

## **AN UNOFFICIAL SUMMARY OF THE 1997 DELEGATES' AND POLICY BOARD MEETINGS**

**By Rachel Lieberman, USCF Secretary**

The 1997 USCF Delegates' and Policy Board meetings were held in Orlando, Florida, in conjunction with the 1997 US Open. Special thanks are in order to the organizers and directors for a well run event, and also to Mike Nolan (NE), who served as Parliamentarian.

### **The Delegates' Meetings**

The Delegates' Meetings were held on the weekend of August 9 and 10, 1997. Items discussed and acted upon included, but were not limited to, the following:

Garrett Scott (IL) was elected to fill the Policy Board Member-At-Large position. Vote totals for the four candidates are listed below. There were a total of 7 write-in votes (combined for 3 people) and 4 no votes.

Garrett Scott, IL 194  
Gary Prince, NJ 138  
John Blackstone, NV 7  
Sam Sloan, NY 6

New RVPs are as follows:

Region I - Rob Roy, CT; Region II - Ed Frumkin, NY; Region III - Bob Dudley, PA; Region IV - Scott Parker, GA; Region V - David Calton, MI; Region VI - Mike Nietman, WI; Region VII - Tim Just, IL; Region VIII - Walter Schaetzle, AL; Region X - Bill Snead, TX; Region XI - Richard Koepcke, CA/N.

Note: Regions IX and XII did not have RVP elections this year.

Youth and scholastic memberships were redefined. Changes will take effect January 1, 1998. Scholastic membership will be limited to people fourteen years of age and under. Youth dues will be increased to \$17 per year; \$32 for two years; and \$47 for three years. Scholastic dues shall be \$12 per year; \$23 for two years; and \$34 for three years. There will be a \$5 affiliate commission on first time scholastic memberships.

The Delegates authorized the Policy Board to revise the fee structure for TLAs and rating fees with the provision that no changes go into effect until after reasonable notice to organizers and TDs.

The budget as presented by the Treasurer was adopted.

The US Chess Federation adopted the following policy with regard to the World Chess Championship:

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 item of property subject to ownership.

2. It follows from point 1 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 time. Such a competition must eliminate, to the extent possible, the effects of luck or other factors irrelevant to skill.

3. In order to best accomplish the objective of point 2, the US Chess Federation takes the position that future competitions should ideally end in a match between the incumbent champion and the winner of a valid challenger's competition. The challenger's competition may be a large knockout tournament.

4. After the 1998 Delegates' annual meeting, the US Chess Federation will not recognize any person as World Champion whose title is not fully consistent with the principles in 1 and 2 above.

The Board of Delegates formed a Quasi Committee of the Whole to consider the proposals of the Blue Ribbon Panel (BRP), the One Member One Vote (OMOV) proposals, and other related motions. Workshops held before the meeting and a series of straw polls in Committee of the Whole resulted in a number of major changes including the following.

State Delegates and Alternate Delegates will be elected at the state level in a national election run by USCF. All USCF members age 18 and older will be voters. The 125 Delegates and 375 Alternate Delegates will join the Delegates at Large, Policy Board members, and Regional Vice Presidents (until the year 2000) in voting for Policy Board members. The Policy Board will consist of 7 members and elect its own officers. The President will not have a tie break vote. The term of a Policy Board member will be four years with a limit of two consecutive four year terms. The Executive Director will be a non-voting ex officio member of the Policy Board. The office of Regional Vice President (RVP) and the region structure will be eliminated. Effective immediately current RVPs will serve their full term but not be replaced. A Chief Financial Officer will be hired by the Executive Director with approval of the Policy Board. The Bylaws, Ethics, and LMA Committees will be appointed by the Delegates. Further details will be included on the final set of Bylaws

The Delegates accepted the proposed new bylaws in concept subject to approval of the final written document. It is the intent of the Secretary to continue the BRP web page at [members.aol.com/secretary/brp.htm](http://members.aol.com/secretary/brp.htm) and update the document as new revisions evolve. There is a direct link to the current bylaws on that page to allow for direct comparison. Please send your comments by e-mail to [REDACTED] with BRP in the subject line.

The following action was taken in order to enable implementation of the changes:

The new bylaws will take effect on September 10, 1998. No election for Regional Vice President or Policy Board shall be held in 1998 under the existing bylaws nor shall any RVP vacancies be filled. The 1999 Policy Board election shall be held under the new bylaws with the electorate of the old bylaws.

The effect of this action is as follows, subject to possible changes in the Bylaws prior to implementation that could affect the schedule.:

1997 - Delegates and Alternate Delegates will be selected by the states under the old Bylaws. RVPs and Policy Board members elected in 1997 serve their full terms.

1998 - Delegates and Alternate Delegates will be selected by the states under the old Bylaws. There will be no election held for Policy Board or Regional Vice President. The Member at Large whose term expires will not be replaced. This will temporarily create a 6 member Policy Board.

1999 - The first election of Delegates and Alternate Delegates under the new Bylaws will take place. They will serve for a 2 year term (2000 and 2001). There will be no RVP election. The Delegates and Voting Members elected in 1998 under the old bylaws will vote for the Policy Board as defined in the new Bylaws which will have been implemented on 9/10/98. There will be 7 members elected. They will join Garrett Scott on a Policy Board that will have 8 members for one year. The Policy Board members elected in 1999 will serve either 4 years or 2 years depending on vote count.

2000 - There will be no election for Delegates and Alternate Delegates. The term of office of the remaining RVPs will expire and they will not be replaced. Garrett Scott's term ends and the Policy Board is back to its 7 member structure. There will be no Policy Board election.

2001 - The transition is completed and the new bylaws are fully in effect. There will be an election of Delegates and Alternate Delegates for a 2 year term (2002 and 2003) and these elections will take place in odd numbered years thereafter. There will be a Policy Board election for a 4 year term to elect replacements for those Policy Board members elected in 1999 to 2 year terms. Hereafter the term of office of the Policy Board will be 4 years and the elections will be every two years in the odd numbered years. Either three or four members will be elected depending on the number of members whose terms expire.

A method for recall of a Policy Board member was established.

Motions redefining the role of the Treasurer as Board liaison to financial matters, establishing the guidelines under which an aggregate of over \$200,000 can be borrowed, and naming the members of the Life Member Assets Committee passed.

Participation and voting by members at the annual Membership Meeting shall be limited to those members physically present in person.

A Code of Conduct for the Policy Board was put in place. In addition, a new Code of Ethics was established.

Joe Bunin, USCF's attorney regarding Nevada issues, addressed the Delegates. The Board of Delegates reaffirmed the Nevada decision as printed in *Chess Life* in November, 1996.

The matter of the US Amateur Team playoff was discussed. One possibility would be to hold the playoff on the Internet. The Delegates preferred a face to face playoff and referred the matter to the Executive Director to explore possibilities.

The USCF office was instructed to program the new correspondence tournaments originally approved in 1994.

A possible tour by Women's World Champion Susan Polgar was discussed. The USCF supports women's chess and likes the idea of simultaneous tours. The Delegates encourage the Executive Director to seek sponsors for those promotions and offers which enhance our uniqueness in the US, including but not limited to a tour by the Women's World Champion.

Rating issues were discussed. The matter of the K factor for Quick Chess was referred to the Ratings Committee. The system of Life Titles based on norms will be abolished. Quick Chess Grand Prix points are to be calculated the same as any other Grand Prix points.

The office will conduct surveys at major open tournaments that are sponsored by the USCF. The purpose is to receive feedback from USCF members and customers.

The matter of unclaimed SASP funds was referred to the Regions and States Committee to determine whether they should be used for other purposes; i.e., given to the Chess Trust.

Life memberships for blind players shall be available for \$210.

Promotion of the USCF website was discussed. The matter of promoting the URL of the USCF's website on stationery and promotional materials was referred to the Policy Board and the office.

Additional scholastic issues as recommended by the scholastic workshop were discussed. A motion calling on the Policy Board to facilitate matches between our All American team, similar teams from Canada, and other national youth teams passed. These matches may be internet or over the board. In addition, the host of the US Open is encouraged to facilitate simultaneous exhibitions using All American players.

The 1998 Delegates' Meeting will be held in conjunction with the 1998 US Open in Hawaii. We hope to see you there.

### **Policy Board Meetings**

The last meeting of the 1996-97 Policy Board was held on Thursday, August 7, 1997. This was the final PB meeting for Member-At-Large Robert Ferguson (PA).

The Board met in closed session to discuss legal issues and review the Executive Director. There was also a short open session meeting for review after which the Policy Board/Staff forum took place, where the PB and staff were available to receive input and answer questions from anybody in attendance.

The first meeting of the 1997 - 98 Policy Board was held on August 11 and 12, 1997, and included newly elected Member-At-Large Garrett Scott. Topics discussed included, but were not limited to, the following:

Tim Redman (TX) addressed the group regarding chess scholarships currently being offered at the University of Texas. The following motion passed: Tim Redman is appointed College Coordinator for the USCF, and the Policy Board directs office staff to provide whatever resources they can to enhance his mission.

Policy Board/ Executive Director/ Office Action items were reviewed.

Three presentations were given to the Board regarding upcoming events: David Kuhns (MN) presented a bid for the 2000 US Open; De Knudson (SD) presented a bid for the 1999 National High School Championship; and Ralph Bowman (KS) presented a bid for Super Nationals II, to be held in 2001. The Board gave a vote of confidence to the Kansas Super Nationals bid, and agreed in principle with the concept of holding a Super Nationals every four years. The bid has not yet been awarded.

The following individuals had their memberships suspended: Timothy Barry, OH; Lawrence Carlson, GA; Tom Cepek, IL; Oscar Echols, MI; Thomas Elliott, CA; Randy Ewart, KS; Mark Havrilla, CA; Jacob Hester, IN; Dennis Lardent, NV; Jay Porter, IL; Jordan Scott-West, TN; Carlos Sims, TN; and John Warchal, MD.

Implementation of the Internet college chess league was discussed. Tim Redman again addressed the group. The goal would be to have some form of league play by February. The concept of a National Intercollegiate Chess League (NICL) was discussed. Garrett Scott, Jim Eade, and Bill Goichberg will form a NICL Board subcommittee, the goal to set up a trial match by October. Fan Adams will assist by development of the New York area.

Promotion of Doubles was discussed. Don Schultz and Bill Goichberg will work together to achieve this goal.

The Board authorized Jim Eade to proceed to identify a professional Ombudsman.

The concept of splitting the Annual Report was discussed. Advance Delegate Motions and minutes from the May meeting would be sent out separately from the Annual Report.

Committees were named and will be included in the *Policy Board Newsletter* (#1 for 1997/ 98).

Online chess play was discussed. A price structure will be determined by the Executive Director and the Board.

Women's chess was discussed. The following motion passed: The Policy Board considers finding sponsorship for the promotion of women in chess to be of the highest priority.

The next meeting will be held the weekend of November 8 and 9, 1997, in New Windsor, New York. Tentative plans are for the February meeting to be held in Northern California. We hope to see you at an upcoming meeting.

### **Other Notes**

The annual Awards Banquet was held on Saturday, August 9. Special thanks to Fred Gruenberg for his great job as emcee of the awards presentation and congratulations to the award winners.

One highlight on Monday, August 11, was a Pro-Am match arranged by President Don Schultz. The team of Gabriel Schwartzman and Oscar Nakamura competed against Alexander Yermolinsky and Gina Ippolito. The match ended in a draw. The partners for each Grandmaster were selected by a bidding process that took place at the Awards Banquet. The prize fund for the match was 110% of the funds raised from bidding. Thanks to Don Schultz for this new idea.

Submitted by Rachel Lieberman, Secretary.