

Vice-Chairman report for 2010-2011

by John Alfred

The Vice Chairman is the back-up in case the Chairman is not available to chair meetings.

S/he can also get involved in other activities as self-interest may dictate.

Well the Chairman didn't need back-up and so the position was relatively quiet, and I will use this opportunity to comment on other serious aspects of the running of the ICU.

ICU Meetings:

Skype:

The first normal meeting was held in Portlaoise in late September, with a promise of a busy and productive year ahead. Four ICU Officers could not be present due to the Chess Olympiad. In hindsight for the sake of two weeks, this first meeting should have been delayed and the principle of 'No ICU Officer left behind' adhered to.

What happened next cast gloom on the rest of the year.

It was decided to try out Skype for a discussion. I was unable to get Skype going on my new PC and couldn't 'attend'. The Skype discussion was 'so successful' that it was decided to make the rest of the ICU meetings Skype-meetings (even though I was not 'there' to vote on it). It was now quite ok to disregard 'No ICU Officer left behind'.

I am not one to have my voting rights dismissed and so the rest of the season was not harmonious to put it mildly ! Eventually the Arbitration Officer was asked to rule on Skype meetings. He was of the opinion that there should be at least one 'Physical meeting' for every 'Skype meeting'. Consequently the last two meetings in the ICU year were 'physical meetings' – the May one I could not attend as it clashed with my 7-month-advertised Limerick monthly. I was able to attend the one in June, my 2nd in the whole season.

Traveling expenses:

Since the 1990's it had been practice to hold ICU meetings in Dublin, and those coming from the country like Galway, Cork, Limerick and Belfast being paid travelling expenses. Not to mention that seven hours is the minimum time people spend commuting from/to these cities, they also have to buy meals. 50 euro is the least it costs to pay for travel and food.

Since Northern Ireland quit the ICU, the hub of the 5 big chess centres (Dublin, Kilkenny, Galway, Limerick, Cork) is now nearer Nenagh or Roscrea and so that's where meetings should be held.

Travelling expenses were abolished this season and is a throwback to the 1980's and earlier. The last two meetings were held in Dublin and with the scrapping of travelling expenses, they should have been held in Nenagh for fairer sharing of costs.

Deregulating the ICU:

With 100 years almost upon us and still no home-produced GM, I am of the opinion that the ICU cannot be fixed from within. A structure is needed where two or more chess bodies should be able to compete for the ICU's resources – namely the Rating system, and access to fide. Lets see what next season brings !

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