

The Executive Board met by telephone conference call on October 23, 2002, at 5 PM EDT. Board Members present were: John McCrary (President), Steve Shutt (Vice President), Frank Camaratta (Vice President for Finance), Bob Smith (Secretary), Dr. Joseph Wagner (Member-at-Large), GM Arnold Denker (Member-at-Large), and Frank Niro, Executive Director. Frank Brady (Member-at-Large) was absent. The following motions were presented:

EB 03-02 (McCrary): The Executive Board officially adopts the following position regarding drug testing: The U S Chess Federation recognizes that Olympic affiliation for chess has various potential advantages, including eligibility for regional games such as the Asian Games, or local funding. The USCF also recognizes that some national federations may currently benefit financially from recognition by their National Olympic Committees, and the USCF does not wish to interfere with federations, which may choose to pursue and maintain such benefits. The USCF also recognizes and supports the right of chess professionals and all players to choose to participate in events, and in doing so to choose to honor requirements for those events.

Furthermore, the USCF recognizes that chess has many of the finest elements of sports, including the very important element of challenging the abilities of its participants to their maximum level. Strengthening of mind as well as body should be the goal of all sports, and mind-sports such as chess can benefit society as a whole.

However, the USCF establishes the following principles and strongly urges their adoption by other federations:

- 1) Research does not support the conclusion that any substance produces measurable benefit to chess playing. Even where research suggests that enhanced cognitive functioning may result from the use of substances, that research has not yet demonstrated that such effects impact the cognitive and perceptual skills that are particular to chess. Psychological studies of chess skill have demonstrated the dominant role of perceptual processes, which are enhanced and made much more efficient by specific learning, and the manner in which perceptions are organized and integrated by the player into a total reasoning process for a move choice. It can be argued from those psychological studies that the cognitive processes used in chess are not necessarily analogous to those employed in other activities that have been studied. Furthermore, the practical effects of such general factors as improved concentration on move-choice must be experimentally tested. It is evident that any such effects, if present at all, would almost certainly be much less than the effects of substances on more sensitive indicators, such as precise running time in a race.

Furthermore, chess players at all levels have demonstrated an excellent record with regard to the absence of substance abuse. Complaints of this type are virtually non-

existent in any chess competitions. The USCF believes that chess competitors have already set and maintained an exemplary standard in this area that is important to all sports.

It is noted, furthermore, that anecdotal reporting by players suggests that use of any substances, including even ingestion of caffeine, may be more likely to have a detrimental effect, rather than a positive one, on chess performance for various reasons. Empirical demonstration of these effects on chess play must be established by experiments that are specific to chess performance and the cognitive processes most pertinent to that performance.

2) Pursuant to point (1), FIDE is urged to join with other mind-sports in petitioning the IOC and the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) to eliminate testing requirements that are inappropriate for mind-sports, until such time as adequate experimental evidence has been produced to support the need for such testing in mind-sports. Even prior to such experimentation, it should be immediately obvious that many substances on the WADA list are inappropriate for mind-sports. Allowing organized mind-sports to investigate and self-regulate in this area is a valid approach that is completely consistent with the goals of the IOC, considering the information described above in point (1). It is noted that WADA is reviewing its regulations and seeking input at this time. FIDE should work more closely with its federations, including the USCF, in coordinating contacts with Olympic officials who are sympathetic to the social and sporting benefits of chess in order to approach this goal.

3) Because of principle (1), there is great risk that sanctions may be inappropriately placed against players who had no intent of using any performance-enhancing substances. The USCF strongly opposes any and all penalties against any players until such time as the need for testing in chess has been experimentally demonstrated as indicated in point (1). The WADA sanctions are based on the assumption that substance use is an established problem in sports, but this has not been demonstrated to be the case in chess or other mind-sports. The USCF asserts that the imposition by FIDE of testing-based sanctions, fines, related penalties, and other reprisals against USCF players will be unacceptable to the USCF, until such time as the experimental need for testing in chess has been adequately demonstrated.

4) No federation should be required by FIDE to perform testing at its events. It is noted that the USCF Delegates passed a motion in 2001 that urged FIDE to limit testing to events where it is absolutely essential for qualification into the Olympic Games. By implication from the Delegate position and consistent with it, the Board considers it to be USCF policy that there be no mandatory testing in USCF-sanctioned events, unless such events are specially organized for the purpose of Olympic

qualification or for qualification to Olympic-associated events such as regional games, and all requirements are advertised clearly in advance.

5) Testing should not occur at this time in any FIDE events that are not necessary for Olympic qualification or for associated events such as regional games, until such time as the need for such testing in chess has been demonstrated, or full acceptance into the Olympic movement has moved closer to reality.

6) Chess professionals and all players should be more adequately informed of the risks they may face resulting from positive tests, and of the nature of the banned substances, particularly where there has been no intent to enhance performance by any such use. The absence of any demonstrated or reported substance-use problem in chess makes it unlikely that players will be sufficiently aware of the risks they have from innocent use of substances such as caffeine.

7) Monetary fines should be immediately removed from FIDE regulations, as these appear not to be required under WADA regulations

8) The USCF requests that it be allowed to nominate an appointment to the FIDE Medical Commission, with the objective of addressing the research and related issues involved in this area.

9) FIDE should address these issues actively with the IOC and WADA, and should take the lead in creating the necessary research to study the effects of substances in chess, while continuing to advocate for the positive place and role of chess as a sport in the sporting world. **PASSED 6-0** Brady absent

EB 03-03 (McCrary): The Executive Board authorizes the USCF President to implement actions to help resolve the Alaska disputes. Such actions may include arranging mediation, arbitration, and/or a USCF-managed election to determine officers of the State affiliate. **PASSED 6-0** Brady absent

EB 03-04 (McCrary): The Executive Board determines the following events will be qualifiers for the 2004 U.S. Championship: National Open, Foxwoods Open, Chicago Open, World Open, and the U.S. Open. The number of qualifying spots from each may be designated by the USCF President in consultation with the America's Foundation For Chess. The U.S. Masters will be a qualifier in any year it is held, assuming that determination of its being held can be made in time to announce a qualifying schedule. **PASSED 6-0** Brady absent

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Smith,
USCF Secretary