

**REPORT OF THE ECF SPORT AND RECREATION ALLIANCE
REPRESENTATIVE**

Introduction

I must begin by apologising for the lateness of this Report. It was delayed by agreement with John Philpott in order to enable me to include issues arising at the meeting of the Alliance Games and Sports Division Meeting on Thursday 26th September. Nevertheless, I should have produced it before now.

It is by no means the first time that I have been late with my Report, but it will be the last. Shortly before the meeting I mention above took place, I informed Mike Gunn that I had decided not to seek reappointment when my current term of office expires shortly after the ECF Council Meeting. After six years I feel that the ECF would benefit from the fresh thinking which a new appointee would be able to bring to the role.

Having informed Mike, I also notified the Alliance itself. I was astonished to receive a considerable degree of recognition, both privately and publicly. My decision to step down was announced at the meeting on 26th September and I received a round of applause. Tim Lamb, Chief Executive of the Alliance, wrote to me to express his appreciation of the contribution which I had made, as did two other members of the Alliance staff. I seem to have raised the profile of the ECF to a degree of which I was previously unaware.

Job Description

In previous years I have outlined my duties at this point in the Report. With the position now becoming vacant, I am instead including a proposed job description. It will be for the new Board to decide how to fill the position and whether to advertise it, but I hope that the information below will prove useful in any case.

“The Sport and Recreation Alliance Representative:

Seeks to maximise the benefits accruing to the ECF from its membership of the Alliance; attends (or arranges for a substitute to attend) Alliance General Meetings, Divisional Meetings, Workshops and Presentations in so far as they are relevant and affordable; provides appropriate information and advice to the Board.

The Representative should in principle be available to attend meetings and other events in London during working hours on a few occasions each year.

A general interest in sport would be an advantage.”

Governance and Related Matters

I commented last year on the importance of the Representative seeking to ensure that the ECF and English chess generally benefit from the opportunities which arise from our membership of the Alliance. There is a wealth of expertise available to us, both within the Alliance itself and from the representatives of other sports. I have felt for some time that we have not made proper use of this; that is mostly my fault and is one of the reasons I am stepping down. One key area is governance, a matter which the ECF will need to address in the next year or two. We are not alone in this. Sports funded by Sport England have until Autumn 2014 to amend their Articles of Association to comply with the current Sport England requirements. These include structuring their Boards of Directors so that Directors are elected for four year terms and may serve a maximum of two such terms. I have little doubt that the ECF would also have been required to do this had the DCMS grant remained in place. The question of whether to adopt an OMOV voting system, with the concomitant problems of potentially low turnout and of uncertain meeting sizes, has also been faced by others. Here there is more than one solution.

There are model Articles of Association available, should we wish to avail ourselves of them.

The matter of a Code of Conduct is also an area where the ECF would in my opinion have benefited from making more use of the guidance available from the Alliance and in paying closer heed to the arrangements made by other sports.

Sports Club Survey 2013

This survey is conducted every two years and the full results of the 2013 survey will be available shortly. It is of limited relevance to chess, but there may nevertheless be points of interest, particularly in relation to trends in membership numbers and subscription income. In 2013 the average sports club amongst those participating had 114 adult members and 90 junior members.

Give and Win Lottery

This has been designed as a replacement lottery for the ill fated Bingolotto. Details are still sketchy, but I understand that clubs can sign up and sell tickets costing £2, with everything being administered online. 40% of the proceeds will go the particular club, 40% will be distributed in prizes, and 20% will go to the promoters or cover administrative costs. The maximum prize will generally be £1,000, but with a few £10,000 prizes.

The term “club” is broadly defined the ECF context it would embrace not only chess clubs in the normal sense but also all member organisations of Council.

Community Sport and Recreation Awards

These Awards are presented annually by the Alliance and were formerly known as the Sports Club of the Year Awards.

I apologise to Malcolm Pein and to Chess in Schools and Communities for leaving this item until last, but I wanted to end on a high note.

Last year I was pleased to report that CSC received a Highly Commended Award. This year I am even more pleased to report that CSC went one better, winning the Award for the Innovative Project Category. Malcolm Pein again received the Award at the Alliance's AGM from its President, HRH Prince Edward the Earl of Wessex. I was unable to be present last year, but this year I was there.

More details can be found at http://www.chessinschools.co.uk/sra_awards_2013.htm#sra2013.

I would like to see the success of CSC extended to other chess bodies. Anyone who wishes to suggest a club or other organisation for nomination in 2014 should contact my successor, or contact the Director of Home Chess or the Director of Junior Chess as appropriate.

David Sedgwick
ECF Sport and Recreation Alliance Representative
8th October 2013