

AN UNOFFICIAL SUMMARY OF THE 08/98 POLICY BOARD AND DELEGATES' MEETINGS

By Rachel Lieberman, USCF Secretary

The recently concluded Policy Board and Delegates' Meetings were held in Kona, Hawaii, in conjunction with the US Open Chess Tournament, during the week of August 1 - 9, 1998. Special thanks go to the organizers of this event for their outstanding hospitality. In addition special thanks go to Emmanuel Omuku, Executive Director of FIDE, for coming to Hawaii to attend the meetings. He was introduced and spoke to the Policy Board and the Delegates on FIDE matters.

Thursday Policy Board Meeting

The last meeting of the 1997 - 1998 Policy Board took place on Thursday, August 6, 1998. Items included, but were not limited to, the following:

The Board reviewed Executive Director Michael Cavallo and Chess Life Editor Glenn Petersen and commended them for their performance.

The Secretary reviewed those items referred by the Delegates to the Board in 1997. All items have been completed.

It was noted that the Annual Report is intended as a tool for potential sponsors, partners and other public contacts. The Delegates' Call is intended to be used for internal communications.

Discussions occurred on the upcoming Olympiad in the Republic of Kalmykia. Emmanuel Omuku, Executive Director of FIDE, addressed the group. Most Board members felt that the United States should send a team.

The Board voted 4 - 0 with two abstentions to support a Delegate motion for direct election of the Policy Board by the members.

The Board debated in open session the issues of conflict of interest and ethics charges between Policy Board members.

The Delegates' Meeting

The Delegates' Meeting was held on Saturday, August 8, 1998.
(Congratulations to President Donald Schultz for completing the meeting in

one day.) Please note that items referred to the Policy Board are covered in the Policy Board summary. Topics discussed by the Delegates included, but were not limited to, the following:

The new governance changes, as presented by the Blue Ribbon Committee, were passed. Thanks to the Blue Ribbon Committee, the Bylaws Committee, and the States Committee for pooling their resources before the meeting to enable the maximum number of people to participate in creating a unified document to bring before the Delegates. Many revisions were generated by joint meetings of the BRC and Bylaws committees and the joint Bylaws/States workshop and many compromises were accepted by all to create the final draft.

The following motion regarding the World Championship of Chess was presented by Robert John McCrary (SC) and passed by the Delegates:

The US Chess Federation officially recognizes the following principles regarding the World Championship of Chess:

1. The title of World Champion is a symbol of the recognition given by the chessplayers of the world to the most skilled chess competitor at any point in time. As such it cannot logically be an object of property subject to ownership.
 2. It follows from point one that the title of World Champion, to be valid, must be conferred by an organization representing the world's chessplayers. The championship must be awarded as the result of a system of competition, which is fairly and objectively organized to determine the strongest competitor at that point in time. Such a competition must eliminate, to the extent possible, the effects of luck or other factors irrelevant to skill.
 3. The US Chess Federation directs its leadership and its representatives to strive to help create a unified system of competition for the World Championship that is fully consistent with principles one and two.
 4. This motion supersedes all previous motions regarding the World Championship.
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The budget as presented by the Treasurer and Executive Director was adopted. Strong improvement in the USCF's financial condition was noted.

Chess Life Editor Glenn Peterson stated that the September, 1998, issue would be geared towards outreach and urged that it be used to help promote chess in schools and communities.

The Delegates adopted the report of the LMA Management Committee.

A new tournament, similar to the Denker Tournament of High School Champions, was proposed for female high school champions. This project is currently in the development stages. The tournament will be named in honor of Fan Adams.

The decision of the Rules Committee was upheld in an appeal submitted to the Delegates by Thad Rogers (GA).

A roll call vote was taken on whether to table a motion that would have called for a One Member One Vote direct election of the Policy Board to take effect after the election of 1999, for all subsequent elections. The motion to table passed by a vote of 44 - 28, with one abstention. There were 16 who did not vote.

Accessibility by e-mail is strongly encouraged for Committee Chairs. E-mail addresses may be published in Chess Life.

USCF committees, excepting those appointed by the Delegates, exist to advise and recommend, but may not make any ruling that affects the status of any member without ratification by the Policy Board, office, or Delegates.

All newly created Delegates' committees must have a statement of purpose defining their function. The two committees to be named by the Delegates for the first time are Bylaws and Ethics. The LMA Management Committee has been named by the Delegates previously.

The LMA Management Committee shall publish an Annual Report showing the performance of the Fund's investments, the investments owned, the investment strategy, and an assessment of investment risks.

The Delegates appointed the following members to the Bylaws Committee: Alan Benjamin, NY; Frank Camaratta, FL; Guy Hoffman, WI; Randy Hough, CA/S; Gary Kitts, MI; Richard Koepcke, CA/N; Myron Lieberman, AZ; David

Mehler, MD; Mike Nolan, NE; Paul Shannon, OR; Bob Smith, FL; Harold Winston, IL. Mike Nolan and Harold Winston were named co-chairs by the committee.

The Delegates appointed the following members to the Ethics Committee: Frank Camaratta, FL; Mike Carr, CA/S; Bobby Dudley, PA; Roger Gotschall, IA; Martin Merado, NY; Ken Sloan, AL; Bob Smith, FL; Hal Terrie, NH; Andrew Thall, TX; Helen Warren, IL.

The Delegates appointed the following members to the LMA Management Committee: Tom Dorsch, CA/N, (current Treasurer); Mike Cavallo, NY, (Executive Director); Frank Camaratta, FL, (past Treasurer); Steve Doyle, NJ, and Jim Pechac, OH, (two additional members selected by the Delegates). Note: Jim Pechac, OH, is the current Chair of the Finance Committee.

Randy Hough (CA/S), Frank Camaratta (FL), and Fan Adams (NY) were nominated by acclamation as Delegates- At-Large for their services to chess. They will need to be nominated again at the 1999 Delegate's Meeting to confirm their Delegate At Large Status.

The Executive Director, in consultation with the Tournament Director Certification Committee, is authorized to upgrade anyone's Tournament Director Certification level to either Local TD or Senior TD.

Effective January 1, 1999, all tournaments without exception advertised in *Chess Life*, *Tournament Life*, or elsewhere shall be required to pay at least 50% of any based-on prize advertised if the prize fund is over \$500. Based-on prizes in tournaments with an advertised total prize fund of \$500 or less must be paid in proportion to turnout. Minimum penalty for violation of this rule shall be disqualification from advertising in *Chess Life* for one year. Additional penalties may be imposed at the discretion of the Executive Director. If a tournament is affected by an act of God, then the organizer may appeal to the Policy Board.

The Executive Director agreed that the USCF office should publish in a rating supplement notification to Tournament Directors that they have the option of using unofficial ratings listed on the USCF website, if listed in the TLA.

All volunteer expense requests and reimbursements shall be included in a special section of the USCF website, which is publicly accessible.

It is recommended that the Executive Director's goals and objectives will be negotiated at the first Policy Board meeting following the Annual meeting.

The following was referred to the Ratings Committee: Ratings below the published rating floor shall be maintained by the office and used for subsequent rating calculations.

The USCF office was directed to implement any necessary procedures to ensure that rating reports are submitted promptly.

The USCF office is directed to make every reasonable effort to include all rating reports for a given rating period when compiling the annual All-American Team. Families of All American Team candidates who might be affected by late submission are encouraged to confirm their status with the USCF office.

The following system of Life Achievement Awards was adopted. This replaces the norm system that was terminated last year.

Executive Summary

USCF recognizes Life Achievement by a series of awards. There is one award for each rating Class, ranging from Senior Master to Class J. Awards are based on maintaining an established rating in the Class for a significant number of games. The number of games required depends on the Class. This system is an extension of the Original Life Master award. Except for addition of the "Special Rules" listed below the table, the requirements for the Original Life Master award are unchanged by this proposal.

Details

The office currently maintains a counter for games toward the Original Life Master title. When a player's post-event established rating is greater than or equal to 2200, then the number of games played in that event is credited towards the Original Life Master title. When this counter reaches 300, the Original Life Master title is awarded.

This proposal extends that proposal to every Class recognized by the USCF (currently Senior Master through Class J). For each Class, a separate counter

will be maintained and a separate title awarded (see below for title names). When a player's post-event established rating is greater than or equal to the lowest rating for a particular Class, the counters for that Class and all lower Classes will be incremented by the number of games played in that event. The counter is incremented before the player's rating floor is applied in the rating calculation. Thus, a player with a 1600 rating floor whose rating drops below 1600 prior to the floor raising it back to 1600 would not have the Second Category counter, corresponding to Class B, incremented. Players with provisional post-event ratings do not have their counters incremented. Each title requires a separate number of games, according to the table below:

Class	Name	Life Title Name	Rating Range	Games Req'd
Senior Master	Life Senior Master	2400 & up	300	
Master	Orig. Life Master	2200-2399	300	
Expert	Life Expert	2000-2199	200	
Class A	1st Category	1800-1999	200	
Class B	2nd Category	1600-1799	150	
Class C	3rd Category	1400-1599	100	
Class D	4th Category	1200-1399	50	
Class E	5th Category	1000-1199	50	
Class F	6th Category	800-999	50	
Class G	7th Category	600-799	50	
Class H	8th Category	400-599	50	
Class I	9th Category	200-399	50	
Class J	10th Category	100-199	50	

Special Rules

Games shall be counted towards titles only if the player completes his or her schedule, in a tournament of at least three rounds, with no forfeit losses. Games played in matches shall not be counted.

Title Awards

The issue of which awards should be mailed to players by the office, and under what circumstances, is referred to the Executive Director.

Reporting Progress

The issue of how a player's title and progress toward the next higher title should be displayed on mailing labels and in rating supplements is referred to the Executive Director.

Transition

To ease the transition to this system, the counters for every current player should be initialized by scanning tournament records from 1991 forward. Original Life Master counters should not be changed (some may include games played before 1991). Initial awards should be made based on this retrospective scan of the records. New players have their counters set to zero and start accumulating games in the first event in which their post-event rating is established. The issue of whether credit may be given, upon request, for games played prior to 1991 is referred to the Executive Director. The proposed system applies only to "standard" time-control events, and not to Quick Chess or correspondence events.

Interpretation

The interpretation of the Life Achievement awards necessarily varies somewhat over the range from Senior Master to Class J. At the lower end of the scale, the award can be seen as a "participation" award, recognizing a significant number of games played. At the top end, the Original Life Master award remains as recognition of a significant number of games at a very high standard of play, and the new Life Senior Master award should be even more prestigious. It is possible that slowly improving, but very active, players may collect a series of Life Achievement awards as they improve. Life Achievement awards are not intended to be "terminal." However, it is expected that most players will receive at most 2 or 3 such awards, with the final award recognizing the effort required to maintain their individual peak standard of play. Just as with current players striving for the Original Life Master award, it provides an incentive for a player at his plateau to continue playing.

Regarding FIDE rules:

Effective July 1, 1999, all tournaments designated "FIDE" in the TLA will apply FIDE rules in accordance with provision 2.1 of the FIDE rating regulations. The introduction to the TLA section in Chess Life will remind readers that all tournaments not designated "FIDE" are held under USCF rules and are not FIDE rated. The USCF pledges to work closely with FIDE to reconcile differences between the two sets of rules.

The following motions were referred to the Scholastic Committee:

In national scholastic tournaments school teams must represent schools that are:

- Certified, approved, chartered or otherwise registered and accepted by the applicable state, or
- Given degree granting status by the state, or
- Accredited by a major accreditation agency.

Any team that finishes within the top five places of a section must document its status and the enrollment of players by letter from the school or school district to USCF within 60 days of the end of the tournament. Failure to do so allows USCF to revoke the team's status in the tournament.

Any player that finished within the top five places of a section must document his or her academic status, age, and grade in writing from the school or school district to USCF within 60 days of the end of the tournament.

The following motions from the Scholastic Workshop passed without referral:

Any profits generated by national scholastic tournaments that are earned by USCF will be retained by USCF and earmarked for scholastic and youth chess.

Home schooled players shall represent their local public school, for all National Scholastic Team competition, when local guidelines permit them to participate as a member of that school, in extra-curricular activities. Home schooled players from school districts that do not permit such participation shall be allowed to form teams under their local Home School Association.

There shall be no smoking permitted in any contract areas of all National Scholastic Tournaments.

The Delegates approved in principle "Revision of Bidding Process for Super Nationals" approved by the Scholastic Committee workshop and referred the document to the Executive Director for implementation.

A motion to allow Scholastic Committee members access to the floor in National Scholastic tournaments was referred to the Policy Board (See Sunday PB meeting below).

Regarding Women's Chess:

The Executive Director will open a "Women's Chess Account" to collect money/ donations earmarked for women's chess.

USCF will add a "Women's Chess Page" to the official USCF website. This new page will promote issues and personalities related to women's chess

Regarding rules:

White's clock must be started first. The player with the white pieces makes the first move and only then starts black's clock. If the player with the black pieces is absent the move may be made on the board or sealed in an envelope until that player arrives. Implementation date is January 1, 1999.

Regarding blind rules:

It is recommended that the move played on the Board be the official move. If a different move is announced the player should receive a penalty.

A vote of thanks was given to Parliamentarian Mike Nolan for his services.

Sunday Policy Board Meeting

The first meeting of the 1998 - 1999 Policy Board took place on Sunday, August 9, 1998. Topics discussed included, but were not limited to, the following:

Jerry Weikel addressed the Board on the 1999 US Open in Reno, Nevada. The issue of adequate space was discussed. Arrangements are being made for additional space if needed. The point at which USCF receives an additional share of the revenue was moved from 500 to 600 players.

The regular membership decline was discussed. The Internet is seen as a way to attract members. The Outreach Committee will be addressing this

issue. Outreach Committee chair Myron Lieberman asked for - and still needs -volunteers to help with media and membership growth projects.

Harold Winston (IL) and Tom Maser (CA/N) were appointed to the US Chess Trust.

Bill Kelleher was appointed FIDE Delegate under the same terms as Tim Redman.

The Chairpersons of the Chess In Education, College Chess, and Scholastic Chess Committees shall serve as ex-officio members on the other two committees listed.

Committee Chairs and liaisons were named.

Those items referred to the Policy Board by the Delegates were discussed:

The Secretary shall post on the USCF website a notice that Advance Delegate Motions are accepted electronically. Advance Delegate Motions shall continue to be posted.

A Board Subcommittee of Bill Goichberg and Tom Dorsch was established to study the feasibility of a new rulebook and report back at the next meeting.

The Board voted against the concept of maintaining a current club directory in both printed and online form due the cost of reprinting the printed version. The directory will be maintained online.

The Board voted to instruct the Finance Committee and the Scholastic Committee to analyze the dues structure for all memberships and report back for the 1999 Delegates' meeting.

The Board voted that Scholastic Committee members shall have access to the playing areas and all tournament areas of all National Scholastic Tournaments to a reasonable extent.

The Board referred the matter of increasing the US Women's Championship prize fund to one half of the US Championship prize fund to the US Championship Committee.

The following memberships were suspended: Robert Cameron (CA); Gilbert Cruz (TX); Thomas Elliott (CA); Randy Ewart (KS); Jerome James (SC); John

Johnson (NY); Cliff Lane (NY); Tyrone Moyer (PA); Jordan Scott-West (TN); John Warchal (MD).

The Board discussed the revised US Open bid from Minnesota for the year 2000. It is being reviewed by the office.

The Board also discussed USCF online chess options, the need for an event organizer at the office, the continued need for infrastructure improvements, and the definition of a school as passed by the Delegates. No Board action was taken at this time, but these items are still under consideration.

When the new computer system is in place there can be many functional improvements made to the rating area of the website, including but not limited to the ability to download the rating database in TA format and the possibility of using individual ratings downloaded from web updates as official ratings.

The concept of a US Open Team Championship as proposed by Bill Moushey (MO) was approved and referred to the Executive Director for further study.

The Board was informed that the "Nevada" lawsuit filed against the United States Chess Federation has been dismissed.

The next meeting of the Policy Board is to be determined. Notice will be given on the Internet and in Chess Life.