

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE USCF EXECUTIVE BOARD HELD ON NOVEMBER 16-17, 2002

The Executive Board of the United States Chess Federation met on November 16-17, 2002, at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Boca Raton, Florida. The following Board members were present:

Dr. John McCrary: President Steve Shutt: Vice President Frank Camaratta: Vice President For Finance Bob Smith: Secretary Dr. Joe Wagner: Member at Large GM Arnold Denker: Member At Large

Dr. Frank Brady, Member at Large, could not attend for reasons of health. Executive Director Frank Niro also participated in the meeting.

The following motions were presented:

EB 03-05 (Board) The Executive Board authorizes the Executive Director to finalize arrangements for the 2004 U.S. Open and Annual Delegates' Meeting to be held at the Wyndham-Bonaventure Hotel in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. **PASSED 6-0**, Brady absent

EB 03-06 (Board): The USCF Executive Board authorizes the Executive Director to sign contracts with or concerning BLI (branding), Think-Like-A-King, and Classic Games. **PASSED 6-0**, Brady absent

EB 03-07 (Camaratta): Final Audited Financials shall be available for Executive Board and Finance Committee review at least 10 days prior to the Finance Workshop at the U.S. Open. Printed copies of the audit shall be available for the Delegates on or before the Finance Workshop. **PASSED 6-0**, Brady absent

EB 03-08 (McCrary): The Minutes of all Executive Board meetings, conference calls, and objections-procedure motions since August 2001 are approved as published. **PASSED 6-0**, Brady absent.

CLOSED SESSION: The meeting began with Closed Session to discuss anything in the usual categories of Closed Session items, which generally include any legal, personnel, or contract-negotiation items.

WEBSITE IMPROVEMENTS: The Open session began with an excellent and thorough presentation by Gary Prince concerning the improvements being made on the USCF website. These will include such things as a more efficient and usable

member store, and means for members to track tournament reports in progress and to access archives.

USCF FINANCES: Executive Director Frank Niro gave an overview of the financial statements of the USCF, supplemented by the printed reports themselves being provided to each Board member. In general membership revenues and sales of books and equipment have been consistent with budgeted expectations, but advertising revenues have been falling short. The USCF set an all-time membership record at the end of October 2002. As part of that record, the rate of loss of Adult Regular members has slowed significantly since May 2002. While that is encouraging, the rate of loss before that time had been high, and this area remains one of significant concern.

SCHOLASTIC CHESS: Vice President Steve Shutt presented an overview of scholastic issues. He discussed the ongoing projects of the Scholastic Council. An effort will be made to have a presentation of the website improvements being currently made to the Scholastic Council at its December meeting.

U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP: President John McCrary mentioned that discussion will be occurring with the America's Foundation for Chess about details regarding the qualifying events for the next U.S. Championship. The USCF Executive Board earlier had approved continuing the same qualifying events that were used in 2002, except that the U.S. Masters was eliminated because of doubts that it will be held. If funding for the U.S. Masters is found, it may be added back to the list of qualifiers if it is feasible to do so.

JACKSONVILLE POSSIBILITIES: President John McCrary discussed possibilities for sponsorship of major international chess events in Jacksonville, Florida. He and his wife, accompanied by past President Don Schultz, met with potential sponsors and with government officials, including a U.S. Congresswoman, on October 26 in Jacksonville. They were interested in hosting an Olympiad, but subsequent discussions at the FIDE meetings in early November made the possibility of a successful Olympiad bid before 2008 seem questionable. At the FIDE meetings, President McCrary suggested holding the World Championship Reunification match in Jacksonville. Later discussions have occurred regarding the possibility of that event, or of other major international chess events in Jacksonville. At the time of these Minutes, no commitments by the potential sponsors have been made.

FIDE ISSUES: President McCrary gave a report to the Board on the FIDE meetings he attended in early November. (Please note that FIDE Delegate Bill Kelleher has published a report of those same meetings, which is posted on the USCF website and is planned for inclusion in "Chess Life.") The official USCF position on drug testing that had been passed by the Executive Board on October 23, 2002 was presented to

the other American Federations (including Central and South America), and was overwhelmingly endorsed by them. Subsequently, monetary fines were eliminated from FIDE regulations on the motion of the USCF at the General Assembly. It must be noted, however, that a majority of the federations in FIDE are recognized by their National Olympic Committees. Many of those federations derive direct or indirect benefits from such recognition, which is related to the issue of FIDE's recognition by the IOC. While inclusion of chess in the Olympic Games seems very doubtful, chess is already being included in regional games with some association to the Olympic movement. Thus, the question of IOC regulations, including drug testing, is more complex than it seems to U.S. players, and many federations in FIDE are uncomfortable challenging those regulations.

The Prague Agreement to reunify the World Championship was endorsed by FIDE. There are plans to implement a worldwide rating system through FIDE, but the USCF was assured that no federation would be required to participate if doing so would hurt its interests. Similarly, the USCF was assured that no rating reports would be accepted from the USCF without the sanction of the USCF.

CLOSED SESSION:

The Board went back into Closed Session to discuss options for moving the USCF headquarters.

OPEN SESSION:

Planned changes in "Chess Life" were discussed by the President and Executive Director. These include the ways in which the publication will better serve the needs of young and new players, now that "School Mates" is being eliminated as a separate quarterly publication. Other Board members made suggestions regarding the content of "Chess Life." Those suggestions included giving more emphasis to chess history as well as to the great players of the present.

RATING SYSTEM: It was noted that the Ratings Committee is evaluating methods for monitoring the rating system, particularly since the system was changed within the last couple of years to implement new formulae. A discussion of ways to help new players understand the system occurred, but it was noted that the old provisional rating formula, while giving a reasonable approximation for some new ratings, could be very inaccurate in some cases.

SCHOLASTIC MEMBERSHIPS: GM Denker raised the question of how to increase the number of scholastic members in the USCF, given the huge numbers of young

players now participating in chess programs. A general discussion of the services that the USCF could provide these young players occurred.

The meeting adjourned at noon on November 17, 2002.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Smith
USCF Secretary