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Attendance

Terry Creighton, Bryan Tobin, Maurice Coveney, Bernard Palmer, Stephen Moran, Eamon Keogh, Jonathan O’Connor, John Alfred, Michael Crowe, Davitt Bekim, Darko Polimac, Anthony Hearne, Paul Carey, Pat Fitzsimons, David Fitzsimons, Gerry Graham, Tim Harding, Shane Lee, John Maher, James Osborne, Martin Schmidt, Stephen Brady, Alex Baburin, Peter Doyle, Gearoidin O’Laighleis, Colm Daly, Martin Crichton, Sean Loftus, Seamus Duffy, Michael Kennedy. Gerard MacElligott, Vitali Baranouski, John Kennedy, William Ffrench, Jack Killane, Eddie O’Connor, Thomas Gruel.

Apologies Mark Orr, Nicky Benson

Chairman’s Address

The Chairman insisted that all debate and questions be done through the chair. The Chairman advised that there were a lot of items before the committee and there would thus be a limited amount of time allotted to each item.

The Chairman read his report aloud and advised it was available on the ICU website. The Chairman apologised that he had omitted to mention Ryan-Rhys Griffiths victory in the U18 British championships and paid tribute to this fine achievement.

James Osborne paid tribute to the outgoing president. James acknowledged the great things the president had done for junior chess and said the chairman was due great credit and left a good mark.

The chairman responded to James saying a lot of good things had been done by a lot of people and paid tribute to the work of John McKenna and James himself. The chairman elaborated saying supporting junior chess was a strategy adopted by the committee in general and people such as James, John and others should be congratulated

The chairman expressed his disappointment with the issues raised on the website (LCU Cogitations) throughout the year and said the website was not the appropriate place to put issues forward and launch attacks on the volunteers who run Irish Chess.

Anthony Hearne echoed the concerns of the chairman regarding online posting, and expressed concern at such discussions being seen by junior members.



Bernard Palmer commented on the Chairman's address saying there was no method to put forward issues at the AGM. Bernard elaborated saying there was a general issue with transparency.

A full copy of the Chairman's report can be found in Appendix A

Proposer Michael Crowe

Seconded Jonathan O'Connor

The chairman's report was adopted.

Last Year's AGM Minutes.

The minutes of last year's AGM were read out by the president. These minutes are available on the ICU website.

The Chairman proposed the minutes be accepted.

Proposer Pat Fitzsimons

Seconded Gerry Graham

AGM minutes confirmed.

Treasurer's Report

A copy of the treasurer's report was made available and read out by Michael Crowe.

Bernard Palmer asked why are they are unaudited subject to wording of audit report
The Chairman responded that they are audited and the report is a disclaimer so that no liability can be attached. Auditors did prepare and verify the accounts.

Shane Lee as a professional accountant explained there is a lower cost for verified versus audited accounts, as an accountant Shane advised he has no problems with the report.

Alex Baburin while saying he was not an expert concurred. In dealing with his own accountants he had experienced the difference in fees in between audited and verified accounts.

James Osborne asked to explain the item unrecoverable expenses in relation to Olympiad in the amount of €1400. The chairman explained that cheques and postal orders paid to the union were received too late and could not be cashed. The chairman said this amount had been netted off income. The chairman also advised the report represented income for 11 months. The months September and October were high income months for the ICU as this is when fees were paid.

Peter Doyle said membership for a full year should be shown on the website. The chairman agreed this would be a good step.

Gerry Graham asked the chairman to name the individual responsible for delaying presentation of the cheques and postal orders in question.



The chairman said this was a mistake and not a personal issue and should not be taken further and he would not name the individual. Gerry asked if this person going forward for a position on the committee? The chairman said he had no comment on this.

Bernard Palmer said that this put people in an awkward position when it came to electing the new committee/

Gerry asked was this a genuine mistake, the chairman replied yes and elaborated that there was no benefit for the person it was just human oversight.

Based on the chairman's response Gerry Graham agreed to withdraw the request.

The Chairman noted the existing funds of €28,000 were sufficient to run the union at the same level as last year. The chairman noted some of the expenses from last year were not applicable this year. The chairman said that there had been a policy of using 30% of funds for junior chess, with additional amounts towards supporting regional Club tournaments.

The chairman asked the members to approve a €300 grant to Anthony Hearne.

This grant was approved by a show of hands.

Colm Daly commented on the Dun Laoghaire festival firstly paying credit for a great tournament. Colm asked for clarification of the €2,500 given by the ICU to this tournament even though this was not an ICU event.

The chairman explained this was a grant by ICU committee to the tournament similar to grants given to other tournaments throughout the year such as the Irish Championships. The chairman elaborated that the issuing of a grant rather than making it an ICU event had the effect of limiting the exposure to the ICU.

Alex Baburin asked to clarify the approx €6000 spent on player supports.

Michael Crowe read these out the various items included in this amount; this consisted of a number of individual grants to various players

Colm Daly asked for clarification of the €1,200 paid to Nicky Benson as part of the €6000 in the query above. Michael Crowe clarified that this was for 4 women players and the money was distributed through Nicky and not to Nicky herself.

Alex Baburin asked for clarification how €2,700 junior Chess was allocated.

This was clarified by Michael Crowe. €1800 to cover youths in Greece and other individual donations for travel etc.

Proposer Michael Crowe

Seconded Terry Creighton

Secretary's Report

The secretary was unable to attend the meeting but the report was read out by Eamon Keogh. The secretary's report is available on the ICU website and in Appendix A

Proposer Nicky Benson

Seconded Bernard Palmer

The secretary's report was adopted



Junior Officers Report

The junior officer was not present. The report was read out by chairman and is available on the ICU website and in appendix A.

Peter Doyle pointed out that there was an updated report on the ICU website and gave a synopsis of the changes.

The chairman pointed out that the junior committee had been disbanded in the past and has no formal standing. The chairman said that fixing this was not for today but heartily recommended that this is followed up by the incoming committee.

The chairman paid special thanks to John McKenna and all the other people who do tremendous work for Junior Chess.

Proposer: John McKenna

Seconded: Peter Doyle

Rating Officers Report

Read out by Eamon Keogh in the absence of Mark Orr

The chairman said it was a concern that Ireland had no international arbiter, and recommends the incoming committee take this onboard. Find people in Ireland willing to be arbiters

Colm Daly indicated that there may be some arbiters in Ireland but they are not active. Gerry Graham advised that FIDE downgrades them after 5 years of inactivity and this was the case with the people Colm had mentioned.

Michael Kennedy asked how the Dun Laoghaire Chess Festival had been a norm event given there was no arbiter present

The chairman said this was achieved with the support from FIDE to bend the rules. This had been communicated beforehand to FIDE and there was an agreement that no arbiter would be present. FIDE's policy on this is the players should not suffer and this allowed the tournament to be a norm event without an arbiter present.

Colm Daly asked was this not a missed opportunity to have somebody credited with assisting an arbiter part of the requirements for becoming an arbiter in the future.

The chairman replied that Gerry Graham would be credited as having assisted at the event so this opportunity was not lost.

Proposer Shane Lee

Seconded James Osbourne

FIDE Delegate's Report

In the absence of the FIDE delegate the report delegate's report was read out by the chairman.



The chairman paid special thanks to Kevin O'Connell and proposed the committee write a letter to congratulate and thank Kevin for his tremendous work through the years. The chairman continued that because of his sterling work we have not needed to pay as much attention as needed to this area and it would be a big piece of work in the future. It was agreed by all that this letter was a good idea and should be auctioned by the incoming committee

Tim Harding spoke in support the letter of thanks and echoed the chairman's high regard for Kevin. Tim had however some reservations on parts of the report relating to FIDE and its performance. Tim's opinion is that the present administration abused its power base and manipulated smaller nations to gain leverage

Darko Polimac asked was it possible to push a FIDE trainer programme. The chairman hoped there will be an initiative by the incoming committee on training FIDE arbiters and trainers.

The chairman expanded on the role of the FIDE delegate and the commitment to attend four meetings per year in various FIDE zones. The chairman acknowledged Kevin for always paying his own expenses. The chairman said Anthony Hearne had been given the responsibility to push the button as our delegate to vote in Kanty-Manisk now that we had made our voting intentions clear.

Martin Crichton asked how it could be stated that we have made voting intention clear when there is a motion before the AGM to determine the voting intentions.

The chairman explained the committee had already voted to support Karpov but this was not previously made public.

Bernard Palmer said this was an example of the lack of transparency he referred to earlier.

Tim Harding said he had received no acknowledgement of submitting his motion and was not aware of this when he submitted it.

Proposer: Jonathan O'Connor

Seconded: Darko Polimac

Development Officer's Report

The report is long so the Chairperson Eamon Keogh said he was only going to read out the highlights. This is available on the ICU website,

Seamus Duffy commented on image problem preventing young Irish people taking up chess. He noted while helping out in Wicklow town he noticed this image issues was limited to Irish juniors as foreign juniors seemed to have no issue.

Younger children are interested but needs promotion and the image problem needs to be addressed.

The chairman said there was a lot off issues with regards the image and development of chess but they were not going to be solved today, Development was always high on ICU and important to get parents involved and helping.

Alex Baburin acknowledged that there was a lot to be done, but would like to point out one problem. There was no visibility in the Irish press and we needed to get this sorted. Alex pointed out that there were no articles in Ireland for first norm tournament even though there



was coverage in the UK. Alex said the Incoming PRO must address this. Alex said in his opinion there was no big issue with image anymore.

Alex advised against putting too much effort into initiatives such as Chess in Schools or having chess recognised as a sport. Alex noted that chess in schools had failed almost everywhere with the possible exception of Turkey. Instead of banging on these closed doors we should work with what we have.

Seamus Duffy said in his experience kids are interested in playing chess but not participating in tournaments and asked how this could be addressed.

The chairman said these are all valid issues but are beyond the scope of the AGM and would not be sorted today. There needed to be a coordinated policy and the incoming committee need to look at this.

Colm agreed with points made by Alex. Colm said the press was lazy and if you present well constructed material to them they will be publish it as it makes their life easier,

Darko Polimac said that will development in schools is difficult but it is possible and Kilkenny was an example of what can be done. Darko said that you have to try to develop chess at the coal face to understand the problems.

Alex Baburin said the new PRO should be given the task of approaching the newspapers and contacting people working in chess to get content for articles.

The chairman said this was an issue for the incoming committee and they would need to manage what resources they have to achieve what they can.

Colm Daly said if he was successful in securing the role of PRO he would do his best to pursue the initiatives suggested by Alex.

Proposer: Paul Carey
Seconded: Jonathan O'Connor

Nominations for positions on the Executive Committee

Chairperson: Jonathan O'Connor (proposed Stephen Brady) **ELECTED there being no other candidate.**

Vice-Chairperson: John Alfred (proposed Stephan Danaher Seconded Darko Polimac) **ELECTED there being no other candidate.**

Secretary: Nicola Benson (proposed John Alfred), John Joyce (proposed Colm Daly)
Both John Joyce and Nicola Benson withdrew before the AGM
Bernard Palmer ELECTED there being no other candidate.

Treasurer: Shane Lee (proposed Mark Quinn, Seconded Eamon Keogh) **ELECTED there being no other candidate.**



Ratings Officer: Mark Orr (proposed Nicola Benson, Seconded Bryan Tobin) **ELECTED there being no other candidate.**

Public Relations Officer: Colm Daly (proposed Martin Crichton, S ALEX), John Alfred (proposed Stephan Danaher, S Darko) **COLM DALY ELECTED BY BALLOT**

Tournament Officer: Gerry Graham (proposed Nicola Benson) **ELECTED there being no other candidate.**

Arbitration Officer: Herbert Scarry (proposed Mark Orr), Martin Crichton (proposed Colm Daly) **Herbert Scarry ELECTED by BALLOT.**

Development Officer: Colm Daly (proposed Martin Crichton) and John Alfred (proposed Stephan Danaher) Colm Daly withdrew having already being voted to the committee **John Alfred ELECTED there being no other candidate.**

Women's Officer: Una O'Boyle (proposed John Alfred) and Colm Daly (proposed Martin Crichton) Colm Daly withdrew prior to AGM **Una O'Boyle ELECTED** there being no other candidate.

Membership Officer: Rory Quinn (proposed James Osbourne) **ELECTED there being no other candidate.**

FIDE delegate: John Alfred (proposed Stephan Danaher) **ELECTED there being no other candidate.**

The chairman asked John to confirm that he was aware of the substantial commitments for this position in light of the other positions he had secured. John confirmed he was aware of the commitments

Junior Officer: Darko Polimac (proposed John Alfred). **ELECTED there being no other candidate.**

ICJ Editor: Tony Foley Propose Jonathan seconded Michael Crowe **ELECTED there being no other candidate.**

Motions

Motion 1: ICU Support for Anatoly Karpov PASSED

“That the ICU shall actively support Anatole Karpov in the upcoming election of President of FIDE, and that the FIDE Delegate in Khanty-Manisk should vote for Karpov. **(Timothy David Harding)**



Tim noted this had already come up and would not have submitted the motion had he known the committee had already voted on this. Instead of withdrawing the motion he felt approval by the AGM would help the voting representative and suggested this motion go ahead.

The chairman said Anthony no alternative but to vote on direction of the committee.

Martin Crichton said that fundamental issues such as this should be voted on by the members and not a committee vote

The chairman said it was difficult to know what was fundamental or not and committee was elected by the members to vote on their behalf.

Proposer **Tim Harding**

Seconded **Gerry MacElligott**

Passed Unanimously

Motion 2: Bye law governing selection for international events PASSED

"That the incoming ICU executive drafts a single bye law governing selection for international events. This byelaw should attempt to encompass the original 1998 byelaw on selection, and any subsequent amendments from AGM's and EGM's. The resulting draft byelaw should be brought to the 2011 ICU AGM, for approval by the general membership".

(Stephen Brady)

Stephen Brady described the motion and said it was an attempt to have less controversy and clarify the rules

Colm asked for clarification of the motion.

Stephen said the regulations on playing for Ireland not updated on ICU site and some previous minutes had disappeared. Colm asked Stephen if he was asking us to go back through previous minutes and find the rules that had been voted in the past. Stephen suggested that we come up with a proposal based on what they believe to be correct based on the interpretation of the previously available minutes.

The chairman acknowledged there was some ambiguity around the minutes e.tc. for 2005 and 2006 and the rights of the Irish Champion to play in the Olympiad. The chairman continued that nowhere in any previous minutes was it decided what happens if the date is after the Irish Championships was before the date for submitting teams and it was left to Selection Committee to interpret what was available to them.

The chairman said the reduction in 6 to 5 members and the implications of automatic selection were not agreed or anticipated at the time. The chairman said he believed in the power of the selection committee which could take such items as, behavior of players and team captains into consideration which a rules based system could not.

A comment from the floor indicated that it was known at the AGM in 2006 that the team size would be reduced.

Colm Daly said he disagreed with the explanation, number of things done wrong but not good to go into this now.

The chairman said the selection committee applied the rules as they knew them.

Alex Baburin said we should have the proposal before next year's AGM as there was no need to wait a year.



The Chairman said we should codify one article on how teams are selected.

Proposer **Stephen Brady**

Seconded **Alex Baburin**

Passed by majority (passed no com)

Motion 3: Irish Champion and Chess Olympiad PASSED

"That the winner of the title of Irish Senior Champion gains the right to automatic selection to the men's team for the next appropriate Chess Olympiad. An appropriate Chess Olympiad is defined as one for which the registration period has not elapsed, and which will commence less than 104 weeks after the completion of the relevant Irish Championships. In event of there being joint winners of the Irish Senior Title in a particular year, an appropriate tie break method will be used to determine which one of the winners will gain automatic selection." **(Stephen Brady)**

The chairman asked for clarification based on this motion what would have been done this year when we had a new champion before the team needs to be submitted. Stephen Brady this would allow both champions to be pre-selected.

Tim Harding said every Irish Champion should be rewarded at the next opportunity and this is the principle we want agreed.

The chairman said this means changing the current rules and previous motion already clarifies this. A selection committee needs clear rules to make decisions.

John Alfred said it was odd to select somebody who won a year ago and may not have played since. The chairman replied that other rules regarding player activity cover this. The chairman invited Gerry Graham to give his opinion on this. Gerry replied that anybody who wins the title of Irish Champion should be on the next available Olympiad. Gerry continued that wording should be found that this intention is recorded correctly. Gerry said there might need to be a modification of the motion to cover this.

The chairman asked Gerry Graham had there been any attempt by anybody on the executive to influence decision of the selection committee. Gerry Graham replied "No, good god no absolutely not." The chairman asked Gerry did anybody else try to influence the selection committee. Gerry replied no.

Alex Baburin said this motion should be withdrawn as it is covered by Motion 2.

Alex said there was both a need to both support the Irish championships and develop new blood. These can be conflicting. Before there was room for maneuver now it is a formula. No way to support young players, Brian Kelly and Sam Collins examples of where players were given a chance in the past now there is no way to give such players the opportunity. Alex said the champion in the year should be included but not the previous championships leaving more room for new blood. This makes some championships uneven as not all would guarantee the champion an Olympiad place and difficult to know in advance as the date Olympiad would not be known.



Alex proposed that the Irish champion is used only when it is the last championship.

Jonathan O'Connor proposed to vote on motion as is and let committee come up with proposal and present to next AGM.

Alex Baburin asked what would happen if for instance Yuri Rochev won the Irish championships. Gerry Graham (to the best of my recollection) responded that In this case nobody would qualify. In the case of an open the winner would not be Irish champion unless they fulfilled the criteria on nationality and residence and were not declared as players for another country

The agreed amended motion is

“Each Irish Champion is allowed a place on the next available Olympiad”

Proposer **Stephen Brady**
Seconded **Gerry MacElligott**
Passed by Majority

Motion 4: Dissolve Olympiad selection committee FAILED

To dissolve the selection committee for the men and women's Olympic teams. **(Martin Crichton)**

Martin Crichton introduced the motions and described it as one of the most contentious issues.

Martin said he had been outspoken on this issue particularly on the selection of the women's team. Martin said he was particularly disappointed in relation to treatment of Anne Coughlan.

He said he believed that Colm Daly had been unfairly treated as pointed out by John Delaney's resignation note.

The minutes of the 2006 AGM were lost although he remembers having read them previously.

Michael Crowe said he was aware of the reasons behind the vice chairman's resignation having been present at the meeting. Michael said John had been afraid of litigation and then other members were not. Michael said organizations like the ICU were always facing threats of legal action.

Gerry Graham said the point of resignation was on the official selection date not on legal action and he was against the motion put forward by Martin. Gerry said Anne herself knew the reason and he objected to the suggestion it was age or popularity which affected the decision of the selection committee

Colm asked Michael to confirm if there were threats of legal action. Michael Crowe replied yes there had been veiled threats. Colm Asked by who, to which Michael replied you.



Michael Crowe said that he had never told Colm he was selected he said that he told him it was his understanding that he was going to be selected but he did not have the power to decide this it was up to the selection committee.

Colm Daly said we should dissolve the selection committee and use WAR and Irish Champion to construct the team.

Michael Kennedy said if there were robust rules there would be no decisions to be made by a committee.

Alex Baburin said this caused a lot of controversy in the past and agreed once rules are clear no need selection committee for the Men's team but there is a role for contacting people to confirm availability and to construct a short list.

Alex said the case for a selection committee for the Ladies was not as clear as with the men's team, there are a lot less ladies so there needs to be more scope which committee is needed.

Darko Polimac said he was against the motion, normally committees selected teams not on rating alone.

Jonathan O'Connor pointed out there was not cross contamination between the executive and selection committee as posts held by those on selection committee are not executive posts.

Michael Crichton said it was not clear on website that is on executive or not.

Alex Baburin said there were two possible systems for team selection

1. Committee and they decide, based on rating progression and various other factors. The present system had no way to promote juniors.
2. Committee just checks who is available and applies rules.

John Alfred pointed out that there is no junior committee. Selection is based on May rating with no controversy.

Stephen Brady said he was against this motion WAR is flawed but is not a law it is a method adopted by Selection Committee. Not in rules and should not be.

The chairman said the selection committee can take into account behavior and previous performance. This acts as a screen for people who will represent their country with pride.

The chairman is also opposed to this motion.

Michael Kennedy asked does the ICU code of conduct not take into care of past behavior. The chairman replied there was a need for a more conFIDential method than applying the code of conduct.

Bernard Palmer asked how this can be challenged by the people with the issue as they have no visibility of the process.

The chairman acknowledged this was a good point.

Darko Polimac pointed out the rules system has no way of taking approving players into account.

Proposer **Martin Crichton**

Seconded **Colm Daly**

DEFEATED by majority



4a) Sole administrator to apply selection rules and WAR **FAILED**

To appoint a sole administrator to apply the selection rules and WAR criteria for future team compositions. **(Martin Crichton)**

EK Falls based on 4 no vote

Proposer Martin Crichton

Motion 5: Appointment of team captains FAILED

That future team captains are to be appointed by the membership at the AGM in the applicable year for an event in question. (The executive only to have the power to appoint captains if no candidates are available or interested at the AGM. **(Martin Crichton)**)

Martin Crichton said there was a lack of transparency in the selection process He said he had canvassed through other media for other people to come forward and apply for the positions. He said there was a narrow window to apply, no feedback on who applied or why they were rejected.

Alex Baburin agreed it was a good idea to encourage new people to come forward. Alex said there were some practical issues on the selections and believes a panel should take care of this.

Bernard Palmer commented not another group of boys picking the boys.

Alex Baburin replied we elect the committee to pick a panel and they should be trusted to do so.

Alex said there was a practical issue with the motion as people who become interested in the year cannot come forward.

Gerry Graham said there was a practical issue on people at an AGM committing themselves to such a large time commitment a year in advance without knowing dates etc

Gerry MacElligott said it was not practical as people can pack AGM to get people put forward and other interested people may not be able to attend the AGM.

Michael Kennedy said there had been a lack of transparency in the selection of captains for this Olympiad.

The chairman replied and explained why the captains had been selected.

Proposer Martin Crichton

Seconded Bernard Palmer

DEFEATED by majority

Motion 6: No women's team be send if average rating below 1400

WITHDRAWN

“That for all future Olympiads after 2010, no women's team be sent to an Olympiad unless the average ICU rating of such a team is collectively not less than 1400 or not less than 1600 FIDE rating. Either being an acceptable basis/standard for sending a team.” **(Colm Daly)**



Colm read out a prearranged statement.

Gearoidin O’Laghleis, surprised by the motion and commented that It smacks of exclusivity and elitism. Bad idea for junior players, some players could lose out even if they are strong enough. Does agree with need to promote and strengthen women’s chess.

Anthony Hearne, extreme support needed for female players it what is seen as a male domain. His kids love the game and should be given the opportunity.

Gerry Graham: against motion. Our women’s team is relatively strong compared to other teams. Our men’s team is week compared to others.

Darko Polimac said we should encourage girl’s team more and is against the motion.

John Alfred against the motion and sees the women’s team as a possibility for advertisement.

Gerry MacElligott said he was against the motion as it disadvantage individuals who had made the grade but the overall standard was not high enough

Alex Baburin spoke against the motion, wrong for a group of men to decide how we treat female players.

Colm Daly said after listening to the arguments he had changed his opinion and wished to withdraw the motion. Colm said he agreed with the comments and no longer favors the motion

Motion 7: Report by players receiving grants PASSED

“That all players in receipt of an ICU grant for either an Olympiad or European Championships be obliged to submit a report to the ICU of not less than an A4 page of their experience playing for Ireland including a minimum of one single game annotated, no later than three months after the event”. **(Colm Daly)**

Alex Baburin said he was against the motion because there is an obligation on people and some may not like it.

Proposer **Colm Daly**
Seconded **Gerry Graham**
PASSED by majority

Motion 8: Limit number of times a person can be captain FAILED

“That all future positions of men and women’s team captains for Olympiads be restricted to people who have not served any more than three time times [sic] in either position or any



combination of [sic].” **(Colm Daly)**

Colm Daly said this motion was in the interest in transparency and said the present system gives people a burden of responsibility and/or entitlement. The proposal would give more people a chance. Colm said he does not feel particularly strong about this particular motion.

Gerry Graham said he was against the motion for the simple reason if somebody becomes good they do so by experience and should be allowed to continue doing a good job.

Bernard Palmer asked in that case how people get experience in the first place if the same person is always fulfilling the function.

Eddie O’Connor said he was for the motion and said it would foster interest and promote more people to do it.

Alex Baburin said there should be a panel of candidates; take the example of Kevin stepping down as FIDE delegate and now nobody else has the required experience.

Proposer **Colm Daly**
Seconded **Bernard Palmer**
DEFEATED by majority

Motion 9: Irish championships restricted to Irish Citizens FAILED

“That the Irish Senior Championships be restricted to Irish Citizens, People born on the island of Ireland, players already registered and listed with FIDE as having declared for Ireland, or legal residents of not less than three years within the jurisdiction of either the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland.” **(Colm Daly)**

Colm read from a prepared statement describing the motion

Alex Baburin said this depends on what the goal of the Irish Championships is. Letting foreign player compete give players chances to make norms, there had been such possibility in previous championships. Is the goal is to promote Irish players or have norms. It depends on the direction the ICU and what its goal is.

Colm said the goal is around juniors and allows juniors a chance to win if IMs etc are not playing.

The chairman said the Irish championship was extended as there were low entries and now there is no sponsor.

The chairman agreed there was a need to specify what that goal of the championships is and asked the new committee to look at this. It was never unrestricted, no non Irish person or those not fulfilling the residence rules can be Irish Champion.

The chairman asks Colm to withdraw the motion

Alex Baburin said Ireland does not offer much chance for players to play strong players and get norms so the Irish championships is important for this

Michael Crowe said it would be easier to attract sponsorship if foreign players are there.



Proposer **Colm Daly**
Seconded **Bryan Tobin**
DEFEATED by majority

Motion 10: Format of National Club Championships PASSED

"That the format of the National Club Championships from 2011 onwards revert to the previous format involving an "all-play-all" tournament of not more than 6 teams of 6 players each. The Champions and runners up of the top leagues in Munster and Leinster to be invited to participate along with a team from Connaught invited at the discretion of the ICU and the Ulster Champions.

In the event of any of the invited clubs declining to participate in the Tournament, the ICU may, at its discretion, invite lower placed teams in the Munster and Leinster Leagues to participate in the tournament with a view to selecting 6 participating clubs.

No player can play in the National Club Championships unless s/he has played at least 5 league games in the Munster, Leinster or Ulster Chess Leagues for the invited team in the season immediately preceding the holding of the Championships. In the case of any team invited from Connaught, where a league structure for Connaught is in place, each player must have played at least five games for the team in question. In the absence of a league competition in Connaught, eligible players must have played in at least one Irish tournament rated by the ICU since 1 September in the year prior to the National Club Championships being held and must be members of the club invited to participate in the Championships

All players must be registered with the ICU." **(Pat Fitzsimons)**

Pat Fitzsimons said running the club championships under the new rules devalue the Armstrong cup and allowed teams to bring in foreign players.

The chairman explained background to the issue, the format of the championship had been changed in order to stimulate the competition and they did not anticipate the import of players.

Gerry Graham said new format had actually run twice but only this year did some teams use the rules to advantage. Gerry said he had no problem with Armstrong Team getting a place. Colm Daly said Bray won taking advantage of the rules as they were, along with some incentive from Paddy Power. Colm said he was in support the motion.

John Alfred pointed out the Provincial leagues not compatible with European championships.

Jack Killane asked what motion is being put. This is not clear following all the discussions.

The chairman said we should fail the motion but ask the incoming committee to clarify, although Bray had complied with the rules as written they did not comply with the spirit of the rules



Pat Fitzsimons agreed to modify the motions to the following two points and this is what was to be voted on

- National club championships will run on the format of the last two years with restrictions on players as defined above.
- The new format will decide the second team to qualify for the European club cup.
- Armstrong winners automatically be entitled to place in the European Clubs

Proposer Pat Fitzsimons

Seconded David Fitzsimons

PASSED by majority

Motion 11: Change in arrangements for International Selection FAILED

“That the current arrangements for international selections for men’s teams be abolished and be replaced by the following arrangements:

Players should initially be ranked by their current FIDE rating (i.e., the rating at the time the selections are being made). Where there is less than 20 rating points between players, the ICU Executive Committee may, at their discretion, take account of the form of the players in question over the previous 12 months in deciding whether to alter the rankings based on rating only.

To be considered for international selection, players must:

- be members of the ICU;
- have paid their ICU membership fee not later than the 1st January in the membership year during which the selection process is being undertaken; and
- have played at least 12 ICU rated games during the two years prior to the date on which the selections are being made". **(Pat Fitzsimons)**

The chairman said this would overwrite issues from the past motions and this should be allowed to be determined by the incoming committee.

Stephen Brady said he was in favour, in particular on the ICU subs, he said WAR is flawed, over emphasised previous rating.

Gerry Graham advised that WAR did give a higher precedence to newer ratings.

Proposer Pat Fitzsimons

Seconded Stephen Brady

FAILED by majority

Amendments

Jack Killane asked the question can the constitution be amended at an AGM.

Referencing the constitution Jonathan O’Connor confirmed it could with the approval rate at 2/3 of those present and voting.



Amendment No 1 PASSED

The ICU shall amend to current constitution point 9.2 from the current wording –

9.2 The Executive Committee shall consist of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Rating Officer, Membership Officer, Development Officer, Junior Officer, and of one member nominated by each of the Provincial Unions.

To

9.2 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, and Women's Officer and of one member nominated by each of the Provincial Unions (**David Fitzsimons**).

The Chairman said this would be unwieldy and advised rejection

Proposer David Fitzsimons
Seconded Pat Fitzsimons
PASSED by more than 2/3 Majority

Amendments No. 2 PASSED

The ICU shall add the following point to its Constitution:

9.7 If for any reason, one officer holds more than one Executive Committee position, that officer shall have only one vote (**David Fitzsimons**)

Proposer David Fitzsimons
Seconded *Pat Fitzsimons*
PASSED by more than 2/3 Majority

AOB

John Maher has asked if there was any update on the issue with Ulster Chess Union
The Chairman said there had been no progress in the last year

Chairman declared the meeting closed.



Appendix A

Chairman's Report

There is no question that this has been a most interesting year.

As has been the policy in previous years the ICU continued their financial support for weekend tournaments around Ireland such as Bunratty, Kilkenny, Galway, the City of Dublin, Limerick and Cork.

In July the D4 Hotel in Ballsbridge played host to the Irish Senior championships, an extremely hard fought tournament which saw Cork's Alex Lopex emerge as a worthy winner. As this event had no sponsor, the event proved more expensive to run than the ICU had previously hoped. As the Irish championships is the landmark event of the Irish chess calendar, the ICU provided such financial support as was necessary to ensure a quality standard in both tournament conditions and play.

This year also saw a highly creditable performance by the Glorney and Faber teams and here thanks are due to John Delaney who coached them. Irish juniors competed and will be competing in numerous International individual events, thereby gaining valuable international experience, but as always more work needs to be done to give our junior players opportunities to play abroad and develop their game. In this respect, securing sponsorship for junior chess is an ongoing concern of the ICU.

In coming weeks, the Irish men's and women's teams will travel to Khanty Mansysk for the Chess Olympiad. The Olympiad will also play host to a series of important elections for both the FIDE and ECU Presidencies. After receiving a personal invitation from the Short camp to attend the Olympiad, I have decided to attend the event at no cost to the Union.

On a positive note, this year saw some notable and impressive individual performances. After winning his first Irish championships in July, Alex Lopez scored his second IM norm at the Dun Laoghaire Chess Festival. This event also saw the return to form of IM Mark Quinn who finished clear second in the GM event. After a highly respectable joint third place in the Irish Senior championships, sixteen year old Ryan-Rhys Griffiths flew the Irish flag at the British Championships where he beat GM Aaron Summerscale and was on one of the top boards of the competition going into the last round. The most outstanding individual result was scored by IM Sam Collins, who made his second Grandmaster Norm in Norway in July and needs just one more norm to become a Grandmaster.

The Dun Laoghaire Chess Festival that took place in late August was a major new event for Irish Chess and involved two high profile closed tournaments that received significant internet media coverage. Thanks are due to Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County council and the Dun Laoghaire Cathaoirleach Lettie McCarthy for providing vital sponsorship and the Dun Laoghaire Club for making their premises and facilities available for the duration of the Festival. All chess events, no matter how big or small, require help to run and the Dun Laoghaire festival was no exception. In this regard, in no order of importance, I would like to thank Michael Crowe, Nicky Benson, Mark Quinn, Herbert Scarry, Gerry Graham, Pat Fitzsimons, Alexander Baburin, Shane Lee and last but not least Una O'Boyle. Una also launched the first book on chess to be published in Irish during the Festival, a significant landmark that will undoubtedly make the game more accessible to anyone with an interest in the Irish language.

Here, I would also like to note the important contribution made by chess teachers engaged in private tuition in schools around the country. These teachers promote the game without any financial support from the ICU or the Dept of Education and succeed in getting more and more children playing chess each year.

Despite the above positive events and minor and major successes, the year did have a downside. Despite being vocal on many issues, it is difficult to find enough members who are willing to contribute to the running of the day to day requirements of the Union and work at committee level in organizing events. There is a general apathy that needs to be challenged if the game is to continue developing in Ireland. In this respect, new blood is required to reinvigorate the Union.



There is still no sponsor of the Irish Chess championships since Michael Crowe independently secured three years of generous sponsorship from Island Oil and Gas. This will be a major concern that the incoming executive will have to try and address. The Irish Chess Union has no strategic links or affiliations with any other sporting organizations. In addition, no meaningful progress has been made on securing recognition for chess as a sport in Ireland. This provides an obstacle to gaining government funding.

This year was also marked by a spate of libellous online publications that involved continual bickering, anonymous personal attacks and occasional intimidation of ICU officials and players. This was an extremely negative and counterproductive development that can only damage the standing and perception of Chess in Ireland. Personally, I have no problem with constructive criticism but John Alfred's observation that some of the content was unsafe for children to be reading speaks volumes. The existence and tolerance of such incendiary blogs implies that personal and libellous attacks and character assassinations are not just acceptable but the norm. I would hope that the incoming committee will take a strong position on this matter. Whatever people's opinions about my tenure as ICU chairman or the ICU committee's performance individually or as a whole, the correct forum for holding people to account is the AGM and not the public airwaves. Here it is worth remembering that these are voluntary and time consuming efforts by dedicated people who have attempted to the best of their abilities to promote Chess in Ireland. Using the Internet for non-constructive and occasionally vicious personal attacks is unacceptable.

Anyone who has ever served on any public body or the ICU will know that despite the importance for transparency in the running of the Union, it is not always in the interests of Chess to release the full details and background to every decision. This is one of the many responsibilities that anyone seeking a position on the ICU or any public body for that matter will soon realise. As such it is my opinion that many of the personal attacks on ICU members were both ill-advised and uninformed. The forthcoming executive will have to address this issue as a matter of urgency.

That being said, while there is much work to be done and difficult decisions to be made, I genuinely wish the incoming Committee and new Chairman all the best in the coming year. In particular, they will need a good team to ensure that Ireland's hosting of the Glorney Cup is a success. This event requires about €10,000 in funding and/or sponsorship.

My thanks to Michael Crowe and Nicky Benson who are retiring from the ICU. After thirty-two years of involvement in chess at local, regional and national levels, serving on committees and in different positions such as Treasurer, President, Honorary Chairman etc., it is also time for me to step down and retire from chess organization. I am looking forward to playing more and will be competing at the forthcoming World Senior Chess Championships in Italy.

Secretaries Report

By Nicky Benson (September 2010)

The ICU Committee meetings were organised on five occasions over the year: in Kilkenny November; Bunnratty February; Green Isle Hotel, Dublin May D4 hotel July; and Harold's Cross Dublin August. In the case of the July meeting a quorum (5 executive members present) was not reached. It is hoped that by increasing the number of people on the Executive Committee this can be avoided in future.

The Executive Committee members were Eamon Keogh (Chairman), Nicola Benson (Secretary), John Delaney (Vice-Chairman, resigned in May), Michael Crowe (Treasurer), John McKenna (Junior officer), Mark Orr (Ratings Officer), John Alfred (Development Officer), Rory Quinn (Membership Officer), Pat Fitzsimons (Leinster delegate), Stephan Danaher (Munster delegate, joined in August); non-executive Gerry Graham (tournament Officer), Herbert Scarry (Arbitration Officer), Kevin O'Connell (FIDE Delegate). Nicola Benson also retained the role of Women's Officer from the previous year.



Tournaments

The economic climate has led to some drop off in attendance at weekend tournaments, but there is a very full calendar: City of Dublin, Galway, Limerick, Kilkenny, Leinster Championships, Gonzaga, Bunratty, Cork, Ennis and Drogheda, culminating in the Irish Championships and Ireland's first Norm tournament at the Dun Laoghaire Festival, plus numerous rapid plays and blitz competitions.

International Participation

Ryan-Rhys Griffiths had an extremely strong performance in the British Championships, finishing joint 6th and U18 Champion. Ronan Magee came second in the U12 British Championships.

Ennis participated in the 2009 European Club Cup and won two of their matches despite the extremely strong competition. They will be going to Poland to participate this year.

Men's and Women's team have been entered to the Olympiad in Siberia next week.

FIDE title norms were attained by Sam Collins (2nd GM Norm in Tromsø, Norway) and Alex Lopes (IM norm, Dun Laoghaire).

Affiliation to GAA was discussed to allow sharing of premises and to help access grant monies and to improve chances of getting chess recognised as a sport.

During the Irish Championships we had a visit from Geoffrey Borg representing FIDE and the European chess union. He was a mine of information on what is going on in other countries regarding getting chess recognised as a sport, getting it included in the school curriculum on the same basis as Art, Music, Drama, developing junior chess, training programmes, coaching programmes, coaching material, FIDE arbiter training. As a result of his visit, John Alfred was invited to visit the world schools youth championship in Turkey, to meet with Ali Niyat Yazici and look at how they have achieved an explosion of interest in chess at junior and senior level in Turkey.

Kevin O'Connell is retiring as FIDE delegate after 32 years of sterling service: please read his excellent FIDE Delegate's Report. He will be unable to act as FIDE delegate for the meeting at Khanty Manisk next month, so it has been arranged that Antony Hearne will act as Delegate and place Ireland's vote in the FIDE elections: the committee voted at the August committee meeting to support Karpov against the present incumbent Kirsan Ilyumzhinov in the upcoming presidential elections: Timothy Harding has a motion at the AGM to endorse this.

It was decided to support Ali Nahit Yazici for the President of European chess Federation: he has been extremely successful developing chess in Turkey, and is proposing to do the same for chess in Europe. A feature of his plans is aimed particularly at smaller countries like Ireland, and has already risen substantial funding to this end: Ireland should gain €20,000.

ICU Publications

There has been no journal for the past few years, but the excellent website (thanks to Mark Orr) has taken over many of the functions previously covered in the journal to keep members up to date with the Irish chess scene.

Junior Chess

As John McKenna (see Junior Officer's Report) is retiring this year, I have undertaken (in consultation with John) to organise Irish Juniors attending the FIDE World Youth Championship in Halkidiki Greece in October. The selection of junior players is automatic, as it is based solely on Irish rating, the highest rated boy or girl in each age group being offered the accommodation paid place. The teams are:



Boys:

- U18 Sam Osborne, Ryan-Rhys Griffiths
- U16 Mark Berney
- U14 Oissine Murphy
- U12 Ronan McGee
- U10 Jeffrey Alfred

Girls:

- U18 None (Poornima unfortunately unavailable)
- U16 Sarah-Jane Hearne
- U14 Sinead Duffy
- U12 Catherine Hearne
- U10 Diana Mirza

Thanks

Finally I would like to thank my fellow Committee members for all their hard work over the year, and wish the best of luck to the incoming committee. I would particularly like to thank Eamon and Michael for their many years of work for Irish chess.

Junior Officer's Report

By John McKenna (September 2010)

The ICU database shows 403 juniors compared with 405 last year. On closer inspection I estimate that there are probably 300 active juniors that, at least occasionally, play in rated competitions. This is a small number considering the number of children who learn chess. How to encourage children to make that step from playing chess in school or at home to moving on to play in "serious" competitions is something which needs to be looked at. One person who has done just that is John Delaney. John is in the process of developing guidance for anyone who is considering setting up a chess club which is very welcome.

British Championships

Ryan-Rhys Griffiths had an excellent time at the British Championships including a win against English GM Aaron Summerscale. In the Under 13 section Ronan Magee came 2nd which was a great performance.

Glorney/Gilbert/U14/U12

Four Junior teams travelled to Wales for the Glorney/Gilbert/U14 and U12 competitions. A full report is on the ICU Website. All the teams played better than their rating so you can't ask for more than that! Many thanks to John Delaney for travelling as coach with the team. Because of the scale of Chess in England it is always a challenge to match them but we came very close in the Glorney (for the third year in a row!) or Girls held England to a 1½-1½ draw and our U12's also held England to a 3-3 draw. It is Ireland's turn to host in 2011. The most logical place to host is in or near Dublin due to the accessibility by air from UK. This competition has settled into a four team event so 6 rounds are now the norm where we play each other twice. It's possible that some continental team may wish to compete next year but in my view it's doubtful.

Quadrangular U16 Competition Liverpool



There has been no Under 16 international team for some time. We managed to get one off the ground in late 2009 with a joint Irish/Scottish team. Hopefully this may be further developed and give Irish juniors another opportunity to gain international experience.

World Youths

There has been a low level of interest in both the Worlds and Europeans over the last few years. This has not been helped by the competitions being held in out of the way places and even near war zones. However, this year they are in Greece which sounds more appealing and thanks to a lot of work by Nicky Benson we have an almost full team going in the autumn, the first time in a number of years.

Irish Junior Championships

The 2010 competition was held in Ennis and was really well run by Connie Danaher and her team. Numbers attending were well up which was really encouraging. The 2011 event is provisionally pencilled in for Ballinasloe.

Irish Junior Inter-Regionals

This year's competition was held in St Benildus. Both the under 19 and under 16 sections were won by Leinster. Many thanks to Frank Scott and the school for hosting. Next year it's Connacht's turn, venue to be announced.

All Ireland Colleges

This year's competition was held in Gonzaga. The Under 19 and Under 14 sections were both won by St Benildus. The Under 16 section was won by Gonzaga. Many thanks to Daniel Lynch and Dave Murray for hosting and organising.

Munster Juniors

After the Irish Juniors this is the only age category event (U8, U10 U12 etc) that is rated. The event is a good opportunity for young players to play in a rated tournament and in recent years has been held in Limerick, attracting good numbers.

Other Competitions

The above are the rated junior competitions that were held over the last year. There are many other competitions run all around the country, one of which I should mention is the Leinster Youth Championships being run by Steven Stokes which is on the weekend of September 11th and 12th.

Future Developments

I think that there is a need for a re-constituted Junior committee. If Junior Chess is going to develop this is a must. As regards International Junior competitions, this is an area that requires a lot of time to organise and should be covered by someone other than the Junior Officer.



Appendix B

New Committee

Chairperson:	Jonathan O'Connor
Vice-Chairperson:	John Alfred
Secretary:	Bernard Palmer
Treasurer:	Shane Lee
Ratings Officer:	Mark Orr
Public Relations Officer:	Colm Daly
Tournament Officer:	Gerry Graham
Arbitration Officer:	Herbert Scarry
Development Officer:	John Alfred
Women's Office:	Una O'Boyle
Membership Officer:	Rory Quinn
FIDE Delegate:	John Alfred
Junior Officer:	Darko Polimac
ICJ Editor:	Tony Foley