 2014 in Katerini, Greece.
- ◆ Provide support to two teams to the World Seniors Championship 2015 in Dresden, Germany.
- ◆ Provide support to our participant in the World Women's Championship 2015 in Sochi, Russia.
- ◆ Provide support to three of our members to allow them to qualify as FIDE trainers.
- ◆ Support our International Juniors participation in the 2014 EU Youth Championship in the Czech Republic, where Kai Pannwitz became the under 14 European Boys Champion.
- ◆ Provide support to the International Junior participation in the Liverpool Quadrangular event.
- ◆ Provide support for a Scotland team to play in and against the Basque Country.
- ◆ Run the 2015 Scottish Girls Championships.

- ◆ Run the 2014 Primary Individual Championships.
- ◆ Support the Player of the Year award and the Jonathan Rowson and Cherie Booth awards.
- ◆ Run the 2014 and 2015 Nancy Elder, Richardson and Spens Cups.
- ◆ Run the 2014 MacIsaac Cup

With an average annual income of between £24,000 and £27,000 before donations and contributions it would be impossible for Chess Scotland to do anywhere near what it does without the goodwill and support of members, benefactors and volunteers.

The 2014 Commonwealth Championships is a perfect example. Without our generous anonymous benefactor such an International event would never have come to Scotland. Without the team of volunteers, headed by Alex MacFarlane, who put in an enormous of time and effort the event would never have got off the ground.

The £2,805 deficit for the Championships shown in the 2015 accounts was covered by the balance of the contributions which had been carried forward from previous years. I should add that a significant contribution was also received last year towards the Commonwealth Championships and a further significant contribution made to the hosting of the 2015 Scottish Championships.

I don't think that it is just coincidence that Scotland had been bereft of newly titled players for some time before the benefactor started supporting the Scottish Championships and just recently we have had two new FM's and a couple of IM norms in the space of a few months.

The Scottish Championships carried forward £7,688 to 2015-16 and the Edinburgh event.

With the Scottish Championship deficit extracted from the 2015 accounts, the accounts show a deficit of £4,406, which is just under £1,500 more than the approved budget for the year but £1,100 less than the previous year's surplus (with Scottish Championship numbers extracted).

Over the last three years, since I took on the role, Chess Scotland has shown a deficit in 2012-13 of £576, a surplus in 2013-14 of £5665 and a deficit of £4,406 in the last financial year (again with Scottish Championship numbers extracted). So, despite the enormous loss of the annual Government Grant we have managed to retain a small surplus of £683 over the three year period.

However, on first look at the accounts there are one or two concerns, particularly the drop in income from memberships, which is split across subscriptions and publications and also the drop in income from grading fees.

The 2012 accounts show income from membership as £13,030, the 2013 was £13,378 and 2014 saw £13,990 coming in. So, a £10,868 figure for 2015 is significant and equivalent to just under 80 full members.

However, I believe that the membership secretary position becoming vacant at the end of 2014 and being temporarily filled until April, was a significant contributory factor to the drop in income and the early indications since Karen Howie took over the role are that this is being addressed.

The grading fee figures for previous years were:

2012 - £4,487

2013 - £3,886

2014 - £4,619

2015 - £3,853

It would have been good if the 2014 figure could have been repeated but looking at the congress events in 2013-14 compared to 2014-15 shows that there were 12 weekend congresses in the former and only 8 last year, with the 2 Inverness events, the South Ayrshire and Glenrothes missing from last year.

With Inverness returning next month and at least a couple of new events in Livingston and Perth already on the calendar for next year, as well as the regular events such as Dundee, Oban and Edinburgh which have been running for a good few years now, the income from grading fees should go back up this year.

So, we're doing alright, doing quite a lot and managing what we have. However, I just feel Chess Scotland could do so much more and individuals could possibly do more too. I have had a number of discussions over recent months about a wide range of topics and areas where we could provide some support.

A funding committee was proposed at a previous meeting and members selected but for a number of valid reasons has yet to meet. I would hope to help push that forward early in the coming year.

I think it might also be useful to get together with one or two other people who have expressed an interest in assisting with fundraising and coming up with ideas, since the funding committee was selected, as well as meeting up with representatives of affiliated organisations such as the Scottish Chess & Draughts Association of the Deaf and the Braille Chess Association, to see how if we can help each other more and work together more.

Over the next three years I would hope that Chess Scotland can continue to provide the sort of support listed in previous pages but also extend support to other areas where we can help to grow chess in Scotland. It may be that we could assist in getting competitions and events off the ground with the assistance of equipment or funding

Finance Director

support or provide coaching support for events through the list of Chess Scotland coaches. I am also a big fan of the suggestion that Chess Scotland could somehow venture into the world of online chess, as while the technological way or the best way to do this is beyond me, I do see the potential for Chess Scotland to connect with more people who enjoy chess in Scotland and ultimately persuade them to walk out their front doors and join a local chess club or start a new one altogether. I do think we can take a note from FIDE on this and that it would result in getting more people involved in over the board chess in Scotland. At the end of the day Chess Scotland is the national association for chess in this country, not just over the board chess.

I feel sure that members will have their own ideas of what more we can do and I would welcome any ideas, suggestions or input.

Membership Secretary

This is my first report to the AGM as Membership Secretary.

Here is the current numbers in membership with a comparison to previous years.

Full	April 2009	April 2010	April 2011	April 2012	April 2013	April 2014	July 2015
Adult	156	153	151	155	161	162	145
Under 17	9	5	6	2	1	6	6
Under 14	13	11	11	10	17	14	11
Family Adult	20	28	22	22	23	22	25
Family Junior	2	2	4	4	2	2	4
Basic							
Adult	147	146	149	183	159	156	150
Under 17	12	8	6	11	9	6	5
Under 14	20	22	26	22	27	27	21
Family Adult	36	46	38	21	13	16	16
Family Junior	25	21	18	11	13	8	4
Patron & Life							
Patron	5	5	4	5	6	6	4
Life		109	111	108	111	110	99
Life magazine	131	29	28	31	28	32	30
TOTALS	576	585	574	585	570	567	520

Firstly I would like to thank my predecessor Dick Heathwood for the fantastic job he did over the last 6 years. I'd also like to thank David Congalton for standing in after Dick left the role and for his assistance and Andy who's computer skills have really helped me.

Membership numbers have dipped this year, to be honest I would suggest it is down to the double handover. I have made a few mistakes but they have been rectified quickly.

Currently the system is based on Excel spreadsheets and Andy is looking at producing an App that will make the tasks easier. One thing I am looking to do this year is a comprehensive user manual to make any hand over a lot easier.

Membership Secretary

I have followed Dicks suggestions from last year and as much as possible, I am using email to send out reminders and inserts into the magazines.

The next job is to start publishing the monthly statistics, I have been concentrating on the admin side for now, now I am comfortable with it, I can start to expand the role again. Look out for this appearing on the website soon.

The vast majority of people are renewing with Paypal which makes it easier. This is something I would like to see continue.

One thing I think we are going to have to think about is what is the value of membership, or to put it another way, what can we do to make membership more desirable? I would be interested to hear from ideas from people on this.

One thing Andy has agreed to do is to take membership forms with him when he is arbiting. This will allow people to both apply and renew their membership at tournaments he is at. I will be giving out membership cards at tournaments where possible as well to cut down on postage costs (again, thanks for the tip Dick!)

Karen Howie.

REPORT TO CHESS SCOTLAND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 2015

FROM THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP

Members are elected at an AGM to serve a three year term. August 2015 sees the completion of a term and the following members have decided against seeking re-appointment:-

Judith Milton

John S R Smith

Ken Stewart

Dick Heathwood (Chairman)

The Committee wishes to place on record its sincere thanks to all four members for their contributions, especially the retiring Chairman. The role of Standards Committee member is both difficult and at times unpleasant. It is very much appreciated that people of undoubted standing are prepared to undertake these responsibilities.

The Committee recommends that the following be appointed to replace the three members who are standing down:-

Elaine Bamber - Glasgow

Duncan A F Campbell – Oban

Jenny Gray - Aberdeen

Stephen H Smith – Stirling

The following existing members are available for re-appointment:-

Lara A L Barnes

Gerald Loblely

Patrick McGovern, Vice-Chairman

MEETING

The Committee met on 8 April 2015; a Note of the Meeting is published on the website.

Other dialogue amongst members was conducted by email and telephone.

COMPLAINTS

No complaint was raised subsequent to the 2014 AGM.

The Arbiters' Committee met in February. Full minutes are on the website. David Congalton was appointed as a CS Arbiter.

The updated version of the Rules Book was printed around this time last year. It took longer to complete the website version (which contains extra material) but this is now available.

We are keen to offer courses or seminars for potential arbiters but interest remains disappointingly low. Please consider whether your area could find enough interested parties to enable such an event. This was done not long ago by Ayrshire.

K Stewart

August 2015

AGM Report 2015 by Douglas Bryson – CS grading plus various.

Grading System: The grading system has completed another season successfully and the new season is underway. There were 46 area graders from around Scotland supplied data this season. The programming team of Gordon Rattray and Andrew McHarg continue to provide invaluable support for the grading system and the online display of data.

At last year's AGM we decided to stop printing the grading list in view of a sharp reduction in sales and the chance to make a cost saving. However this decision was modified at the following Council meeting after a request that some players and organisers did still want to use a hard copy of the list. To satisfy these requirements we have made a smaller print run this season but only for copies that were ordered and paid for in advance which minimises spending on potentially unsold copies.

All area graders, tournament organisers, CS officials and patron members should have already received a complimentary pdf copy of the new grading list by email. The pdf has been added to the online membership page as a purchase option. There will only be a limited number of printed lists available for purchase from the online membership page for anyone who did not make an order in advance.

Grand Prix: The Grand Prix concluded with the 2015 Scottish Championships and prizes are now being distributed. Our sponsors Chessbase and New in Chess have agreed to continue into the new season. Everyman were thanked for their support over several years but this has now finished. A new sponsor has been asked and at the time of writing an answer is awaited.

Some members asked during the year why top players were not included in the Grand Prix (the maximum grade for inclusion is 2150). This was the limit decided at the time the current Grand Prix format was initiated in 1999. The logic at the time was a UK wide Grand Prix with substantial prizes was available to top Scots and would be more attractive than the more modest rewards in the domestic Grand Prix. The CS Grand Prix with a restricted 2150 rating limit could be an attractive target for players who by playing strength may not be in a position to compete regularly for top prizes in Opens. However the existing grading limits or anything else in the GP can of course be revised if members want to propose changes.

FIDE Rating: The number of Scots with a Fide rating has been boosted with the decision by FIDE to reduce the number of games which are required before a new FIDE rating is listed. Previously 9 games were required for a new rating, now it's 5. There should be a significant further boost with the advent of the new Scottish Chess Tour in which at least the top section of every congress will be FIDE rated. We should soon reach a critical mass of players by which it is significantly easier to acquire sufficient games to achieve an initial rating. As at August 1 2015 there were 347 Scots with a FIDE rating, a 10% increase on the previous year.

Richardson and Spens Cup FIDE rating was restarted this season. If this was meant to be a controversial decision it seems to have been generally accepted such was the muted reaction when a post season debate on future Cup format led to precisely zero comments on the FIDE rating issue.

100 Club: This CS lottery generates a regular income of about £500 a year for CS with the only expense an annual lottery licence of £20. In 15 years of enhanced publicity through website promotion the number in the draw has never quite reached the 100 level referenced

in the title. The peak sales have been 97 units in a monthly draw and the current level is about 84. New units can be purchased via the online membership facility. Latest and historic winners are listed in the news panel on the front page of the website as well as information on how to subscribe.

Grading issues raised during the season:

Monthly import of FIDE data. Events which are FIDE rated and take place outside Scotland are imported monthly into the domestic rating system. FIDE issue a spreadsheet at the beginning of each month which includes the results of all players with a SCO code who played in any FIDE rated event which was processed for rating the previous month. Some players in these sets of results are not CS members and their results are not imported. This season one player complained about the member only policy. It was explained that this is an additional service outwith normal grading.

Significant work has gone into programming this service and there is additional labour required every month to prepare the data for import. This will continue as a perk only available to CS members unless members would prefer a change in policy. NB: results are processed and included for FIDE rating regardless of the CS membership status of the player.

Speed of Program development. There was a complaint this season that changes to the grading program should be implemented faster. Some arithmetic changes would be beneficial to the domestic system but the arithmetic of the current program is fixed and cannot be adjusted. The grading team are happy to acknowledge that improvements could be made but there are limitations on how fast anything can be implemented. Our programmers have their own work and families which can restrict the time they can devote to CS issues. There has been development this season of a new application which

Grading Officer

will eventually replace the existing program at which point the arithmetic of the program can be addressed – these developments are outlined in the preamble to the new grading list. However the coding and testing of these systems is laborious. The current programmers have provided long term reliable and high quality work. It is the judgement of the chief grader to continue with the current set up.

INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR REPORT 2014/15

COUNCIL MEETING – MARCH 2015

Agreed budget for 1/5/15-30/4/16

£2000 for adult events (£1500 European Team £500 Club Cup),
£1000 for senior events

Basque have asked for refund of expenses of £640.67 to be paid by CS but have not filled in bank forms

AM +JG trainers fees of 400 euros paid by CS and will do training weekend for Olympiad 2016 – coordinated by Neil Berry

TOURNAMENTS:

Used <http://chess-results.com/>

12/7/14-22/7/14 World Senior Team –Lithuania – Scotland came 12th in over-50 section.

1/8/14-15/8/14 Olympiad Norway – Scotland came 83rd in Open and 58th in Women's sections, both below seedings

14/9/14-20/9/14: European Club Cup, Bilbao, Edinburgh came 39th , Bon Accord came 43rd, both above seedings

4/10/14-12/10/14: Isle of Man: Stephen Mannion was 49th with 4/9, Alan Tate was 53rd with 4/9

23/10/14-5/11/14: World Senior, Katerini, Greece: In the over 65 section, Craig Pritchett was 7th with 7.5/11 and Alan Borwell scored 5.5/11, in the over 50 section David Findlay scored 5.5/11 and Phil Giulian 5/11

29/11/14: Scotland played 2 matches v Basque Federation winning the first 5-1 and drawing the second 3-3

12/14-1/15 Clement Sreeves & Andy Burnett attained the FM title

24/2/15-4/3/15 World Senior Team, Dresden, Germany, Scotland A were 7th , Scotland B were 29th Both Colin McNab (5.5/9) on board 1 and Douglas Bryson (6.5/9) on board 4 received bronze medal board prizes. Alan Scrimgour was top scorer with 6.5/9 for B team.

15/3/15-17/3/15 Keti Arakhamia played in the Womens World Championship in Sochi, losing to Pia Cramling

1/5/15 -10/5/15 European Senior Individual , Alastair White 4.5/9, Douglas McKerracher 3.5, Jim Webster 3.5 – Eritrea, Greece

18/5/15-31/5/15 Keti Arakhamia played in the European Womens Individual Championship in Georgia

Events coming up:

9/11/15-22/11/15- World Senior Individual - Acqui Terme, Italy

12/11/15-22/11/15 – European Team – Reykjavik, Iceland

SELECTION THOUGHTS

Olympiad captain: panel of 5 players/captains will select

Senior teams chosen 4 months before deadline to give more time for flight booking

No selector chooses himself in team

Andrew Muir 15/08/15

Scottish Championship Director

The 2015 event was held at Stewart's Melville in Edinburgh. The venue was generally very well received and potentially could be used again in 2017.

The entry was 98 players with a good number of titled players making norm chances a real possibility. I had hoped for a couple more IMs but was unable to secure those. Neil Berry won the Scottish Championship, gaining an IM norm in the process and Craig Pritchett won the Senior title. The Open was won by Oleg Korneev (Spain). There was a good entry from potential norm seekers though the event would benefit from having more entrants in the 2100-2300 range.

The control team had Andy Howie and Alex McFarlane there each day with additional support from Simon Gillam, Dave Clayton, Lara Barnes and Ken Stewart. Though not on the control team the assistance of Donald Wilson was appreciated. The Chess Essentials Bookstall was a welcome addition.

There were some areas where improvements or changes will be considered. There was a problem with the introduction of Senior Titles at 50 and 65 levels which should have been foreseen but wasn't. This will be rectified for next year.

The shortage of manpower does limit the subsidiary events which can be held. If re-elected I would have an U1500 Championship alongside the main event next time.

I also had some health problems at critical times in the arrangements which meant that advance publicity and confirmation of titled players was not all it might have been.

There are some potential sources of financial support which I am looking at currently but cannot discuss at the moment.

The venue for 2016 will be Glasgow with the date provisionally set for 9-17 July. The hall and dates should be confirmed by the end of October at the latest but obviously will be influenced by any financial support available. For 2017 onwards consideration will be given to holding the event in the last week of July or the first in August (which would mean a clash with the British Championships).

I am glad that a proposed motion to avoid a clash of dates with the Glorney events is not on the agenda. As Glorney dates are set by the organising country and for the next event will not be confirmed until April 2016 it would make organising the Scottish an impossibility and mean that what should be Chess Scotland's flagship event would be relegated in status. Whilst I do not think that the AGM would have passed such a motion I would have found it impossible to work with a Director who proposed a motion which so devalued the Scottish Championships.

It would be good if a younger person could be found to initially assist in the organisation of the event with the possibility of taking over.

I would like to thank our Benefactor for supporting the event again this year and giving us a memorable event.

Alex McFarlane

Marketing Director

Apologies for what is a shorter and less positive report than I had hoped

After my initial appointment I prepared a presentation document to be used for potential sponsors.

I had a very productive meeting with Alex McFarlane (thanks Alex) and a lot of good input from members via the noticeboard

Unfortunately I have had to put all work on hold due to ill health for the past few months. This means I am about 4-5 months behind where I had hoped to be by the AGM.

I should be back to normal very soon and intend moving things forward quickly. I am very keen to hear from members, after all it is members who make Chess Scotland- especially those outside the central belt, as they may have good ideas for local sponsorship contacts. All suggestions are welcome via noticeboard or email.

Because of my health and other committee member's family/work commitments I have been unable to arrange a meeting of the new finance committee again I hope to address this soon.

Fiona Petrie

My first year as HD(O) necessitated some prioritising so in my second year I was hopeful of being able to look at how some of the events under this banner might be developed. As it turned out I found much of my time being spent on affairs of Richardson and Spens. Both competitions featured match defaults, accusations of ineligible players and appeals to the Arbiters Committee. There seemed to be a clear demand for reform, of the Richardson in particular, and every club was invited to take part in a consultation as to how we might achieve this.

Richardson Cup.

There were nine entries this year (ten last season) necessitating one preliminary match. Unfortunately the winners of that match then defaulted their next (Semi Final).

The consultation referred to above took place mostly by email, with additional contributions on the CS forum, between May and July. Among the forum postings a series of polls in respect of particular aspects of the Richardson rules was initiated by George Neave. Email responses were very mixed with no weight of opinion for any substantive change. Overall the results showed that the 'clear demand for reform' did not actually exist so the only changes will be removal of the 30 mile restriction for bona fide and pre-match publication of team lists.

Spens Cup

We had nine entries compared with eight the previous season so a preliminary match was required here also. The losers qualified for the Jack Campbell Rosebowl while the victors remained in the Spens. As in the Richardson the Prelim winners then defaulted their next match. The Tournament Controller and I agreed that by the wording of the

relevant rule they did not qualify for the Rosebowl. This led to some debate but they were allowed to take part following a successful appeal to the Arbiters Committee.

Another issue arose when a team was accused of playing ineligible players. Investigation by the Arbiters Committee found that one player had been ineligible and the outcome was a reversal of the match result.

Suggestions for possible changes to the competition were fewer than for the Richardson and the opinions were contradictory :

- Scrap the Spens;

- Allow hybrid teams, change K.O format to regional groups of teams;

- Strictly club members, continue K.O., don't use regional groups.

so there will be no changes other than a rewording of the Rosebowl qualification rule.

Team finals

These took place once again at Grangemouth Sports Complex. Some changes were introduced with the aim of enhancing the prestige and atmosphere of the occasion:

- Live boards were used. They were spread over the three finals but some commentators think that all boards should have been used for the Richardson as the premier tournament;

- Mementos of higher quality than previously were presented to the winners;

- Trophies and mementos were presented by the Provost of Falkirk;

Attended by CS President and 3 Directors (responding to criticism of absence in previous years);

Various online and print media outlets were given details ahead of the event and reports after. However I have seen no evidence of any publication.

MacIsaac /Nancy Elder

One positive development in the MacIsaac is the re-emergence of the trophy. Unfortunately I have not been able to look very deeply at a new competition so it remains in cold storage for the time being.

The Nancy Elder continued the resurgence of last season with 23 entries. The competition progressed in a timely fashion which allowed the two regional winners (Declan Shafi – NE, Stephen Hilton - W&SE) to play their national final alongside the team events at Grangemouth. The two finalists were appreciative of the atmosphere of the occasion. Their game was drawn and attempts to arrange a replay came to naught, so the title was shared.

East/West of Scotland Championships

These events continue to be incorporated in the Edinburgh and Ayr congresses and I thank the organisers for their help with these.

Winners:

Richardson: Champions – Edinburgh West, runners-up - Edinburgh.

Spens: Champions - Kilmarnock, runners-up – Phones.

Jack Campbell Rosebowl: Champions - Wandering Dragons, runners-up - Irvine.

Nancy Elder: Champions (joint) - Declan Shafi, Stephen Hilton

Team Lightning: Champions - Hamilton A.

East of Scotland: Champions - FM Alan Tate.

West of Scotland: Champions – FM Clement Sreeves

Appreciation

I would like to express my thanks to:

Andy Muir and Ken Stewart for running the Richardson/Spens and Team Lightning respectively;

Alistair Maxwell for acting as arbiter at the Team Finals;

Andy Howie for the live boards at the Team Finals;

George Neave for initiating polls on the CS noticeboard in respect of the Richardson.

Disability Officer

Nothing much to report this year. I have endeavoured to establish links with affiliated organisations such as the BCA (Braille Chess Association) who kindly supplied Chess Scotland with a specially adapted chess set. I hope to establish communication with various disabled organisations with a view to promoting chess and Chess Scotland within the chess community. I have also arranged for certain chess clubs to have a loan of the adapted chess set to see if it is good enough for use. I would also like to obtain a small budget from Chess Scotland to purchase audio materials, software readers etc and perhaps a couple of clocks for the blind. Stephen Hilton has also given me a couple of contacts for the FIDE commission for the disabled with the hope of asking FIDE for a grant as well. Stephen will also be donating half a dozen sets for to distribute as well.

I can also report that at the behest of the International Director, I visited the community centre at Grangemouth (venue for Chess Scotland finals) to ensure its suitability which passed with flying colours. As well as a lift, a specially adapted chair and competent procedures in the event of a fire, they also have trained staff at all times to cope with any emergency. My personal thanks go to the staff at Grangemouth community Centre and Grangemouth chess club for their hospitality and VIP tour. It should be noted that all venues should have adequate facilities for the disabled, including toilets and proper exit facilities in the event of an emergency. I am more than happy to speak to any club or individual who may have any concerns.

Members may have noticed I am standing for Chess Scotland President this year. I would like to state however I would like to continue to foster the relationships built up via this post at least for the next few months or least have someone in my place who would be enthusiastic on taking this to the next level