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CHESS SCOTLAND

Annual Report

2015/16

Chess Scotland has, over the past year, undergone a change in that we now have a new constitution in place. This has been the result of work over the last 3 years by a hardworking core of people, many forum discussions, two Special General meetings and one General Meeting. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank my fellow members of the Working Party and the Moderators for all their effort: -

CWP: - Gerald Loble, Alastair White, Ian Brownlee, Andy Howie, Hamish Glen
Moderators: - Alex McFarlane, Stephen Mannion Snr.

Management Board

The Management Board has been meeting on a regular basis over the past year and the minutes of the meetings are posted on the Chess Scotland website. These regular meetings have created avenues for much greater communication between Board members and has created a strong sense of teamwork between us all. These meetings also ensured that issues were not kept to one individual but that others Directors were willing, and able, to step in and help when required. I would like to thank all directors for their commitment and enthusiasm in their respective remits over the past year. There has been some hard work, and even a bit of fun, in all these endeavours.

Constitution

Under the new constitution we have created some new positions, renamed others and created a clear structure which I am sure will benefit Chess Scotland over the coming years. One new Executive Committee Directorship, that of Administration Director, is yet to be filled as there were no nominations forthcoming for the AGM. The responsibility to appoint someone to this post now falls to the Management Committee. Before such an appointment is made the President and Executive Director will create a Job description and remit in order to clearly define the expectations of the position.

A similar situation arises with the new Youth Development Officer and again the process outlined above will be implemented. This position replaces the School Development Officer and will enlarge the scope to include early leavers and students. Chess Scotland will seek nominations from individuals who would like to be considered for this appointment, and again this will be when we have a clear job description and remit.

All other Job Descriptions are "work in progress" and once converted to a common format will be placed on the website.

Proxy Voting

This year we took the initiative to introduce a Proxy Voting Form for the SGM and have extended it for the forthcoming AGM. We have also allocated PNUM to all clubs and Leagues to enable them to utilise the Proxy Voting system and also allows Chess Scotland to easily verify membership status. Each Proxy Voter will also receive an acknowledgement that their votes have been registered. All Proxy Votes must also be registered whether or not the nominated proxy voter attends the AGM or not.

Operating Procedures

With the implementation of the new constitution Chess Scotland is now required to create, operate and maintain procedures detailing how the functionality of the organisation. Some members of the working party have agreed to extend their efforts in helping create these procedures. Further volunteers will be sought from the chess community to assist and add additional expertise to creating the “OP’s”.

Some of these OP’s include: -

- Standing Orders (conduct of meetings)
- Selection Criteria
- Voting Procedures, including online and Proxy
- Disability Procedures

Three procedures already exist, PVG, Standards and Grading, and we will be adding to these over the coming year. With such an undertaking there will be a need to prioritise, however we will publicise a list of these procedures and the priority order when looking for volunteers.

Chess Scotland Activities

Scottish Championship – I would like to congratulate all the players and prizewinners that took part in the Scottish Championships and additionally all the organisers for their hard work without whom such an event could not be the success that it was.

Juniors: - There have been some outstanding performance by our junior players over the year and they have all represented themselves and Scotland with great credit. I would also like to thank all the organisers, coaches, chaperones and support from parents – they all contribute massively to the

success of Junior Chess. A special mention, however, must go to David Congalton for his herculean efforts for Junior Chess.

Seniors – this group of chess diehards never go away. These players are to be thanked for representing Scotland in team and individual events throughout the year and one of them even gets to beat a GM and an IM in the same event.

I have not said too much on funding so far and I would like to say that the Management Board and others are investigating methods to improve funding for Chess. We have recently opened discussions with an Event and Sponsorship company and we will be pursuing this and other sources over the coming year.

In closing I would like to say that it has been an entirely different year for me, but no one told me how much work there would be involved – that being said it has been very rewarding and I hope beneficial to all.

Jim Webster

The 2015 AGM saw the start of the Jim Webster era. I have to say I have thoroughly enjoyed working with Jim this year and hope we are both re-elected to continue the relationship next year.

It would be totally remiss of me not to pay tribute to David Congalton this year. Not only has he had the difficult task of balancing the books, but he has also taken on both Junior posts and performed admirably. I tip my hat to you Sir!

With the passing of the new constitution at the second attempt, it means some of the tasks I have been doing are going to be done by another person. I completely welcome this as it frees me up for other projects I have been wanting to get my hands on. At the start of the year, we began to develop a strategy for Chess Scotland. With the extra time I will have now, I can devote more time to this as well as developing the online voting system for next years AGM.

Turning now to FIDE and ECU matters, I think it is fair to say I am going to Baku next month with a sense of trepidation. Both the AGM for the ECU and the GA for FIDE are promising to be stormy affairs with one country having submitted a proposal for the impeachment of the president (and it not appearing on the order paper) the FIDE GA is going to be interesting. Civil war seems to have broken out at the ECU with a dispute between the former president and current. There is a motion to expel the Bulgarian Federation from the ECU, something I feel personally is not in the interests of the ECU and I intent to speak against this motion (although I will be bringing this up at the AGM to seek guidance from the floor on this).

Back at home, we have had some amazing performances this year from both our Junior and Senior squads. Really good to see and well done to all involved.

I will finish with my usual appeal. We are desperate for people coming forward as Arbiters, Tournament Organisers etc. Chess in Scotland cannot function without people to assist.

2015/16 has been a good year. Here's hoping we get more of the same in 2016/17

Andy Howie

Executive Director

International Director Report for 2016 AGM

European Seniors Team Championships, Halkidiki, Greece

2 teams were entered in the 65+ section. A 3rd team, due to play in the 50+ section, suffered from an unfortunate and unavoidable last minute player withdrawal and it was arranged that the other members of the team would compete in the World Amateur event running concurrently.

The attitude of the players can only be described as phenomenal both before, during and after the event.

World Senior Team Championships Radebeul, Germany

I managed to secure a late entry for a team in the 50+ section (possible medical problems making it impossible to guarantee a team before the deadline).

The team of Phil Giulian, Dave Findlay, Rosie Giulian and Richard Jennings performed excellently, finishing well above expectations and secured a special prize for this showing. I was fortunate enough to attend the event for 2 days, which the team seemed to appreciate.

European Senior Individual Championships, Armenia

Nobody expressed any interest in this event, mainly owing to it being arranged for dates in between the 2 team events.

World Senior Individual Championships, Marianske Lazne, Czech Republic

It is expected that several of our seniors will participate in this event and, as with other events, David Congalton will work along with myself and the players to ensure registrations and fees are dealt with quickly and efficiently.

Baku Olympiad, Azerbaijan

This has proved to be the most challenging event of all to organise teams for, with registration, visa issues, funding and travel plans all being problematic.

Nevertheless, the players and myself – along with David Congalton and Andy Howie – have worked hard to ensure that organisational problems have affected the players as little as possible, allowing them to focus as much as possible on the actual chess.

To this end I arranged to captain both teams and also act as head of delegation for the first half of the Olympiad. Training seminars and coaching titles were arranged for both myself and John Shaw at no expense to CS. Similarly, my own roles in Baku were funded personally so as not to impinge on the necessarily strict budgetary considerations.

British Championships

4 places were secured for the Championship event although, as in recent years, none of these were taken up by individuals. The plan for next year is to develop talks with the BCF to see if the 'impasse' caused by past events can be broken, thus ensuring Scottish representation in the future.

European Club Cup, Belgrade

Both of our eligible teams were offered support (though not financial) for this event although as yet neither have definite plans to play.

Player eligibility and registration as SCO

Three players expressed an interest in changing federations to SCO although none of these subsequently followed through on the switch.

The eligibility of players who were given SCO 'status' but fail to meet the general CS eligibility for SCO representation in team events and also for championship title is still a rather grey area. I would like to hear views on these criteria with a view to definitively answering the question in the forthcoming year.

Budget

The adult/seniors international budget was stretched this year with so many events taking place, but I think that David Congalton will agree that we have not overspent – this is thanks in great part to our seniors' teams footing bills (team registrations primarily) which I would hope we might be able to cover through CS funds in future.

Finally, I would like to thank all those people who helped me in the ID role this year (too many to mention) and I would welcome any feedback/constructive criticism in order for me to improve the ID role.

With no Olympiad next year I would hope (if re-elected) to carry out more proactive work. (Securing subsidised places in foreign events for norm seekers, trying to ensure that Scotland are represented at every FIDE adult international event, etc.)

Andrew Burnett
(CS International Director)

Home Director Report

I am pleased to report that the active domestic tournaments have now successfully concluded. One of the changes introduced this year is that the runners up got a keepsake trophy as well.

The results are as follows:

Richardson Cup : WINNER: Edinburgh Runners-up: Bon Accord

Spens Cup: WINNER: Edinburgh Wandering Dragons Runners-up: Kilmarnock

Campbell Rosebowl: WINNER: Edinburgh Runners-up: Castlehill

Nancy Elder: Winner: Euan Dawson Runner up: Keith Rose

I would like to thank the following for their help this year:

Keith Rose and Chris Donkin for their help at regional level and contributing above and beyond the call of duty

Douglas Bryson for his invaluable guidance (keeping me on the right track) and work grading the games

Andy Howie, Alistair Maxwell and David Congalton for their help and support not only on finals day, but also for their support throughout the season.

Bill Gray, and members of Grangemouth Chess Club for directly supplying the venue for this year. Bill has already looking into providing the venue for next year possibly also multiple days to accommodate a central venue. I strongly feel that in recognition of Grangemouth's efforts CS should give them a hefty discount on their fees bearing in mind they have saved CS hundreds of pounds

Finally for everyone who provided help and advice throughout the season, including Jim Webster, our President. It truly was a team effort and I couldn't have done it on my own.

It is unfortunate that Glasgow Polytechnic had to withdraw from the Richardson Cup due to certain circumstances. There is no need to go any deeper into this other than hopefully the issues raised would not be repeated next year although it is practically unavoidable to avoid clashes in the January fixture. The only other challenge faced was that one team tried to play an ineligible player in the final. The 30 mile rule was scrapped but the eligibility rule was still

in force and unfortunately it had to be enforced this year as it was obvious the player was not only not a member but could be considered a “ringer” (a rating over approx. 2200 was mentioned).

The Nancy Elder was dominated by Castlehill Chess Club therefore it wasn't surprising to see two Castlehill players fight it out (and what a fight it was) Perhaps it is fitting that the replay was played at Castlehill.

The team Lightning tournament was yet another successful tournament and many thanks again to Ken Stewart for running that. I actually played in it for the first time and thoroughly enjoyed that even with the gamesmanship associated with it.

Team Lightning report by Ken Stewart as follows

41st Scottish Team Lightning Championship

Eighteen teams took part in the 2016 Scottish Team Lightning Championship on Sunday 27 March, once again a good entry though slightly down as the Easter date did not suit everyone.

The event was again held after the conclusion of the SNCL at the Dunfermline venue. The number of last minute entries made it difficult to organise, but this is inevitable given the arrangements and the timing has certainly increased the numbers.

The event saw a new winner in the shape of Bon Accord who performed convincingly throughout and were unbeaten in all matches, dropping just one draw and defeating Hamilton in their individual match. This brought to an end Hamilton's sequence of 12 consecutive victories (Shettleston had won for many seasons before that), though they finished as runners-up.

Bon Accord's winning margin was fairly small but clear enough. For the winners Dominik Csiba scored 12/12, as did Murad Abdulla on Board 3; Adam Bremner had 8½ and Daniel Maxwell 7½. For Hamilton Steve Mannion scored 8, Joe Redpath and Pat Coffey had 10 and Andrew Muir had 10½.

Final Section 2 was won by Crouching Tigers on 14/20.

Final Section 3 was won by Dundee D with 20/24 after a tie-break play-off with Bank of Scotland.

On the subject of ineligibility, this rule is at least difficult to apply and should be scrapped in favour of a completed team registration list supplied to the Home Director at the beginning of the season.

This list should also include the inclusion of a Fide Identification Number (FIN) as FIDE graded games MUST include a FIN number otherwise the event cannot be graded. It can be suggested that players cannot play in these tournaments unless they have a FIN number.

The team registration list would be kept by the Home Director and can be added to up to 48 hours before each round again by contacting the Home Director. I would also ban any team player additions for the final round

I am not in favour of publishing any team lists before each round. If any team wishes to publish it voluntarily then so be it but it would not be binding.

On the registration forms for next year it will be made clear that team contact details, including telephone names, will be published on the Internet. If anyone objects to this then it will be that team's responsibility to be easily contactable by the opposing team.

There is also the possibility of resurrecting the Maclsaac trophy as a FIDE-recognised arbitrated rapidplay tournament, At the time of writing here are the details up for discussion

Time control 25 minutes plus 5 second incremental

Fide rated

One venue (possibly Perth or Grangemouth)

One day possibly March 2017

Either an Open , or a major and open

NO grading bar

The winner of the Open tournament will be presented with the Maclsaac trophy for one year. It is also up for this discussion if this trophy is only for Chess Scotland members only

No requirement to be a member of either Chess Scotland or a member/non member club

Chess Scotland is also looking at further funding for these events and hopefully will report back the finance and marketing directors in preparation for the AGM.

There is also a suggestion that the FIDE rated tournaments should be switched to an incremental time control. This would involve the use of Digital clocks and as a consequence of loaning out Chess Scotland clocks for clubs who do not have them and it would require training in the use of applying incremental controls as well as applying penalties. A possible way round this would be to use central venues under the supervision of CS FIDE-rated arbiters. These points will be up for discussion during the Home Directors report at the AGM.

Finally I would like to state it has been an enjoyable experience this year and have met many new friends.

I would also like to make two personal observations:

The role of disability office has suffered a bit and personally would like to see this addressed at the AGM.

We also need a youth development Officer

Ian Brownlee Home Director Chess Scotland

This year has been spent trying to form working relationships with a number of potential sponsors.

I have had some feedback from a couple of individuals but nothing has been finalised yet.

I was approached at the Scottish by someone interested in talking to me about sponsorship and I hope to have some positive feedback soon.

Also after the Scottish I sent an email report of the event to local papers across the country telling them how their local players had done. Dundee Courier replied to me interested in the Scottish and the performance of our juniors, the reporter is keen to do a more detailed report on this and I am waiting to hear further about this.

One of our big problems is the ageing chess population making it vitally important that we attract new younger players- to try and start this I have emailed every secondary school in Glasgow, North and South Lanarkshire to see if they are or would be interested in getting involved in chess in schools. I am not trying to take over school's director role, however I think there is a big drop off from primary school to secondary and the only way to guarantee the future of chess is to try and encourage this age group back into the game. I have already had a couple of favourable replies from head teachers and will be taking this forward as soon as the schools are back and settled into the new session.

I have also had a request from the creator of a new independent schools' network website asking to put a link on our website, he is going to get back to me to discuss what benefits he can offer Chess Scotland in return for the link. I have also suggested to him about trying to use his contacts to run an independent schools event- again raising the profile and generating interest and hopefully encouraging sponsorship. As the website is still under construction it will be later in the year before there is any serious update on this

I am still looking at several small charitable trusts for specific sponsorship- however it seems that having charitable status would greatly improve the chances of being successful in applications- this is something I would like to have a full discussion about at a later date.

I am still working with Andy on funding applications- this is ongoing work.

Further work is continuing to create a presentation for future sponsors that I can send by post or email- I am still open to suggestions from members if they know anyone that might be keen to sponsor chess.

Earlier in the year I had a meeting with a marketing specialist regarding the best way to get publicity, I had hoped to move this forward but we were looking at a Facebook publicity event and there have been issues surrounding the Chess Scotland Facebook page that we hadn't anticipated, once these are resolved I will be back in touch with him.

While there is no definite promise of finance I am encouraged by some of the conversations I have been having, I always saw this role as a long-term objective and think I am still on track to deliver some favourable outcomes soon.

As a quick publicity tool can I ask all members who use Facebook, to use every opportunity to highlight chess events, this is a free and effective way of getting chess into the wider Facebook community (think how many non-chess friends you have on Facebook, consider the difference it would make if we each got one of them joining a club and playing regularly)

Fiona

The Arbiters' Committee met in March. Full minutes are on the website. Two matters are worth highlighting:

The idea of combining a course for qualification as CS arbiter with a (2-day) FIDE Arbiter course was considered though it was noted that incompatibility of Swiss pairing systems would have to be taken account of in some way. It is hoped to run such a course. I am aware of some people who are interested but would like to hear from others. Our more experienced arbiters are not as young as they once were and new blood is very much needed.

It is important that other CS Arbiters should become recognized as National Arbiters (to enable them to act at FIDE-rated events).

FIDE will once again revise the Laws this year and the Arbiters' Committee (with input from Stephen Hilton on visually-impaired players) has submitted opinions on proposed changes. We are also responding to FIDE proposals regarding arbiter qualifications; there are some issues which could make it more difficult to run FIDE-rated events in Scotland and these are being monitored.

The Arbiters' Committee was also involved in discussion and revision of the Richardson and Spens rules.

Ken Stewart

AGM Report 2016 by Douglas Bryson – CS grading plus various. (August 10, 2016)

Grading System: The grading system has completed another season and the new 2017 season was underway on July 29. The grading task is a team effort involving over 40 area graders, the programmers and the chief grader. The main task of the graders is to collate, process and display online the data as accurately and promptly as possible. The task of looking at the theory of the calculation arithmetic has not featured for several years not least since the current program cannot be adapted. However a new application has been in development by Gordon Rattray for a number of years and should have its first live test in the new season. The current program will still be the one used by area graders at least for the next season.

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 was a print run of 70 copies last season of which 10 were still unsold which is indicative of the reduced interest in the hardcopy option. This smaller print run will continue while there is sufficient demand.

Grand Prix: The Grand Prix concluded with the 2016 Scottish Championships in Glasgow and prize distribution should start at the Marymass Congress. Our sponsors Chessbase and New in Chess have agreed to continue into the new season. Quality Chess supplied books for this season's Grand Prix and we thank them for their support. We have a few ideas for a replacement sponsor and an announcement will be made as soon as anything is finalised.

FIDE Rating: As at August 1st 2016 there were 377 Scottish players with a FIDE rating, an increase of 40 from this time last year. The new series of events organised by David Congalton's scotchesstour.co.uk all included FIDE rated sections this season. Although FIDE regulations now only require a minimum of five games to get an initial rating some players have been hit by rules which still impose the previous requirement of a minimum nine results. We hope that these players will persist and gain their first FIDE rating.

This season featured the highest number of FIDE results ever submitted from this country. In addition to the Tour events at Inverness, Livingston, Perth and Ayr there were opportunities for FIDE rated play at the Scottish Championships

in Edinburgh, the Edinburgh Congress, the Richardson and Spens Cup plus the Scottish National League. There was also a rapid event at Prestwick and a new series of blitz events at Ayr, Glasgow and Edinburgh – these events rated for the separate FIDE rapid and blitz lists.

One of the main requirements for the smooth running of these events is to generate a FIDE ID for all participants (the FIDE equivalent of our domestic pnums). CS can only add players eligible to be badged as Scotland to the database i.e. new players must satisfy at least one of the following criteria: born in Scotland, a Scottish parent, residency of two years in Scotland, one year if under 18 (i.e. residency immediately prior to the event or the generation of the ID). This means that some players may not be eligible for a code in which case they must get an ID from their own federation. A player without a code can invalidate a whole event from being eligible for rating submission so it is important that organisers check ID status prior to the event taking place. The participation of some players may have to be declined if FIDE rating is required.

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. We would like to try and boost participation numbers and will try and contact members soon to ask if they would like to take part. An annual payment of just £12 buys 1 unit per month and 12 opportunities to win a prize. New units can be purchased via the online membership system. Latest and links to previous winners are listed in the news panel on the front page of the website as well as information on how to subscribe.

Calendar: Updates were made throughout the season in response to organiser requests to have their events listed and entry forms uploaded. One popular feature of the calendar is the facility by which organisers can list entrants to their events. This season the player listing facility was almost error free – in previous seasons there had been duplications and disappearances but a fix connected to a revised grading uploader has now solved these problems.

Report on Scottish

As you know finding a venue for this event proved very difficult. It was held in Strathclyde Student Union. Unfortunately, what was agreed in my first visit and was actually provided did not agree. The hall booking was done through a third party so less than usual was actually written in black and white.

I had arranged for an overspill area and the use of tables from the bar areas. A few days before the event I was told these would not be available.

The entry was considerably lower than hoped for which avoided potential problems in fitting everything in to the available space.

The lower entry was down to several factors including the delay in finding a venue but mainly due to transport difficulties. I've had three people contact me to state that transport from Lothians was the reason they didn't play. I believe lost entries to have cost about £1.5k

There will be a considerable deficit on the event – without donations this will be in the region of £5k, with donations it will hopefully half.

My thanks to all who helped particularly the control team who claimed zero expenses.

The event itself ran smoothly and was hard fought.

Scottish Champion: Keti Arakhamia-Grant

Scottish Senior Champions: Colin McNab, Stephen Mannion

Scottish U1750 Senior Champion: George Murphy

Scottish Junior Champions: Murad Abdulla, Declan Shafi

Scottish Girl Champion: Rachel Smith

Scottish International Open: 1st Matthew Turner; 2nd= Keti Arakhami-Grant, Danny Gormally ; 4th= Colin McNab, Stephen Mannion, Mark Lapidus. Rating Prize Declan Shafi

Scottish 7 Day Event: 1st George Murphy; 2nd James Watson; Grading Dave Watson, Bernard Cassidy, Ian Hope

Weekend Open: 1st Andrew Greet; 2nd Julius Schwartz

Weekend U1750: 1st Iain Campbell; 2nd Stephen McQuillan; Grading Daniel Breslin

Weekend U1400: 1st Divyesh Selvaraj; 2nd Morven Petrie; Grading Mark Smith, David Watson.

I am currently in negotiations to run the Scottish in conjunction with a celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the Dundee International in 1867. If this happens the event will be one week later than usual as that is when the hall is available (15-23 July). There would be a free venue but with additional costs this would save only circa £2.5k.

For 2018 I hope to hold it in Paisley as part of its bid to be UK City of Culture in 2021.

I hope to know better about the possibility of both of these venues within 6 weeks.

If no sponsorship/funding is forthcoming by the end of October then something radical will need to be done for 2017.

Plan A – Dundee

Plan B – Edinburgh with sponsor

I have a plan C but even it would require £700 funding.

Having taken over as PVG Lead Signatory in February of this year, I would like to pay tribute to the sterling work done by my predecessors, Steve Mannion Snr and Dick Heathwood, who were instrumental in setting up the system. My thanks also to Steve for agreeing to remain as the Additional Signatory to help me understand the vagaries of the process.

The migration process from Disclosure to PVG is now complete and Steve and myself will carry out a final audit.

Confidentiality is paramount to the PVG process and individuals will never be discussed. The name will be added to the appropriate List(s) once the PVG Scheme Record is granted for the individual.

It is worth pointing out that the number of new names added to the CS Lists in the season recently finished outweighs the number of names that have been removed from the CS Lists.

We have recently received an email from Volunteer Scotland Disclosure Services indicating that an exercise referred to as Data Cleanse will be carried out to check if individuals on the CS Arbiters, Coaches and Chaperon Lists are still carrying out "regulated work". Details to follow on CS Website in the near future.

Hamish Glen
Chess Scotland, PVG Lead Signatory

| Full | April 2009 | April 2010 | April 2011 | April 2012 | April 2013 | April 2014 | July 2015 | July 2016 |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Adult | 156 | 153 | 151 | 155 | 161 | 162 | 145 | 139 |
| Under 17 | 9 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 6 | 17 |
| Under 14 | 13 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 17 | 14 | 11 | |
| Family Adult | 20 | 28 | 22 | 22 | 23 | 22 | 25 | 23 |
| Family Junior | 2 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 11 |
| Basic | | | | | | | | |
| Adult | 147 | 146 | 149 | 183 | 159 | 156 | 150 | 146 |
| Under 17 | 12 | 8 | 6 | 11 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 33 |
| Under 14 | 20 | 22 | 26 | 22 | 27 | 27 | 21 | |
| Family Adult | 36 | 46 | 38 | 21 | 13 | 16 | 16 | 8 |
| Family Junior | 25 | 21 | 18 | 11 | 13 | 8 | 4 | 9 |
| Patron & Life | | | | | | | | |
| Patron | 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 5 |
| Life | 131 | 109 | 111 | 108 | 111 | 110 | 99 | 102 |
| Life magazine | | 29 | 28 | 31 | 28 | 32 | 30 | 27 |
| TOTALS | 576 | 585 | 574 | 585 | 570 | 567 | 520 | 520 |
| Magazine only (non members) | | | | | | | 9 | 4 |

I have now completed my first year as Membership Secretary, which has been a real learning experience!

The number of members has remained static over the last 12 months but we have seen an increase in the uptake of the simplified Family and Junior memberships.

A couple of ideas have been passed on to me by members that have been brought to the attention of the Management Board and Council. The first was the abolition of membership cards. Quite a few members approached me about it as they saw no need for them and the expense for Chess Scotland to produce and send out. We will still print Membership cards on request but have to wait until we have a batch of 10 before doing so.

The second idea was around why we don't recognise the most improved adult in the same manner we do with the Juniors. I have asked for this to be a discussion point at the AGM as I feel we should be celebrating adult improvement.

The vast number of renewals now come in with Paypal. This makes things a lot easier as cheques can (and have this year) be lost in the post. I would encourage members to use this method for payment where possible.

We have had a few renewals this year from people giving Andy the money at tournaments. I have no problem with people doing this should they wish and I have asked Andy to carry membership forms with him when he is arbiting for anyone wishing to join.

As always I am open to ideas on how we can improve the service we are giving you. If there are things you would like to see as part of membership or indeed improvements you can see for the process, please let me know.

Certainly one area I am looking to explore is an idea that was mentioned before in previous AGMs, the ability to pay monthly. I need to sit down with David and discuss if we can use the recurring subscription method of paypal to allow people to be, say Patron members for £5 a month. Equally could use paypal to automatically take the annual payment should the member wish that using subscription services.

I'd like to thank Andy and Dougie this year for their invaluable help and assistance.

Karen Howie

Membership Secretary