SEAN HEWITT – ELECTION ADDRESS AS NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR C19.11.5

I am a 43 year old active chess player and organiser, well known for running the e2e4.org.uk series of events which have, in a short space of time, gained a reputation as being first class Chess tournaments. I am also the Festival Organiser at the London Chess Classic and in the past have organised the Irish Chess Championships and have served as Chairman of Leicestershire & Rutland Chess Association. In addition, I am both a FIDE International Organiser and International Arbiter and have officiated at the European Individual Championships. I will also be Chief Arbiter at next year's Bunratty Chess Classic.

My working career has a significant commercial background, having been a Director of both easyCar and Virgin Cars. I have also worked professionally for a sport's governing body (The Football Association) and I now work on a major project within the civil service.

I believe that I add value to the ECF board through having:-

- significant commercial experience at board level
- successfully demonstrated how good commercial practice can be applied to chess organisation to give players excellent value for money
- experience and insight of how a sport's governing body should operate
- youthful exuberance (relatively speaking!)

I stated last year that I believed that past ECF boards have let us, the membership, down by allowing the finances of the federation to reach the perilous state they were in. I am delighted that this board has reversed that, taking a much more commercial view to finance and ensuring that it is in control of both costs and income. As such, the current financial plan should restore reserves to satisfactory levels in three years, without having to make significant cash calls on the membership.

I also said that strategy was for the executive directors but that I hoped my commercial background would help to identify costs which can be saved and revenue streams which could be maximised. I'm delighted to have been able to help achieve both. I was asked to help negotiate some commercial contracts which resulted in a significant five figure income being achieved for 2014. I was also able to save more than £5k for next year's British Championships in Aberystwyth by applying commercial acumen to contract negotiations with suppliers on behalf of the British Championship team.

I warned that the ECF board needed to work hard to ensure that the membership scheme was implemented effectively. I believe that this has been successfully achieved to a large extent and whilst there are still some relatively minor issues to iron out, the implosion of chess in this country which some foresaw has not taken place. I also said that the board should monitor the effects of the membership scheme and deal with any obvious and immediate flaws whilst being patient and ensuring that any changes to the scheme were properly considered, fact based decisions. We now have the first year's data and I believe that this should be analysed, together with year two data so that any proposed changes are properly researched and thought through. Assumptions should be made, and published, as to the anticipated impacts of any change. In the past, too many changes have been made as a knee jerk reaction and we must resist the temptation to repeat those past mistakes. In my role as NED, I have been able to prevent the Board from making that mistake.

The role of the non-executive director is to broaden the horizons and experience of existing executive directors and act as their counter balance, facilitate ideas (particularly in terms of business strategy and planning) and play a part in appraising and commenting on a company's investment/expenditure plans. Within the ECF, the non-executive is the voice of both organisations and players. I believe that my experience makes me an ideal candidate to perform this function for the ECF, and I believe that I have done this successfully on your behalf during the last year.

Consequently, I ask you to vote for me again, and re-elect me as non-executive Director.