

ECF Director of Home Chess Report for 2014 Annual General Meeting

The following outlines brief reports from the three largest areas of this Directorship in terms of impact: the British Championships, the County Championships and Grading. Following that, there are comments on other areas of the Directorship where things have developed.

British Championships

The 2014 Championships were held in Aberystwyth. There were 831 entries, which was a return to the sort of numbers who entered at normal British Championships after the surge at last year's 100th. The only difference numerically was with the weekend and rapidplay tournaments; tournaments which typically rely on local entries to flourish, and Aberystwyth had less of a local chess scene relative to other recent venues.

The Championship section proper started on a Saturday rather than Monday. This allowed David Howell, Tim Kett, and Akshaya Kalaiyalahan to double up and play in both the British and the Olympiad that followed. With no clash in 2015, the Championship schedule at the University of Warwick, on the outskirts of Coventry, will return to the traditional Monday – following Friday schedule.

Financially, the Championships made a small surplus.

County Championships

The County Championships had the following number of entries in each section

Open 6 (champions Yorkshire)

Minor Counties 9 (champions Suffolk)

U180 6 (champions Warwickshire)

U160 9 (champions Yorkshire)

U140 7 (champions Hampshire)

U120 7 (champions Nottinghamshire)

U100 6 (champions Kent)

Aside from a withdrawal in the U180s and a dispute in the U120 there were no major administrative issues. The MCCU were unhappy that their first two nominees were in the same half of the draw and after consultation at a Union Representatives meeting, and a rule has been written for this. There have also been proposals to make the process of authorising ungraded players more straightforward. Otherwise feedback from players and captains was generally positive. One form of positive feedback was the re-establishment of awarding of individual trophies for winning Finalists at Finals Day.

To assist captains in the 2014-15 season, a spreadsheet-based result sheet that will automatically show whether or not the 10-point rule has been breached has been developed, and will be distributed to captains that qualify for the Final Stage. All that captains will need to type in is a grading reference to identify players.

Grading

The Grading Team has:

- Issued both the January and August lists on time
- Moved the database onto a new server due in a bid to increase the performance of the main website
- Improved information available on the site
 - There is now enough information to calculate a player's grade independently
 - Current membership situation included
- Issued several improvements to the calculation software including extra information on the English Youth Grand Prix
- Reviewed and changed the FIDE conversion formula for games played abroad to $ECF * 7.5 + 750$. The suitability of using this is being investigated for use as new conversions between other British Isles lists.

Other Areas

Arbiters: The regulations for Arbiters were improved, such that there are now three tiers of Arbiters, with a new bottom level for people who have passed the ECF Arbiters Test. The Test is now free for potential candidates to take.

Armed Forces & Veterans: This was created last year and was transferred to my Directorship in November. Regrettably, I have done nothing in this area this year.

Congress Chess: The intention is to remove this post, and replace it with a "Grand Prix Controller" post, the job description of which will be to administer all aspects of the Grand Prix.

Disabled Chess: Various routine enquiries have been dealt with. Liaison with FIDE may establish a World Junior Disabled Championships in Durham University this December.

Grand Prix: The awarding of trophies for 2013/4 is being dealt with.

National Club: The format changed to a team-based weekender with four sections. The intention is to repeat this in the first half of 2014, and by the time of the AGM, details should be announced. The entry of 18 was approximately in line with expectations. The event made a small surplus.

Prisons Chess: Carl Portman took on this role, and has achieved various things. A chess club has been established at HMP Coldingley and HMP Wandsworth. HMP Parkhurst is also lined up for a visit. A chess column may be established in *InsideTime*, a national prison magazine.

Women's Chess: The £2000 set aside by Council has a tentative budget, one of the goals within this budget is the establishment of an English Women's Championship, which has previously been part of the Home Chess "to-do" list.

I would like to thank all of the volunteers and Officers within this Directorship for their assistance this year.

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Alex Holowczak

ECF Director of Home Chess

12th September, 2014