

PAY TO PLAY FEES IN FIDE-RATED EVENTS

When the present membership scheme was introduced it inherited from the old scheme the feature that should a player registered with FIDE as English compete in a FIDE rated event without being a Gold or Silver member of the Federation the organisers will be charged the FIDE rating fee payable and the player concerned will be de-registered on the FIDE rating list.

This policy has been criticised by a number of FIDE officials in private conversation with their ECF counterparts as using FIDE to solve our problems with enforcing our own membership regulations. They observe that few other countries feel it necessary to take this step for administrative, rather than disciplinary, reasons. Should the player wish to play in further FIDE rated events it involves them in a payment to FIDE (of no benefit to the ECF) of a sum an order of magnitude greater than the income which would have been received had they taken out Gold membership; this seems to the Board to be inequitable. A parallel might be drawn with the County Championship, where the draconian penalty of defaulting the game for playing an ineligible player if a non-ECF member takes part in a match in the National Stages has been replaced by a fine of £10 per game.

There have also been shortcomings in the administration of the policy. The Office does not hold a definitive list of delisted players, detailing the date of and reason for delisting.

For the above reasons the Board put to Council the proposal which appears on the agenda, viz. that:

“a Pay-to-Play fee equal to the difference between Silver and Gold membership rates be levied on each England-registered player in an event submitted for FIDE rating through the Federation who is not a Gold or Platinum member of the Federation, that for members holding Silver membership this payment shall be treated as an upgrade of such membership to Gold, and that the existing policy of requesting FIDE to delist such players be discontinued.”

From the available evidence it appears that the majority of players who are liable to be delisted under the current rule are already Silver members. The proposal will therefore secure from those players an amount which equals that which the Federation would receive were the player to comply with the membership requirement. From the remainder it would secure more than the Federation currently receives in the case where the non-member simply ceases to play in FIDE rated events.