

President's Report to CS Council – March 2009

The past six months have been quiet and peaceful for me, thanks largely to the solid work being done by a very competent set of Directors.

The biggest event of the period was the Dresden Olympiad, where our Open team finished in line with its seeding and our Women's team scored above expectations. Carey Wilman and Rhian Hughes gained WFM titles, and Ketevan Arakhamia-Grant secured her third GM norm – FIDE have now confirmed her title.

It has been my pleasant duty in recent months to present Title certificates (and badges) to John Shaw (GM), Philip Giulian (FM), Amy Officer (WFM) and Paul Roberts (FCM). I have two more certificates ready for presentation at the first suitable opportunity, and hope to have a further three to present before my term of office expires in August.

On the subject of presentations, I attended the Borders Primary Schools Team Chess Championships in Galashiels last month and gave one of the 2008 President's Awards to Tom Lawson, who has been running that event for a quarter of a century and teaches chess in a number of Borders schools.

Mention of Junior teams brings me to the Liverpool Quadrangular tournament which was held in December. I accompanied our squad (Under-12, Under-14 and Under-16 teams) for the first time (along with their coaches and a brave group of chaperones). A great weekend was had by all, and it was made even better by the Under-14s winning their section.

At the Braille Olympiad held in Crete shortly before the Dresden event, one of our members (and a former CS Director), Stephen Hilton, was elected General Secretary of the Braille Chess Association. This must rank as one of the highest positions ever held by a Scot in a world organisation, and has to be seen as an honour both for Stephen and for Scotland. In recognition of this achievement, the Provost of Inverclyde gave a civic lunch today in Stephen's honour and presented him with a small gift from the people of his home town.

Finally, just to show that being President of Chess Scotland isn't all fun, a few months ago Mac, Douglas and I had to consider the question of whether our grading system needed to be registered under the Data Protection Act. So I read all the relevant material on the Home Office website, and downloaded and read the DPA itself. Now as a former civil servant I'm quite used to interpreting legislation (though in my particular job I was more involved with EC Regulations than with Acts of the UK Parliament), but the Data Protection Act must be one of the most imprecise and uninformative pieces of writing ever created. In the end I came to the conclusion that we did not need to register, but I'm not much more than 51% sure that that is the correct conclusion.

Donald Wilson
20 March 2009