

Irish Chess Union
Annual General Meeting: 28 September 2014

It was agreed at the start of the meeting that the election of officers would take place immediately after the presentation of officer' reports and before motions were considered.

Agenda

1. Welcome address by the chairperson
2. Apologies for absence

The Chairperson outlined the manner in which the meeting was to be conducted and responded to some queries from the floor.

3. Approval of minutes of previous meetings

- (a) The EGM held on 18 May 2014
- (b) The AGM held on 29 September 2013
- (c) The AGM held on 30 September 2012

The draft minutes of the above three meetings presented to the AGM were adopted.

4. Presentation of Officers' Reports
5. Presentation of accounts for 2013-14.

The officers' reports were presented and adopted following queries from the floor which were addressed by the Chairperson and other members of the outgoing executive committee. PRO report was amended before adoption.

6. Election of Officers.

As the only contested position was for the role of Chairperson, the two candidates seeking election each addressed the meeting for two minutes followed by some questions from the floor. A secret ballot was then held and Pat Fitzsimons won the election by 48 votes to 8. The following officers were also appointed:

Vicechairperson
Paul Cassidy

Secretary
Bryan Tobin

Treasurer
Chris Sheridan

Development Officer

Darko Polimac

FIDE & ECU Delegate

Kevin O'Connell

Junior Officer

Desmond Beatty

Rating Officer

Mark Orr

Tournament Officer

Peter Scott

Public Relations Officer

Colm Daly

Women's Officer

Gary O'Grady

Membership Officer

The request for nominations was deferred pending consideration of a motion to abolish the position on the Executive. The motion was not taken along with a number of other motions on the basis that the incoming Executive Committee would consider the motions afresh and bring forward their own proposals. No nominations were received for the position at the meeting.

7. Consideration of Motions

A. Motions to Change the Disciplinary Process (see AGM documents article for these motions)

1. Proposal from the Advisory Board on the Code of Conduct
2. Proposal from Pete Morriss

Both Motions rejected on the basis that incoming ICU Executive would review documents and bring forward new proposals.

Motion to insert Appendix A in the constitution to cover Code of conduct/disciplinary process passed. Contents of Appendix A subject to proposals from incoming Executive Committee.

B. Motions to Change the Constitution

[These motions, if passed, to come into effect immediately on being passed, unless they specify otherwise. Passages proposed to be deleted are struck through; to be added are in bold font.]

3. To amend Article 7: General Meetings

7.1 Replace “1st July and 30th September” by “1st October and 15th December” to read:

7.1 The AGM shall be held between 1st July and 30th September **1st October and 15th December** in each calendar year (to come into force in 2015).

(Proposed by the Executive)

Explanatory Note: On the timetable for the year

The Constitution contains a contradiction. The Constitution says that the AGM should be held between 1 July and 30 September (7.1); one of its functions is to approve the accounts (7.9); the accounts are to be for a subscription year (12) and a subscription year runs from 1 September for 12 months (Membership Bye-laws). This is internally inconsistent, as the accounts can't be prepared before the end of the accounting year, so an AGM can never take place in July or August.

There seem to be three ways of resolving this:

- (1) Change the dates of the AGM to be considerably later;
- (2) Change the accounting year to end considerably earlier;
- (3) Keep the same timetable, but present the accounts to the AGM in the subsequent year.

All three seem to have drawbacks. The Executive are proposing to go with (1).

Option 1 passed with amendment that the AGM to be held between 1 October and 1 December.

4. To amend Article 7: General Meetings

7.3 Delete and replace by: “Without prejudice to other forms of communication with members of the Union, publication on the website of the ICU shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements of giving notice to members.”

(Proposed by the Executive)

Article 7.3 Change Passed with need to access news updates noted.

5. To amend Article 7: General Meetings

7.4 Delete “at the time when the meeting proceeds to business” to read:

7.4 No business shall be transacted at any General Meeting unless a quorum is present at the time when the meeting proceeds to business; the quorum shall consist of 9 persons entitled to vote at General Meetings of the Union.

(Proposed by Pete Morriss)

[Explanatory note: As drafted, a quorum is only required when the meeting starts; once that is satisfied, the meeting would still be quorate if only one person remains, which seems unwise.]

Change Passed.

6. To amend Article 8: Extraordinary General Meetings

Delete the current Article 8 in its entirety, and replace by the following

Article 8: Extraordinary General Meetings

8.1 An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) can be called by one of two procedures. The first is at the request of a majority of the Executive. The second is if not less than 30 fully paid up members of the Union, who are entitled to vote at a general meeting, request an EGM, then the request should be placed on the website (for members only), and the EGM called if at least 20%

of the members of the ICU who are entitled to vote at a general meeting indicate, within one month of the request being published on the website, that they wish the EGM to take place. Those entitled to vote are those defined as entitled to vote in general meetings in section 7.6, who are paid-up members of the ICU on the date that the motion is submitted.

The request must state the motion proposed, giving reasons why it should be considered and why it is sufficiently urgent to be considered before the next AGM. Each document containing signatures must contain the full statement of the motion, with supporting reasons. An EGM cannot be called simply to reverse a decision passed at the previous AGM.

8.2 An Extraordinary General Meeting must be called by the Executive of the Union within 60 days, and held within 90 days, of a valid request. At least three clear weeks notice of the date, time and venue of the meeting and of motions for consideration at that meeting shall be given.

8.3 If a motion is rejected at an EGM, the cost of hiring a room for the EGM shall be borne by the proposer of the motion. The Executive can require a suitable deposit to be paid in advance of the EGM, to be returned if the motion passes.

8.4 The other rules of this Constitution applicable to general meetings shall also be applicable to Extraordinary General Meetings.

(Proposed by the Executive)

Motion rejected but increasing the number of signatories to 60 for calling an EGM may have been passed ?

7. To amend Article 8: Extraordinary General Meetings

That 'Article 8. EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETINGS' be removed from the ICU Constitution. If not then the recent EGM called by Gabriel Mirza and over 30 registered ICU Members should be allowed to take place.

(Proposed by Anthony Fox)

Motion was discussed in depth and then withdrawn by the proposer without a vote being taken.

8. To amend Article 8: Extraordinary General Meetings

Addition of a new article into the constitution after 8.2 (and subsequent changing of article 8.3 to 8.4 where mentioned in the constitution):

8.3 Upon receipt of these 30 valid signatures, the Executive must allow the EGM to proceed as above, regardless of the purpose of the EGM.

(Proposed by Bernard Palmer)

Motion withdrawn.

The following motions listed from 9 – 21 were taken collectively and rejected on the basis that they would be considered afresh by the Incoming Executive Committee (meeting had already been running for 5 and a half hours when item 9 was reached!).

9. To amend Article 9: Membership of Executive Committee

Addition of a new article into the constitution after 9.1 c (and subsequent changing of article 9.1 d to 9.1 e where mentioned in the constitution):

“9.1 d. If they have been previously found guilty of breaching the ICU constitution or bye-laws, requires a 2/3rds super-majority of valid voting members endorsing their candidacy; and”

(Proposed by Kevin O'Flaherty)

10. To amend Article 9: Membership of Executive Committee

9.2 Delete "Membership Officer" to read:

9.2 The Executive Committee shall consist of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Rating Officer, Membership Officer, Development Officer, Junior Officer, Tournament Director, Public Relations Officer, FIDE Delegate, Women's Officer and of one member nominated by each of the Provincial Unions.

(Proposed by the Executive)

11. To amend Article 9: Membership of Executive Committee

I propose that the position of Womens Officer be changed to that of a non-executive position.

(Proposed by Gearóidín Uí Laighléis)

12. To amend Article 9: Membership of Executive Committee

"9.4 If no candidates have been validly nominated for a particular position, the Chairman shall accept nominations from the floor. If more than one candidate is validly nominated, a secret ballot shall be held among these candidates and the candidate attracting the greatest number of votes shall be declared elected."

to

"9.4 If no candidates have been validly nominated for a particular position, the Chairman shall accept nominations from the floor. **These nominations are required to comply with article 9.1 (except article 9.1 b and 9.1 d).** If more than one candidate is validly nominated, a secret ballot shall be held among these candidates and the candidate attracting the greatest number of votes shall be declared elected."

(Proposed by Kevin O'Flaherty)

13. To amend Article 9: Membership of Executive Committee

Renumber 9.5 to 9.7 as 9.6 to 9.8, and insert a new clause:

9.5 In voting for a member of the Executive Committee, when one or more candidates have been proposed one option shall always be "None of the above". If "none of the above" obtains most votes, the chairperson shall reopen nominations; the candidate(s) proposed in the previous vote may not stand again. If no further candidates are proposed, or the vote again goes to "none of the above", the position shall be declared vacant and filled as in 9.7 [was 9.6].

(Proposed by Pete Morriss)

14. To amend Article 9: Membership of Executive Committee

9.6 In the event that there are no candidates for an Officer position at the Annual General Meeting, after nominations have been sought from the floor, the incoming Executive will have the power to nominate a member of the Union to carry out these duties. This power shall also apply in the event of casual vacancies arising over the course of a year."

to

"9.6 In the event that there are no candidates for an Officer position at the Annual General Meeting, after nominations have been sought from the floor, the incoming Executive will have the power to nominate a member of the Union to carry out these duties. This power shall also apply in the event of casual vacancies arising over the course of a year. **These nominations are required to comply with article 9.1 (except article 9.1 b and 9.1 d)**"

(Proposed by Kevin O'Flaherty)

15. To amend Article 9: Membership of Executive Committee

Removing article 9.7 and amending article 9.6 from "9.6 In the event that there are no candidates for an Officer position at the Annual General Meeting, after nominations have been sought from the floor, the incoming Executive will have the power to nominate a member of the Union to

carry out these duties. This power shall also apply in the event of casual vacancies arising over the course of a year."

to

"9.6 In the event that there are no candidates for an Officer position at the Annual General Meeting, after nominations have been sought from the floor (or a casual vacancy occurs during the year), the Executive must advertise this vacant position to members giving 3 clear weeks notice. For a candidate to be valid, they must be seconded by an Executive member, comply with article 9.1a, not hold more than one position on the Executive and have not been voted off the Executive. The Executive must fill this vacancy with a valid candidate and if only one person applies that person must be accepted"

(Proposed by Bernard Palmer)

16. To amend Article 10: The Executive Committee

10.3 Delete last sentence ("If the Committee so resolves, it shall not be necessary to give notice of a meeting of the Committee to any member of the Committee who being resident in Ireland is for the time being absent from Ireland"). Add instead "The Executive may make decisions by an email vote between meetings. Any such decisions shall be recorded in the minutes of the next committee meeting." To read

10.3 The members of the Executive Committee may meet together for the dispatch of business, adjourn or otherwise regulate their meetings as they think fit. Questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by majority vote of those present and voting. In the event of a tie the presiding Chairman shall have a second or casting vote. If the Committee so resolves, it shall not be necessary to give notice of a meeting of the Committee to any member of the Committee who being resident in Ireland is for the time being absent from Ireland. **The Executive may make decisions by an email vote between meetings. Any such decisions shall be recorded in the minutes of the next committee meeting.**

(Proposed by the Executive)

17. To amend Article 10: The Executive Committee

Insert a new clause, after 10.7:

If any elected member of the Executive, in the opinion of the majority of the other members of the ICU Executive, shall not have fulfilled his or her duties, that member shall, at the discretion of the Executive, be deprived of their position."

(Proposed by the Pete Morriss)

18. To amend Article 10: The Executive Committee

Insert a new clause, after 10.7:

If a member of the Executive, in the opinion of the majority of the Executive, is not performing their duties in a satisfactory manner, they may be voted off same.

Always providing that this judgement is in accordance with natural law, eg, that the precise grounds for their expulsion is provided to them in advance, etc.

(Proposed by Bernard Palmer)

19. To amend Article 10: The Executive Committee

Insert a new clause, after 10.7: The Executive shall adopt a Code of Practice governing the actions of Executive members. If any elected member of the Executive, in the opinion of the majority of other members of the ICU Executive, shall be judged to be in significant breach of that Code of Practice, that member shall, at the discretion of the Executive, be deprived of their position.

(Proposed by the Pete Morriss)

20. To amend Article 10: The Executive Committee

Insert a new clause, after 10.7:

The ICU executive publish executive meeting agendas at least 7 days before an executive meeting and executive meeting minutes at most 21 days after each meeting on the ICU website. These minutes will only be available for fully paid ICU members.

(Proposed by Darko Polimac)

21. To amend Article 10: The Executive Committee

Insert a new clause, after 10.7:

The Executive Officers (listed in article 9.2) publish officer reports on the ICU website once every 4 months.

(Proposed by Darko Polimac)

22. To amend Article 12: Accounts

Delete second sentence and replace by: "Copies of the accounts should be made available to members on the ICU web-site at least 4 weeks in advance of the Annual General Meeting" to read:

Accounts of the Union shall be prepared in respect of each subscription year by the Hon. Treasurer and audited by an Auditor who shall be a qualified Accountant approved by the Union in general meeting. Copies of the accounts shall be available for inspection by fully paid up members of the Union at the Annual General Meeting and also on written request from any fully paid up member (including any body referred to in rule 4.1). **Copies of the accounts should be made available to members on the ICU web-site at least 4 weeks in advance of the Annual General Meeting.**

(Proposed by the Executive)

Item 22 passed ?

D. Motion to Change the Junior Eligibility Criteria

23. To amend section 3

To amend

"3. A player qualifying under 1 above must also fulfil the following minimum activity criteria: 12 ICU rated games in Ireland in the two years preceding the start date of a representative international tournament for which s/he is selected to play for Ireland and participation in at least one of the two Irish Junior Championships or the Irish senior championships preceding the start date of the representative international tournament for which s/he is selected to play for Ireland."

TO

"3. A player must also fulfil the following minimum activity criteria: 12 ICU rated games in Ireland in the two years preceding the start date of a representative international tournament for which s/he is selected to play for Ireland and participation in at least one of the two Irish Junior (i.e. under age) Championships or one of the two Irish Chess Championships (Senior tournament only) preceding the start date of the representative international tournament for which s/he is selected to play for Ireland."

(Proposed by Desmond Beatty)

Motion number 23 Passed.

E. Other Motions

24. That the ICU should bestow honorary membership of the Union for life on J.J. Walsh, in accordance with 11.2 of the ICU Constitution.

(Proposed by the Executive)

Motion number 24 Passed unanimously.

25. Players in the Irish Chess Championships may have the rating requirement ignored provided they are nominated by:

- a. The ICU Executive (maximum 3 players)
- b. The Junior Officer (maximum 3 players who must be under-18)
- c. Provincial delegates (maximum of 1 player per province)
- d. The tournament organisers (maximum 1 player)

(Proposed by Kevin O'Flaherty)

Motion number 25 Passed.

26. The Irish Women's Champion, Irish Veteran's Champion, Irish Intermediate Champion, Irish Open Champion are automatically nominated to play in the Irish Championships irrespective of rating.

(Proposed by Kevin O'Flaherty)

Motion Passed with an amendment which states "provided the titles were won in tournaments held within 14 months of the Irish Championships."

27. The time limits for the Irish Championship be changed to 1hr 40 mins per player then a further 40 minutes to be added to each player at move 40 plus a 30 sec increment from the start
(Proposed by Peter Cafolla)

Motion Passed

28. Executive size and structure

That the incoming Executive shall consider changes to the Executive Committee size, role and structures and to prepare proposals for the necessary constitutional amendments to be put to an EGM in sufficient time to have the new constitution in place for the 2015 AGM.

(Proposed by Kevin O'Connell)

Notes to the motion:

1. Not everyone agrees, but in my view (based on my 36+ year experience), the Executive is too large.
2. Management (or attempted management) by committee is far from ideal.
3. I see no good reason for the FIDE & ECU Delegate to be a member of the Executive.
4. The same applies to the Chairman of ICU-TRG (our Trainers' body) and ICU-ARB (our Arbiters' body).
5. Individuals and or other bodies (not sub-committees) should be tasked with specific jobs, like Delegate, Training, etc.

Motion withdrawn on basis that incoming Executive Committee will review operations and come up with proposals about size, structure etc.

29. The executive minutes are published at most 1 year after the date of the executive meeting. The executive may redact sensitive information from the published minutes.

(Proposed by Kevin O'Flaherty)

Motion Passed?

30. As the ICU Junior officer recommended that Pat and David Fitzsimons be appointed as team coaches for the 2014 Glorney/Gilbert events in Scotland, the ICU should recoup the expenses of approximately €700 incurred by the parents of players to bring the two coaches to the event.
(Proposed by Pat Fitzsimons)

Motion Passed.

31. chess players privacy should be respected when it comes to taking photos or making a video at chess venues as we live in an internet age and these photos or videos can be accessed by any member of the public , some icu regulation needed in this matter to protect players like me who are camera shy
(Proposed by Shahram Nikrow)

Motion Withdrawn

32. Electoral Cycle

That the incoming Executive shall consider changes covering the electoral cycle with a view to making the standard cycle a two-year one starting in 2016. The Executive shall prepare proposals for the necessary constitutional amendments to be put to an EGM in sufficient time to have the new constitution in place for the 2015 AGM. Assuming passage through the EGM of the constitutional changes, an appropriate motion to be put before the 2015 AGM, so that the new cycle may commence in 2016.

(Proposed by Kevin O'Connell)

Notes to the motion:

1. One year is simply too short and has led, increasingly, to problems. There has been an acceleration of these difficulties during my 36+ year involvement with the Executive.
2. A two year cycle is a step in the right direction.
3. Ultimately (yes, it's probably still a long way off) we will be associated with (or a member of) our National Olympic Committee, by which time we should have shifted to a 4-year cycle synchronized with the NOC. Hence starting our new 2-year cycle in an even numbered year (the more easily later to synchronize with the Olympic cycle).
4. Many details will need to be considered, not least elections in odd-numbered years to cover the case of vacancies, but such things have no place in the motion as such.

Motion 32 Passed

33. The person who will be designated to be HOD (Head of Delegation) or Coach to any of the Juniors International Tournaments (respective WYCC/EYCC/EUYCC/Glorney) to deal with the correspondence & forms related to that competition and just with the assistance of the ICU Treasurer

(Proposed by Gabriel Mirza)

Motion rejected.

8. AOB