Chess Scotland Website Report

15th August 2012

CURRENT UPGRADES

Server Upgrade **(Completed)** – The site was recently spread across more than one server in order to relieve the strain of extra traffic during the Scottish Championship. The event went well as far as the website is concerned, with no outages of service or times of excessive lag that we are aware of.

Coaching Management System **(Installation In Progress)** – A couple of technical hitches have prevented this from going live on the date originally planned. The system has been constructed and after we fix a few bugs that have cropped up during testing it will be fully useable.

We are confident that it will be live by the end of August. After this point we will issue a guide to those involved in the coaching side of Chess Scotland so that they can begin to take advantage of the system. As always, we will welcome feedback from them and are on standby to make any alterations as required/requested.

I personally feel that this is potentially one of the most significant developments we have done for Chess Scotland and I hope that it can contribute – even in a small way – to the excellent work already being done on the Junior Chess scene.

Statistics Overhaul **(Completed Phase 1)** – The first phase of this saw the introduction of player tournaments stats, which lists a player's best tournament performances and a chronological graph of TPRs. Further phases will be rolled out in the near future, as and when the features are completed to a publishable standard.

Quick Search Module **(Completed)** – A module now appears on the website home page which allows users to quickly search for a player or club without the need to go into the more detailed search facility. This will allow users to get the information they want more quickly, and simultaneously speed up the performance of the website by having fewer people visiting the more processor-intensive advanced search.

User Administration **(Completed)** – A new system which allows administrators on the Chess Scotland website to manage the users database. This enables the membership secretary to instantly give access of the online systems to new members without the need to wait for the following upload. It also enables him to reset user passwords and alter user details as required.

Membership Auto-payment **(In Progress)** – The creation of a form to allow users to signup for a membership directly on the website. Currently this is handled via a Paypal button on a signup page but the real admin is done by the membership secretary in the background. Our intention is for customers to enter their details in a web form, select the membership type they want and click a "Pay Now" button. The financial side of things will still be processed by Paypal, except that Paypal will now *speak* to our website. The primary advantage of this is that the website will know when payment was successful and grant users immediate access to the online grading pages if so (without requiring to wait on the next upload or any intervention by the membership secretary). Membership

cards/magazines/welcome letter and other admin tasks will still remain with the membership secretary.

We are also considering the idea of allowing members to pay for membership on a subscription basis, which can all be handled via Paypal. We believe that this will generate more money and also reduce costs. It'll generate more money because fewer members will cancel or not renew their memberships. Potentially more will also signup as the cost spread over 12 months would be negligible for most people. It'll save money because the membership secretary will not need to post as many membership renewal reminders, nor will he need to spend the time involved in administering that process to the same extent. Despite the above, please note that we have no immediate plans for this, we are only discussing the idea and reviewing the options. Before we start to make any solid plans we will contact the relevant people in Chess Scotland to get their approval.

Tournament Entrants **(Completed)** – This has now been used successfully by the entry secretaries of various events. Some organisations still prefer to use the method employed by the Membership Secretary, but the option is now available for any event to use the new feature and have their entrants automatically shown on the website.

Introduction of Forum Rules **(Completed)** – Due to some recent disputes we took the decision to introduce a set of rules on the forum. We believe that by having a set of criteria with which to moderate heated discussions we will be better placed to make decisions on any required post intervention.

PERSONAL NOTE

I hope you all enjoy/find useful the features on the website and any new features that we introduce. I am committed to continuing the improvement of Chess Scotland's online facilities and making the whole system more manageable for those who administer it. If anyone has any comments, suggestions, criticisms or anything else they wish to bring up then please feel free to email me.

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