Chess Scotland Website Report

13th March 2012

CURRENT UPGRADES

Hosting Switched   **(Completed)** - The site has recently been transferred to a new server. A few isolated issues have since cropped up which have resulted in a bit of downtime but we are fairly confident that we've ironed out most of them. The uploader has now been re-programmed by Gordon Rattray to work with the new server/databases.

The advantages of switching are that it's cheaper and allows for more flexibility (as I personally have a lot more control over the server than we had over the previous one). This means that any issues that we have in future will be easier to deal with and it also opens the door to potential other future improvements, such as an offline grading program which can communicate with the online databases (blocked by previous supplier). The other main advantage is that it's a more powerful server, and offers Chess Scotland more facilities (extra FTP/mailboxes/databases as necessary).

So better service and cheaper.

Coaching Management System   **(In Progress)** – will allow coaches to advertise their coaching sessions directly on the Chess Scotland website. Each coach will have a "coach profile" and be able to take payment for coaching sessions into their own Paypal accounts.

Statistics Overhaul **(Planning Stage)** - Overhaul of present stats system including additions of club-level and national stats.

National stats will include top ten juniors, top ten juniors (female)... and a variety of other similar lists.

Club stats will include best performing player of the season, highest riser, best junior and a variety of others.

Upgrades to individual player stats pages will include a table showing grade movement, tournament stats and a zoned-in ranking list showing a few players who are above you and a few who are below you. We are also toying with the idea of introducing a "grade trend", which we think might be able to predict what a player's grade will be in the next season or two.

Part of this project will also involve improving the efficiency of what already exists. We are planning to modify some code to have some database tables specifically created for storing stats – which will mean the website doesn't need to do as many calculations as frequently. So, despite supplying more information, the site will actually perform much better.

Membership Auto-payment **(Upcoming)** – 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). Membership cards/magazines/welcome letter and other admin tasks will still remain with the membership secretary.

FUTURE UPGRADES

Player/Club Search (Later this Year) – The current system was designed to be fast and intuitive, and we feel that it fails in some of these areas. We intend to simplify the searching process and speed it up. We will still allow users to use advanced search features if they choose, but some of the existing ones will be *hidden* from those who don't need to see them. We are considering a "micro" module on the home page where entering a pnum/surname/club name and clicking "Go" will forward to a new page with search results. This would be much faster than the more in-depth system that currently exists.

Tournament Entrants (Later this Year) – We finally hope to fix some of the bugs which have been preventing this from full release.

Admin Controls (Later this Year) – Admin-only features which will allow key positions (membership secretary/chief grader + any others necessary), to modify member/grade/tournament info as required, without needing direct access to the internal workings of the databases. This will allow them to manage things more easily.

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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Webmaster