

NEW ZEALAND CHESS FEDERATION NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2008

Paul Spiller

Annual General Meeting 19/01/2008

A new Council was elected at the AGM with long serving President FM Bob Smith and wife Vivian standing down after 7 years on Council. Those elected were

President: Paul Spiller

Vice-President: Peter Stuart

Secretary: Bob Mitchel

Treasurer: Anthony Whitehouse

Councillors: Mike Steadman, Murray Chandler, Helen Milligan, Bob Gibbons

Central North Island Regional Councillor: Hilton Bennett

Wellington Councillors: Ross Jackson, Michael Freeman

Canterbury Councillor: Craig Hall

Otago Councillor: Quentin Johnson

Patron and Vice-Patrons elected were:

Patron: Jim Benson

Vice-Patrons: George Trundle, Graham Haase and Bill Poole.

The new team combines some experienced campaigners with new faces GM Murray Chandler and WFM Helen Milligan who bring a wealth of expertise in the areas of IT, marketing and sponsorship.

Millennium Hotels & Resorts Chess Grand Prix

Millennium Hotels and Resorts Group will continue to sponsor the New Zealand Chess Grand Prix this year, with the New Zealand Chess Supplies Congress being the first event in the 2008 series. Clubs and organisers are encouraged to support Millennium Hotels when considering holding an event. Organisers can liaise through Paul Spiller (spillerfamily.enterprise@xtra.co.nz) or directly with Mat Shaw (Mat.Shaw@millenniumhotels.co.nz) for all Millennium, Copthorne & Kingsgate Hotel tournament and accommodation quotations. Support for the Grand Prix has been gaining momentum and this year the total prize-fund has been increased by nearly \$2,000. FM Bob Smith will continue in his role as Grand Prix administrator so clubs should ensure that results are sent in promptly. Results will be regularly updated and posted on Helen Milligan's website at www.newzealandchess.co.nz.

New Zealand Championship Congress

The 2007/2008 New Zealand Congress was held at the Copthorne Harbourcity Hotel in downtown Auckland and was sponsored by New Zealand Chess Supplies. Twenty-two players competed in the New Zealand Championship including overseas guests IM Herman Van Riemsdijk from Brazil, FM Tim Reilly from Australia and FM Ove Hartvig from Denmark. The field included most of New Zealand's strongest active players including GM Murray Chandler, IMs Russell Dive, Paul Garbett & Anthony Ker and FMs Stephen Lukey, Bob Smith, Bruce Watson and FM elect Nic Croad. In the end Murray powered away with 5 consecutive wins to finish on 9/11, one and a half points ahead of second placers Russell Dive and Mike Steadman. Mike in particular had a standout performance and narrowly missed an IM norm by half a point. Herman Van Riemsdijk, Leonard McLaren, Ralph Hart & Graeme Spain tied for fourth place on 6.5 points. The Major Open was a tremendous success for 12 year old Daniel Shen who was outright winner with a score of 8.5/11 and

rating performance of 2286. It was a great opportunity for the younger players to test themselves against more experienced veterans. The runners up were Bruce Wheeler and Stan Yee who both performed very solidly.

The Rapid Championship attracted a field of 58 players with defending champion IM Puchen Wang expected to be hard to topple. However, losses to Herman Van Riemsdijk and FM Bob Smith in rounds five and eight meant he had to settle for =4th. Visitor Herman Van Riemsdijk repeated his 2000 victory to clinch the Championship conceding just three draws. Mike Steadman and Bob Smith both put in strong performances for = second place thus sharing the title of NZ Rapid Champion.

The Lightning Championship was fought out between the six qualifiers IMs Puchen Wang, Russell Dive, Anthony Ker, Paul Garbett, Chris Thurner and Ralph Hart. Puchen was out on his own winning comfortably with a score of 9/10. Paul Garbett edged out Ralph Hart to finish 2nd on 6.5 with Ralph on 6 points.

Website Links

Helen Milligan established a new website last year which features a very up-to-date chess calendar of events and important links to other popular chess websites. It also gives recent tournament results and updates. The url is www.newzealandchess.co.nz. Players can also check Grand Prix standings via this site. It is intended that this site will be complimentary to Michael Freeman's site which provides detailed information about the Federation and member clubs. This site is www.nzchess.co.nz.

Project Grandmaster

As many players around New Zealand will already know, NZCF is supporting IM Puchen Wang's endeavours this year to become New Zealand's second Grandmaster. Puchen made significant strides forward last year after a convincing win in the New Zealand Championship he placed second= in the Oceania Zonal in Fiji and narrowly missed a GM norm in the Euwe Stimulus tournament in the Netherlands in August. Now having completed his secondary studies, Puchen is taking a gap year to concentrate on studying and competing in a series of strong chess tournaments in Europe and Asia. His first event in the huge Capelle La Grande swiss in France was a very good start. His 6/9 points placed him in a tie for 31st place out of 600 including over 100 GMs. Particularly encouraging were his 2 draws and 1 win against the three GMs that he played, all rated over 2500.

Mike Steadman is the project manager and details of how you can support Puchen are available on Helen's website as above. I would urge all players and clubs to get behind this very worthwhile cause. All financial supporters will receive regular updates on Puchen's progress and annotated games from Puchen.

The Auckland Chess Centre will be holding regular 2nd Sunday tournaments every month (with the exception of April when the event will be held in Hamilton) to help with fund-raising efforts. Howick-Pakuranga and Auckland have already held special simuls and other events will be held during the year to help.

New Zealand Chess Magazine

The magazine has been a huge voluntary effort over the last few years from Graeme Trass, who is based in Taupo. Graeme took on a very large workload prior to Christmas and has been snowed under. However, I can promise that the NZCF Council is working hard to resolve these issues and is committed to bringing the magazine up to date. The October issue should be out to clubs within the next week with the December issue shortly following on after. Council will keep clubs posted on progress.

2009 Queenstown Chess Classic

Excitement is starting to build for the 2009 Queenstown Chess Classic incorporating the 116th New Zealand Chess Championships. With a prizefund in excess of \$50,000 the 2009 event will set a new benchmark for chess events in Oceania. There has already been considerable interest from top overseas players with five Grandmasters already confirming their participation. If you didn't have the opportunity to play in the 2006 event, make sure that you don't miss the 2009 edition!

A new feature next year will be the addition of the Queenstown Junior Chess Classic, a six round swiss restricted to players under 18 as at 01/01/2009. \$1,600 in prizes will be at stake.

Information from: paul@queenstownchess.com.

2008 Chess Olympiad in Dresden, Germany

The 2008 Olympiad is scheduled to be played in Dresden, Germany in the month of November. Shortly, NZCF will be seeking expressions of interest from strong New Zealand players wishing to be considered for selection.

New rules this year mean that both the Open and Women's teams are restricted to five players. Also, FIDE intends introducing a system of match points to replace the long established system of game points. To determine overall placings a complex system of tie-breaks will be used.

New Zealand Chess Federation events

The NZCF is seeking a club to organise the NZ Junior Chess Championship which is normally held the week following the North Island Championships. Last year's sponsor has indicated a willingness to support the 2008 event as well so this will take some of the financial burden off the organising club. Please contact Bob Mitchell at robertmi@ihug.co.nz if your club would like to host this event. The NZ Women's Championships are being held at the Auckland Chess Centre from April 30th until May 4th. The Championship will be a 10 player round robin with the Reserve section held as a Rapidplay. At this stage it looks likely that the Seniors Championship will again be held in Hamilton. The dates and venues for the North & South Island Championships are still to be confirmed but indications are that they will be held in Tauranga and Kaikoura respectively.

Full details of all events will be posted on www.newzealandchess.co.nz as soon as they are available.

Paul Spiller