

Report of the International Selection Committee of the Irish Chess Union on Selections for Olympiad 2020.

May 4, 2020

ISC Composition: Mel Ó Cinnéide (Chair and Secretary), Stephen Brady, Jonathan O'Connor, David Murray (Ratings Officer).

Preface: The original report was issued to the ICU Executive on March 8, 2020. The postponement of the 2020 Olympiad led to the ICU Executive deciding that the team selections would remain the same, but that any selection of reserves (if required) would be postponed. This report is an update of the March 8 report that reflects this new situation.

Preamble

The International Selection Committee has been actively working since its formation early December 2019. The first task was to contact the top dozen open and women players to determine who was eligible, able and willing to play in the forthcoming Olympiad. When final rating lists became available in early March, the committee was in a position to make its selection. The entire process involved close to 200 emails, and the committee is happy that all issues have been discussed and resolved satisfactorily and can make its recommendations as detailed below.

1. Open Team

The following players were selected. All have confirmed that they are available to play:

Conor Murphy (Irish Champion 2019, WAR 2407)

Alex Lopez (Irish Champion 2018, WAR 2440)

Alexander Baburin (WAR 2392)

David Fitzsimons (WAR 2348)

Tarun Kanyamarala (WAR 2333)

Board order is left to the captain to decide.

Brian Kelly was deemed inactive. Sam Collins and Mark Quinn were unavailable for selection.

2. Women's Team

The following players were selected. All have confirmed that they are available to play:

Trisha Kanyamarala (WAR 2204)

Ioana Gelip (WAR 2171)

Diana Mirza (WAR 1905)

Alice O'Gorman (WAR 1876)

Mercedes Plaza Reino (WAR 1755)

Board order is left to the captain to decide.

April Cronin, Ann Delaney, Poornima Menon and Karina Kruk were deemed inactive. Lara Putar has not been resident in Ireland long enough to qualify to play. Dayna Ferguson was unavailable for selection.

The gap between Plaza Reino and Mihaylova is 22 points, and the order of these two players was discussed in detail as Mihaylova's recent results have been outstanding. The final decision was to select the player with the higher WAR.

3. Selection of Captains

Women's Captain: Conor O'Donnell

There were five applicants for this role. All applicants had their merits, but given that the women's captain is also expected to coach the players, the committee favoured a strong chess-playing captain. A vote was taken among the top six players from the women's list, and this confirmed the preference of the committee to recommend Conor O'Donnell for this role.

Open Captain: Carl Jackson

There was one applicant for the role of open captain. Carl Jackson was open captain in 2018 and has since acquired the TRG title, so the committee is very happy to recommend him for this role.

Head of Delegation: Carl Jackson

Given his experience, we also recommend Carl Jackson for this role.

4. Overall Remarks

The committee has some proposals to improve the future selection process for players and captains. These will be reported separately.