

Chess Scotland Council Meeting

Held on Sunday March 22nd, 2009 at 1:00 pm in Glasgow (QM Union)

Present: Donald Wilson (DW–Chair), Douglas Bryson (DB), Trevor Davies (TD), Chris Hampton*(CH), Steve Hilton (SH), Andy Howie (AH), Alex MacFarlane (AM), Iain MacIntosh (IM), Mac MacKenzie(MM), John Shovlin* (JS) (part), Ken Stewart (KS), Jacqui Thomas (JT), Phil Thomas (PT).

Apologies: Jacob Aagaard (JA), George Anderson (GA), George Clark (GC), Sam Collins (SC), John Dempsey (JD), Jonathan Grant (JG), Lynsey Shovlin (LS), Peter Woods (PW).

** Not a member of Council*

1. Minutes of the previous Council Meeting (February 23rd, 2008)

(a) Accuracy: The motion that the “Minutes be approved” was proposed by KS and seconded by MM. The motion was passed nem. con.

(b) Matters Arising:

- (i) Valuation of trophies. MM reported that the trophies had not been valued because of the expense. The inventory of equipment was incomplete. KS stated that he still retained possession of the Robertson Cup and the Cranston Cup. JT informed Council that Rebecca Childs still held a large CS trophy (Girls Individual?) last contested some three years ago at the Glasgow Congress.
- (ii) Role of Fund Raiser. DW reported that he had discussed this role with Jim Webster (Dunfermline) and had circulated a paper to CS directors in March 2008. However, there had been no further action.
- (iii) Scottish Championships 2010
It was noted that the plans (and funding) in place for the Scottish Championships (2009) at Edinburgh surpassed, by some distance, any seen in recent years. The Home Director (JA) and his team, particularly JD and AM, were congratulated on this achievement. However, it was noted that JA had indicated that he wished to step down as Home Director at the AGM. No replacement had been identified. SH suggested that the job of Home Director was too onerous for one individual and that the job of Tournament Director for the Scottish Championship should be separated from the other responsibilities of the job. It was noted that this could be done within the current constitution if the “Scottish” was delegated by the Home Director to someone else. DW informed Council that a tournament organizer had been approached to run the 2010 “Scottish” : no decisions had been reached yet.

2. “Fair City” Complaint

JS spoke to his (and LS’s) complaints, circulated previously, and passed to Council from the 2008 AGM.

The principal allegations (primarily in relation the “Fair City” Congress, but also in relation to the Dalguise event and the Girls’ Championship) are that Chess Scotland or its directors:

- (a) failed to advertise the tournaments in a timely fashion,
- (b) scheduled competing tournaments.

A lengthy discussion followed. The following points were noted:

- (i) At the 2006 Organisers’ Meeting that it was agreed that it would be desirable to improve communications so as to minimize the risks of event clashing. However, it was generally acknowledged that this was difficult to implement. However, some believed that further progress in this regard was possible.
- (ii) No organizer benefited from a tournament clash.

- (iii) In the absence of the relevant CS directors, Council could not properly assess the case.
- (iv) No reason for discriminating against these tournaments was apparent.
- (v) Some of the allegations were not specific enough to allow a judgement to be made.
- (vi) CS had no effective means of dealing with such allegations. However, the proposed “Standards Committee” appeared to offer a suitable vehicle for this purpose.

In his closing remarks, JS stated that he was dissatisfied with the excessive length of time taken for CS to address his complaints and its failure to deal more effectively with them. He hoped that CS would implement better procedures in future, both to avoid the problems which were the substance of his complaint and also to deal more effectively with them.

3 **The Standards Committee**

TD spoke to his paper (previously circulated) advocating the creation of a “Standards Committee”: more specifically the creation of a “task group” with a remit to bring forward a detailed proposal for a Standards Committee to CS.

Council approved the setting up of a task group (nem con). TD agreed to lead the task group and to invite two others to join him in this work. On enquiry, he listed some names which had been suggested or had volunteered for this role. He thought that the proposal could be developed within two months.

4. **Reports from the Directors and Office Bearers**

Reports were received from the:

President	DW
Home Director	JA
International Director	JG
Membership Sec.	GA
Grading Officer	DB
Webmaster	DB
Junior Board	JT, PT & AH
Technical Director	KS
Marketing Director	PW

None of these reports (other than that of the Home Director) was generally available prior to the Council Meeting. Although detailed scrutiny and discussion of them was thereby constrained, the following points arose:

(a) Girls’ Championship.

In reply to a question, AH stated that this would take place in parallel with the West of Scotland Congress.

(b) Junior Website

It was noted that the junior website needed to be updated.

(c) Online Forum

SH, speaking on behalf of the IBCA, stated that he had been disturbed that complaints directed against certain IBCA officials at Dresden had been raised on the on-line notice-board. Although he accepted that the matter was now closed, he hoped that such complaints would be raised through proper channels in future.

(d) Email communications

It was noted that JG’s email address had been unobtainable for some time. Several directors had complained that they were receiving excessive volumes of “spam emails.”

(e) Law Society Event

The reduced number of Secondary Schools competing in this event was noted: this reflected the alarmingly small numbers of “improving” Secondary School players in Scotland (less than 80).

(f) Marketing

PW was complimented on the quality of the marketing materials he had produced for Congresses and other purposes.

(g) Membership Renewals

On enquiry, it was explained that the problem of membership (non-) renewal could not be addressed by making use of direct debit facilities: these are unavailable to "Treasurer Accounts".

(h) Dormant Clubs

Among a list of apparently dormant Clubs proposed for deletion from the online register, it was noted that "Dalmuir" was certainly an active club.

(i) ECF Grading

It was noted that proposed changes to the ECF grading system would, next season, require a revision of the conversion formula.

(j) Up-coming Junior Events

Council was reminded that:

- (i) the Invitational Primary Individual Tournament would take place at Culzean Castle in June.
- (ii) Scotland would be hosting the Glorney Cup at Strathclyde University (July 22nd-24th).

(k) Junior Player of the Year (The Booth / Rowson awards)

JT agreed to discuss with Steve Mannion (Jnr.) whether current nomination/award procedures could be improved.

(l) FIDE rating of SNCL

It was noted that 40% of those taking part in the SNCL were not members of Chess Scotland. FIDE rating remained under constant review and also depended on FIDE regulations.

(m) Organizers' Guidelines

It was agreed that it would be helpful (especially for new organizers) to have easier access to organizers' guidelines online.

(n) SDDA on-line listing

This organisation, representing the deaf, had formerly been affiliated to SC but not in the last two years. It was agreed that SDDA should be de-listed from the on-line list of affiliates.

(o) FIDE Council Meeting at Dresden

It was reported that JD had been unable to vote at the FIDE Council Meeting because a proxy vote had (allegedly) not been arranged.

(p) Deletion of personal telephone number

SH requested that his personal telephone number be removed from the (BBC) teletext directory. This request was remitted to JD for action.

(q) Sponsorship for Braille Olympiad

SH had requested £150 to defray part of his costs for representing Scotland in the Braille Olympiad in Crete in September 2008. This question had been raised at the Management Board prior to the event but had been deferred. After some discussion, Council agreed that £150 of expenses should now be reimbursed and referred the matter to MM. It was held that normally expenses should be agreed in advance but that this exception would be granted.

5. **Budget & Fees**

MM briefly spoke to the (circulated) "Income & Expenditure Budget" and the "Fees" proposed for Season 2009-10. It was noted that the projected deficit (based on conservative assumptions) was in excess of £1700 on a turnover of £36,000. Some 30% of Income (amounting to £10,600) was grant aid from the Scottish Government.

Several points arose in discussion.

- (a) In reply to a question regarding the £560 assigned to the Correspondence Association, it was noted that this matter had been discussed on several earlier occasions and had been agreed with Management Board. Among the arguments in favour of sponsorship of the CA was that it promoted an "inclusion" agenda, which was part of the Chess Scotland case for funding. The CA would be presenting a business case in January 2010 for renewal in 2010-11.
- (b) It was noted that approximately 100 copies of the Grading List were distributed free of charge.
- (c) The possibility of distributing e-copies of "Scottish Chess" to some subscribers (at reduced cost) was mooted. Whether this would result in a net saving to Chess Scotland was unclear.
- (d) In reply to a question regarding the benefits of Club affiliation to Chess Scotland, it was stated that benefits included free grading for club events, and access to the CS Insurance Scheme. It was noted that non-affiliates enjoyed the same online benefits (advertising of club details etc) as affiliates and it was suggested that there should be greater differentiation between the two.
- (e) It was noted that an affiliation fee had been re-instated in the Draft Budget for Junior Clubs. It was argued that for the reasons given in the 2008 AGM of Chess Scotland, it was inappropriate to charge a fee to these Clubs. Moreover, it was noted that no Junior Clubs had affiliated in 2007-08 when there had been a fee. It was agreed to amend the draft Budget to re-instate a zero affiliation fee for Junior Clubs. It was further agreed to amend the budget by raising the entry fee for Junior Team events from £8 to £12.

Subject to the above-mentioned amendments, Council voted unanimously to approve the Draft Budget and Fees for 2009-10.

6. **Any other competent business**

(a) Disability Officer

SH indicated that he wished to step down from the post of Disability Officer with immediate effect. It was agreed that CH would assume the duties of the post for the time being (such work being delegated by SH) until a replacement could be appointed at the AGM.

(b) Scottish Championship

On enquiry, it was confirmed that a sum of £750 had been budgeted by CS to support the "Scottish". The major sponsors were Edinburgh Council (who were providing a free venue, the City Chambers, plus £5000 cash) and £1000 reportedly from Quality Chess.

(c) FIDE exemption

AM noted that any plans to stage an international chess event in Scotland might have implications for the FIDE exemption currently enjoyed by the Scottish Championship.

(d) Junior Grading

DB noted that no action had been taken yet on the resolution passed at the 2008 AGM re the minimum game time limits for grading of junior games in the 'main' list. This matter was still under discussion between JA and the Junior Board.

The Meeting ended at 5:45 pm.

Trevor Davies April 18th, 2009