

ICCF CONGRESS 2008

Pleven, Bulgaria

20th September to 26th September 2008

The ICCF Congress 2008, in conjunction with meetings of the Executive Board and Management Committee, took place in the Municipal Hall, Pleven and the Hotel Kaylaka, Pleven, Bulgaria from 20th to 26th September 2008.

The Congress was arranged by the Correspondence Chess Federation of Bulgaria (BCCF), who provided an outstanding programme, with excursions to the historical Panorama, a tour of the City of Pleven, a superb classical music concert and a day trip which included visits to Etara Museum, Trjavna and Veliko Tarnovo, the old capital city. There was also an interesting and extensive ladies programme, a chess match with Pleven Chess Club, an open blitz and a traditional ICCF blitz tournament.

Congress participants (memberships of Commissions/Committees are listed in Appendix A)

Maigonis Avotins (LAT) as delegation member

Dr. Fritz Baumbach (GER) as delegate and with proxy for Hungary and as World CC Champion XI

Ulrich Baumgartner (SUI) as delegation member

Gerhard Binder (GER) as Ratings Commissioner

Raymond Boger (NOR) as delegate

Alan P. Borwell (SCO) Honorary President, Honorary Member, as delegate and with proxy for Australia and India.

Petr Buchniček (CZE) as delegate and with proxy for Croatia

Daniel Cincă (ROM) as delegate

Andrew Dearnley (ENG) as delegate

Artis Gaujens (LAT) as delegate with proxy for Estonia

Guntis Gerhards (LAT) as delegation member

Sergey Grodzensky (RUS) as delegate and with proxy for Belarus

Tunc Hamarat (AUT) as delegate and with proxy for Turkey and as World CC Champion XVI

Dr. Jan Helbich (SVK) as delegate

Kim Ronnow Jensen (DEN) as delegation member

Everdinand Knol (RSA) as delegate

Dr. Matthias Kribben (GER) as delegation member

Alfonas Kupsys (LTU) as delegate

Neil Limbert (ENG) as delegation member

Petyo Iordanov Marinov (BUL) as delegation member

Gianni Mastrojeni (ITA) as delegate and with proxy for Argentina

Cornel Matei (ROM) as delegation member

Josep Mercadal Benejam (ESP) as delegate and with proxy for Chile

Michael Millstone (USA) as delegation member and Direct Entry Administrator

Søren Rud Ottesen (DEN) as delegation member

Alexandar Parushev (BUL) as delegation member

Søren Peschardt (DEN) as delegate

Indulis Petersons (LAT) as delegation member

Mauro Petrolo (ITA) as delegation member

Nol van 't Riet (NED) Honorary Member and as delegate and with proxy for Algeria

Eric Ruch (FRA) as delegate and with proxy for Ireland and as Qualifications Commissioner

Prof. Georgi Sapundjiev (BUL) as delegate

Henk Sarink (NED) as delegation member and as ICCF Auditor

Leonard Schakel (USA) as delegate and as Zonal Director (North America/Pacific)

Per Söderberg (SWE) as delegate and with proxy for Iceland and Israel and as Rules Commissioner

Dr. Uwe Staroske (GER) as delegation member

Gian-Maria Tani (ITA) Honorary Member with proxy for Luxemburg, as delegation member and as Zonal Director (Europe)

Georg Walker (SUI) as delegate

Opening the Congress, the ICCF Honorary President, Alan P. Borwell (SCO) responded to warm welcoming speeches by the Chairman of the Organising Committee, Mr. Rumen Petkov, the Bulgarian Sports Minister, Mrs. Vesela Lecheva, the President of the Correspondence Chess Federation of Bulgaria (BCCF), Mr. Petyo Marinov and the BCCF Delegate, Professor George Sapundjiev. He expressed thanks to the Governor of Pleven, Mr. Tzvetko Tzvetkov for the privilege of opening the Congress in the fine Municipal Hall and for the civic hospitality provided.

The ICCF Honorary President conveyed the apologies of ICCF President, Med Samraoui, who had been unable to attend because he did not have the necessary travel documents, who had extended his best wishes to everyone in attendance. The ICCF President had asked the ICCF Honorary President, Alan P. Borwell (SCO) to chair the 2008 Congress, assisted by Honorary Member Nol van 't Riet (NED), with Eric Ruch (FRA) having agreed to be Congress Secretary (due to the absence at Congress of the ICCF General Secretary and other Executive Board members).

The ICCF Honorary President expressed pleasure that a Congress was being held in Bulgaria for the first time in ICCF's history and that delegates were looking forward to discovering more about the local culture, scenery and architecture of Pleven and the surrounding area. He referred to famous sports stars of Bulgaria, including World and European Rifle Champion, the Bulgarian Sports Minister, Mrs. Vesela Lecheva! He congratulated FIDE GM Veselin Topalov on his many super tournament successes, including his most recent one of the FIDE Grand Slam Final in Bilbao. In correspondence chess, Bulgaria had been active internationally for almost 70 years and he referred to pioneers of Bulgarian CC, which included Prof. Georgi Sapundjiev and Dr. Stefan Sergiev, both of whom he was delighted to welcome to Congress. It was heartening that in recent years Bulgaria had been represented at ICCF Congresses by Petyo Marinov and that he had been able to offer to host the ICCF Congress in such a short time of involvement. The ICCF Honorary President thanked Mr. Marinov for his initiative, enthusiasm and commitment.

The ICCF Honorary President referred to all dear CC friends who had passed away since the last Congress and he mentioned, in particular, **Gerhard Radosztics (AUT), Witold Bielecki (POL), Günter Henrich (GER) and Robertas Sutkus (LTU)**. Delegates then stood in silence to the memory of all departed CC friends.

In his Report to Congress, the ICCF President, Med Samraoui referred to the resignations from the Executive Board of Michael Blake (ENG), sadly for health reasons, and Hans-Jürgen Isigkeit (GER), who had replaced Günter Henrich in the BdF Board.

The ICCF Honorary President wished delegates, partners and friends a productive and very enjoyable week and declared the ICCF Congress, Pleven, Bulgaria 2008 duly open. After the playing of the ICCF Anthem, the Congress was entertained by a young folk singing group.

The ICCF Honorary President then made some introductory remarks describing intentions for dealing with agenda items on each of the four days planned for meetings of Congress and a meeting of the European Zone delegates.

As the ICCF officer responsible for strategic and financial planning, the ICCF President had provided a summary of points which he considered should be discussed by the Congress and it was explained that his proposals would be intimated under specific agenda items by the Deputy Chairman for the Congress, Nol van 't Riet (NED).

1. Proxies for 2008 Congress

The proxies for the Congress were confirmed as shown in the participants list.

2. Approval of Minutes of 2007 Congress

The ICCF Honorary President pointed out a mistake in the 2007 Congress Minutes: Under item 7 it referred to "Marketing and Membership Services" but this should be replaced by "Marketing and Services".

The 2007 ICCF Congress Minutes, Benalmadena, Spain, as already published on the ICCF website, amended by the above mentioned correction, were approved.

3. Membership matters

The General Secretary reported that there were no recommendations or applications for new members of ICCF.

The situation of member federations in arrears with payment of membership and tournament fees was discussed and it was agreed that provisions decided by the 2004 ICCF Congress in Mumbai, should be fully implemented.

The ICCF President would send a letter to all member federations which had not paid fees due at 31st December 2007. If they remained unpaid at 31/12/2008, provisions decided by 2004 Congress in Mumbai would be applied.

For those countries with fees outstanding for years 2006 and/or 2007, a levy of 2% per month would be made starting from 01/01/2009 and those countries would not be able to participate in ICCF team tournaments, e.g. Olympiads, and no Invitational/Open Tournament would be approved until unpaid fees and levies had been paid. Congress also approved that no Direct Entry rebate would be credited to any defaulting member federations.

For countries with fees unpaid for earlier years than 2006, non-payment before 31/12/2008 would result in such federations being immediately suspended from ICCF membership.

4. World CC Championship and Bertl von Massow Awards

World Correspondence Chess Championship Trophies were presented to the respective national delegates for the following World CC Champions, their certificates and medals having been presented at previous Congresses :-

World Correspondence Chess Champion XIX - Christophe Léotard (FRA)
World Correspondence Chess Champion XXI - Joop J. van Oosterom (NED)

Congress acclaimed the new **Ladies World Correspondence Chess Champion XII – Mrs. Olga Sukhareva (RUS)** and her trophy, certificate and medal were presented to the delegate for Russia.

The ICCF Honorary President intimated that 2008 was the 25th Anniversary of the passing of Bertl von Massow and he invited Honorary Member Nol van 't Riet (NLD) to give some reflections of those days. Mr. Van 't Riet referred to the great support which Frau von Massow had provided to Hans-Werner von Massow as ICCF President and also to the work which she did herself in developing and running the European Tournament Office for more than 20 years.

The ICCF Honorary President then outlined the background and criteria which applied for the Bertl von Massow awards :- "These medals in Gold and Silver were awarded respectively for 15 and 10 years of faithful service to ICCF as the Delegate of a National Federation, as member of the Executive Board, Management Committee or Commissions, of Zonal organisations or as a Tournament Director, as well as Team Captain of winning or highly placed teams in Olympiads or Continental (Zonal) Team Tournaments".

The ICCF Honorary President then announced names of officials which the ICCF President and Executive Board considered should receive Bertl von Massow awards in 2008. Each recipient (or the respective delegate) then came forward to receive medals and certificates from the ICCF Honorary President, with the acclamation of Congress.

In Gold and Silver for more than 15 years meritorious work for ICCF to:

Prof. G. Sapundjiev (BUL)

In Gold, for 15 years meritorious work for ICCF to:

G. Binder (GER)
J. Bohak (SLO)
E. Liebert (EST)
M. Manduch (SVK)
P. Polakovic (SVK)
A.J.C. Rawlings (ENG)
M. Rõtova (EST)

In Silver, for 10 years meritorious work for ICCF to:

M. Rocius (LTU)
J-P. Dondelinger (BEL)
L. Madonia (ITA)
H. Onoda (JAP)
G. Bendaña Guerrero (NCA)

5. ICCF Accounts to 31/12/2007

The ICCF Honorary President introduced the Financial Report and Accounts to 31/12/2007, which once again had been produced by the previously retired ICCF Treasurer, Carlos Flores (ESP), following the resignation of the ICCF Finance Director, Hans-Jürgen Isigkeit (GER). Carlos Flores also kindly constructed and issued the 2007 member federation statements, incorporating very helpful tournament entry statistics produced by Søren Peschardt (DEN).

Whilst there had been a deficit arising from previous years of CHF 4,161, there was an operating surplus for the year to 31/12/2007 of CHF 6,247 and a profit had been realised from the sale of further ICCF investments of CHF 1,085. Therefore there had been an overall small final surplus at 31/12/2007 of CHF 3,171. Although the ICCF financial situation was sound, there had been exceptional items of income for 2007, including two years membership fees. It would be necessary to maintain ongoing vigilance to ensure that ICCF finances and liquidity remain healthy.

Carlos Flores thanked all delegates and officials for helping him by supplying requested information, and for their continued support and also Søren Peschardt and Stefan Salzmann (in Switzerland) for their excellent assistance.

The ICCF Honorary President expressed deep gratitude to Carlos Flores for his invaluable assistance to ICCF once again and hoped that he would in future be able to take up the Auditor's role, with a new Finance Director in place.

6. Auditor's Report

The retiring ICCF Auditor, Henk Sarink (NED) reported that he had received the 2007 Accounts in good time and he had verified all the figures and documents provided for the year 2007 and that the financial position at 31/12/2007 had been correctly recorded and reported correctly.

The ICCF Honorary President thanked Mr. Sarink sincerely for his dedication for almost 20 years as ICCF Auditor - even when he was appointed in 1992, he had agreed to review the financial documents for the previous three years! The ICCF Congress warmly accorded Mr. Sarink well deserved applause and a standing ovation for his great work.

7. Election of Executive Board members and other appointments

The ICCF Honorary President reported that following the retirement of the Finance Director Hans-Jürgen Isigkeit (GER) and the Marketing Director Michael Blake (ENG), elections for mid-term vacancies had been organised but no candidates had been nominated by member federations. However, he intimated that the ICCF President had been successful in finding two officials who were willing to be appointed to the respective vacant positions.

Before accepting the position of Finance Director, **Søren Peschardt (DEN)**, indicated that he was prepared to carry out the function on condition that the ICCF Finance Committee would be available to help him to carry out the role. **Eric Ruch (FRA)** had indicated his willingness to accept the position of Marketing Director and both of these appointments were enthusiastically approved by Congress.

Congress also approved unanimously nominations for the vacant positions in the Management Committee:

Michael Blake (ENG) Webmaster
Ron Langeveld (NED) Qualifications Commissioner

Michael Millstone (USA), Direct Entry Administrator, was appointed Direct Entry Commissioner.

8. Financial Matters

ICCF Direct Entry Commissioner, Michael Millstone (USA) reported that the direct entry system was a resounding success and the number of entries had continued to increase during the current year (around 170 new players). He also reported that Money Prize Tournaments decided during 2007 Congress had been a very successful innovation. Congress expressed thanks to Michael Millstone (USA) for his excellent work as ICCF Direct Entry Administrator.

The ICCF Honorary President, Alan Borwell, then reviewed the ICCF Financial Plan for the period 2003-2007, comparing actual figures with estimates and referred to the main fluctuations, although overall results had been remarkably close to the targets, with a healthy overall 4 year achievement, despite webserver development costs.

He explained that the old basis of having separate headings of income and expenditure for different methods of transmission would not be appropriate for the 2008-2011 plan and he showed a proposed streamlined framework to the Congress. He then presented a first draft, which contained initial estimates for each of the four years, but these would require consideration and refinement, particularly to reflect start dates of the main ICCF tournaments and decisions of Congress on larger items, such as further webserver enhancement and marketing expenditure.

He suggested that after he had further refined the draft figures they should be reviewed by the Finance Committee and thereafter be presented to the Executive Board for adoption and then issued to all ICCF Delegates (but not for publication generally). He emphasised that estimates/budgets should not be considered as being restrictive but used to monitor actual expenditure so that major variances would alert ICCF to any deteriorating financial trends.

Georg Walker (SUI) raised the question of the high fees for entering GMN tournaments (CHF 60), but it was shown that the fee was consistent with entry fees for similar high level tournaments. However, Congress decided it would be appropriate to offer free entry to GMN tournaments to Grandmasters or to players with a fixed ratings of 2600 or more (at the latest valid rating list) to encourage their participation and stimulate more interest in GMN tournaments.

9. Qualifications

Qualifications Commissioner, Eric Ruch (FRA) presented his report. Title awards for players with applications under Rules 8.4(d), 8.5(c), 8.6(e), 8.7(d) and 8.9(c) were discussed and agreed.

All approved new 2008 title awards have been listed under Item 14, Title Awards.

10. Website Policy

In his Services Director's Report, Gino Figlio (PER) had proposed the merging of the main "iccf.com" website into the webserver site "iccf-webchess.com", but this was not accepted by Congress, by unanimous vote. It was thought that it would be helpful to all concerned to define ICCF policy regarding the main ICCF website and the webserver:-

Main ICCF Website "iccf.com"

Shop window of ICCF to the World
CC News, all announcements re CC events etc.
CC Information (eg DE/DP), features, history, membership
Main sponsors, attractive presentation, promoting ICCF
Downloading facilities ie of games databases, documents eg Congress
Prominent links to other ICCF sites eg webserver, forum, wiki, zones, federations, etc.

Webserver "iccf-webchess.com"

Webserver chessgames, including structured archiving
Tournament tables and records for all CC events
Information relating to specific tournament arrangements
Related services, eg qualifications, ratings, suspensions etc.
Prominent link to Main website
Sponsors of specific tournaments eg with tables

Dr. Fritz Baumbach (GER) pointed out that there was no listing of email addresses of ICCF officials on the website. Various options were discussed, including address security, and the best one should be decided and implemented. A member of the ICCF Executive Board should be responsible for the maintenance of up to date address listings.

It was emphasized that the ICCF Webmaster needed help to ensure that all main website information and pages were kept up to date and that access should be provided to appropriate officials to facilitate this requirement. All ICCF officers were expected to support ICCF website policy and to give assistance to the Webmaster in his task.

11. Webserver Matters

Congress then reviewed the Report of the ICCF Services Director Gino Figlio (PER) and he was commended for the excellent work which he and his team of operational helpers had done with the ICCF webserver in the past year and for the statistical analyses he had provided on webserver usage and his comments on webserver maintainance.

It was noted that 33 development tasks had been listed, but that the normal WDSC specification was not provided. Reference was made to the Phase 4 Development Plan which had been reviewed by the 2007 Congress, but that no similar Plan was available for Phase 5. It was observed that many of the achieved tasks listed related to previous plans but it was not clear which tasks were for Phase 5. From a summary of external costs, it was noted that some CHF 4000 had already been expended on Phase 5 items. It was agreed that this was not very satisfactory and it was decided that the WDSC should provide a schedule of Phase 5 tasks, with programming times shown, for review by the Finance Committee, for submission to the Executive Board, before approval was given to release of further webserver development funds (for which a provisional budget was agreed of CHF 10'000 for ongoing projects).

The following webserver enhancements were discussed and approved by Congress:

- The message facilities should remain open for 7 – 10 days after the finish of the game ie closure by one player would not be activated until after such period had elapsed
- It should be possible to send a message to an opponent without sending a move, using the available message facility.

The possible extension of the message facility (e.g. outside the frame of a game or tournament) should be reviewed again by the WDSC with conclusions transmitted to the EB for consideration before any programming work is begun.

12. ICCF Archives, including Gamescore Databases

ICCF Honorary President expresses his concerns about the security of the access to ICCF gamescore database as he had recently been sent a copy of a database containing some 100'000 games from the ICCF webserver system. This was at a time when it was not easy for players or officials to download integrated archives of completed games.

In their report, the games archivists George Pyrich (SCO) and Laurent Tinture (FRA) had stated that "regrettably we must report that no progress whatever has been made since the last Congress on the proposed games archives, to include all the games played on the ICCF server. Unfortunately the games archivists do not possess the necessary technical skills (and authority) to make such changes as are required to the ICCF webserver system".

It was agreed that access to games databases should be immediate (ie on tournament completion) to all ICCF registered players, then to ICCF sponsors (such as ChessBase) and thereafter be made available via "iccf.com".

Further organisation of games archiving should be a high priority of Webserver development, in the Phase 5 plan.

Congress expresses its thanks for the dedicated work of George Pyrich (SCO) and Laurent Tinture (FRA).

13. Marketing and Publications Matters

Retired Marketing Director, Michael Blake (ENG) had provided Congress with a useful and comprehensive report.

Congress approved the following proposals:-

- A Marketing budget for 2008-9 was set of CHF 10'000.
- The ICCF website www.iccf.com should receive sustained development to create a shop-window for ICCF.
- The sponsorship agreements with Chessbase and NiC be continued and developed by the Marketing team.

Dr. Fritz Baumbach (GER) informed Congress that his book on "Who is the Champion of Champions" had just been published and copies were circulated amongst the delegates. He gave details about purchasing copies of his book.

14. Title Awards

According to tradition, the title awards ceremony was the first item on the agenda on the third day of the Congress. The ICCF Honorary President introduced the ICCF Qualifications Commissioner, Eric Ruch (FRA) who read out the names of new title holders. The ICCF Honorary President Alan Borwell (SCO) and ICCF Honorary Member Nol van't Riet (NED) made the presentations to new titleholders attending the Congress and presented medals/certificates to delegates, proxy holders or Zonal Directors for all of the respective countries.

Correspondence Chess Grandmaster (GM)

Francisco de Asís V. Velasco (ESP)	David Lafarga Santorromán (ESP)	Frank Schröder (GER)
Vladimir P. Dudyev (UKR)	Joel Martín Clemente (ESP)	Tansel Turgut (TUR)
Daniel Fleetwood (USA)	Horácio Neto (POR)	Aleksei B. Voll (RUS)
Davor Krivic (CRO)		

Correspondence Chess Senior International Master (SIM)

Valentin Petrovich Baklanov (RUS)	Joel Ibarra Padrón (CUB)	Luis Manuel Quaresma (POR)
Tadeusz Baranowski (POL)	Valentin Dimitrov Iotov (BUL)	Fritz Rattinger (AUT)
Manfred Bauer (GER)	Anatoly N. Isaev (RUS)	Yves Reich (SUI)
Guy José Bendaña Guerrero (NCA)	Hans-Jürgen Isigkeit (GER)	John D. Rhodes (ENG)
Petr Boukal (CZE)	Thed Klauner (LUX)	Werner Schön (GER)
Wesley T. Brandhorst (USA)	Ing. Leonardo Ljubcic (CRO)	Dr. Frank Schubert (GER)
Alex N. Bubir (UKR)	Milan Manduch (SVK)	Jerzy Staniszewski (POL)
Ioan Călin Chiru (ROM)	Uwe Mehlhorn (GER)	Zbigniew Szczepański (POL)
Walter Cornejo (ARG)	Christian Muck (AUT)	Keld Thomsen (DEN)
Francis Cottégne (BEL)	Mike L. Nicholson (ENG)	Juraj Václav (SVK)
Nico Daubenfeld (LUX)	Mark Noble (NZL)	Martin Vlasveld (NED)
Iskren Dimov (BUL)	Eric Nylander (SWE)	Tadeusz Wilczek (POL)
Dr. Mike J. Donnelly (ENG)	Ing. Nenad Piculjan (CRO)	Darius Zagorskis (LTU)
Albert Hebels (NED)	Michael C. Proof (USA)	

Correspondence Chess International Master (IM)

Brian W. Anderson (NZL)	Horst Hunger (GER)	Klaus Rogetzer (AUT)
Stefan Auch (GER)	Vladislav Hýbl (CZE)	Nikolai Sergeevich Romitsin (ROM)
Sérgio Badolati (BRA)	Vladimir P. Kharlamov (RUS)	Oleg Saenko (UKR)
Mirko Bandelj (SLO)	Mirsolav Kuta (CZE)	Rolf Scherer (SUI)
Stephen Boyd (CAN)	Marek Kolesár (SVK)	Ralf Schüppel (GER)
Sergei Bubir (UKR)	Einar Laane (EST)	Mathias Schwenck (GER)
Nigel Burne (ENG)	Gert Legemaat (NED)	Dr. Vladimir A. Shchekoldin (BLS)
Daniel Cincă (ROM)	Martin Lohse (DEN)	Nikolay Selyanchin (UKR)
Rickard Dahlström (SWE)	Iain Mackintosh (SCO)	Jiri Soudny (CZE)
Enver M. Efendiyev (RUS)	Serge Maurer (CAN)	Kamil Stalmach (CZE)
Mikhail N. Emelyanov (RUS)	Manuel Mendl (AUT)	Dr. Uwe Staroske (GER)
Georgy Goncharenko (UKR)	Dmitry Viktorovich Morozov (RUS)	Konstantin V. Stepanov (RUS)
Günter Haika (AUT)	Carlos G. Pappier (ARG)	Mario Daniel Stöckert (GER)
Miloslav Hladeček (CZE)	Mauro Petrolo (ITA)	Zdeněk Straka (CZE)
Frank Hoffmann (GER)	Thomas Rattinger (AUT)	Pierangelo Turati (ITA)
Keith Holzmueller (USA)	Jesus Julio Remis Fernandez (ESP)	Jindrich Vozda (CZE)

Correspondence Chess Lady Grandmaster (LGM)

Margarita Bocheva (BUL)	Maria de los Angeles Ynchausti Leyva (CUB)
Ricarda Flügel (GER)	Tamara Porfirevna Zaitseva (RUS)
Laura Piazza (ITA)	

Correspondence Chess Lady International Master (LIM)

Francesca Capuano (ITA)
Laura Hartmann (GER)
Caterina Saviano (ITA)

International Arbiter (IA)

Arif Küçükalioglu (TUR)	Michael Millstone (USA)
Juan Alberto Martello (ARG)	Giorgio Ruggeri Laderchi (ITA)

15. Title Tournaments, including World Correspondence Chess Championships

ICCF Title Tournament Commissioner, Marco Caressa (ITA) had provided Congress with a comprehensive report on his work 2008. The Congress decided that the first item of the proposals of the Title Tournament Commissioner (re Rating) would be discussed under Ratings matters (section 25) and item 2 (re expiration of qualifications) would be discussed under Tournament Rules matters (section 25).

Congress discussed the proposal prepared by the Discussion Group on Sunday afternoon concerning the future of the World Correspondence Chess Championships. The discussion group had considered it in three sections:-

Where are we now? Where do we want to be? How do we get there?

After analysing the first item, the following principles were agreed by the discussion group on the future structure:-

Objective – World CC Championship Finals should be started at 18 month intervals with other stages continuing to be started on a progressive basis. This should achieve not more than one new World CC Champion per year, but should not make achievement of the title too long a process for a new entrant.

There should be only two routes to World CC Championship Finals – via a Candidates Tournament or from a previous WCCC Final. This should apply from 1/1/2009 for new tournaments starting thereafter. World CC Championship Finals should comprise of 17 players, with a webserver time limit of 10 moves in 50 days (for all stages).

This should produce a minimum number of qualifiers, with criteria to be established for filling of any vacancies in Finals. Only one deferral should be allowed for qualified finalists under the future arrangements for World CCC Finals. The start date of the first WCCC Final under the new structure should be 18 months after the last final started under the existing arrangements

A small expert working group should be established to propose detailed rules in accordance with these objectives.

These proposals were then discussed by the Congress and were adopted unanimously. The following arrangements were then agreed for the transition to the new WCCC structure :-

It should be aimed to start the last WCCC Final under the old structure before the end of 2009. It seemed likely that 4 WCCC Finals should be started in 2009 with 2 at the beginning and 2 at the end of the year, depending on entries.

Currently qualified finalists (ie at the date of the 2008 Congress) should have opportunity to play in one of the Finals. Qualifiers emerging thereafter under existing arrangements should be able to enter these finals or either of the first 2 finals under the new structure. Qualifications for places in Finals which were not taken up, should lapse thereafter.

After considerable discussion, the WCCC arrangements were approved by Congress, by a substantial majority.

Detailed rules and proposals for the future World Correspondence Chess Championship would be prepared by a working group, which would report to the ICCF Congress in 2009. The Working Group to comprise of Gerhard Binder (GER) as Chairman, Raymond Boger (NOR), Marco Caressa (ITA), Tunc Hamarat (AUT), Ron Langeveld (NED), Eric Ruch (FRA) and Leonard Schakel (USA)

The arrangements for the last WCCC Finals to be started under the existing structure were then discussed. It had been decided by the 2007 ICCF Congress in Spain that both postal and webserver transmission must be allowed and that rules and arrangements for "nodes" should have been made for the 2008 Congress to approve. Unfortunately, the Playing Rules Commission had not been able to reach agreement on such rules for "nodes".

Therefore this requirement was also considered by the Discussion Group and the following "Addendum to the Playing Rules" was drafted and was then agreed by the Congress, by a substantial majority :-

Rules for the use of nodes in ICCF events.

Nodes shall be allowed in selected and specified ICCF events, in order to allow players to participate using webserver or postal transmission according to their individual preference.

1. A node is an official who receives moves from a postal player and enters those moves into the webserver system. A webserver player's move will be directed to the appropriate node (by server generated Email).
2. When a reply move is received from an opponent via the webserver, the node will send the Email as received, as soon as possible, to the postal player by regular mail.
3. Postal players in games against each other will both use nodes.
4. No conditional moves can be used in games involving either player using a node.
5. An impossible move sent by a node using player shall be returned for clarification according to standard Rules for this, including penalties (to be advised to the TD).
6. A clerical mistake made by the node, but NOT by the node using player, shall be corrected; without penalty to either player. The documents will be submitted as evidence to TD, who will arrange for playing times to be corrected on webserver.

7. The reflection time will be used as follows:
 - a. Webserver player, standard ICCF webserver rules (eg 50 days for 10 moves)
 - b. Postal player, standard ICCF Rules for postal play (ie 30 days for 10 moves), except that an ETL will result in loss of game.
8. The reflection time for the player using the node will be according to normal rules for postal play. Time used by postal player will be entered in message area by the node.
9. ICCF is responsible for arranging all nodes, located in the same or adjacent countries. Postal expenses of nodes will be refundable by ICCF, on receipt of expense claims.
10. Each node will nominate an assistant (also for ICCF confirmation) and advise postal players and TD of periods of cover by the assistant. Should the node and the assistant be unavailable, special leave for both players, will be entered into webserver system.
11. No events with node using players, will involve live or delayed display of the games. A postal player will not be able to access games in the tournament via the webserver (for which special arrangement will be made).

Note: Although playing time of a postal player will continue running in the webserver system, it will NOT be the official time count for that postal player. However, it will be used to monitor the operation and fairness of the node arrangements, for future review.

An announcement concerning the Finals of Olympiad 16 (postal) and Olympiad 17 (webserver) would be made as soon as all the finalists were known, given that the Final of Olympiad 15 was still being played. The next cycle of preliminaries would be played by webserver only and would commence at the same time as the start of Final 17.

Congress expressed sincere thanks to Marco Caressa (ITA) for his work with ICCF title tournaments and for his informative report and statistics and his proposals.

16. Ratings Matters, including Rating Rules

The following proposals made by the ICCF Ratings Commissioner, Gerhard Binder (GER) were approved:-

Evaluation rules:

If the difference in start ratings is > 350 in a game, Dp to be snipped to this value for the evaluation.
The significance factor f to be completely removed from the system.

Proposals concerning provisional ratings:

The limit for provisional ratings in national tournaments based on the average of the participants to be increased from 2,200 to 2,400. In friendly matches, Team Captains to be allowed to use other values than 1800 as start ratings where appropriate. These have to be confirmed and may be changed by RC before a tournament starts.

Proposals concerning national tournaments:

Last year's Congress decided to include national tournaments on request of any federation and the possibility for using national ratings. This required a clear procedure. A federation using this possibility would have to prepare an agreement with the RC which contains

- a list of tournament classes with the structure for short names and a proposal for provisional ratings based on the estimated average of participants rounded down to a multiple of 50. This value then to be used for all groups of this class.
- a list of players with ICCF-Id (if available) and national rating. This list to be used to convert national ratings to provisional ICCF ratings, eg. using a constant factor. The ratings determined by this method to be used only as start ratings in tournaments but would be irrelevant for achieving an ICCF rating.

Change in rating periods:

FIDE provided quarterly updates of their rating list. With the new software instruments and the daily registration of results it seemed to be possible that ICCF followed this rhythm – with the exception that one month would be needed between the end of the base period and the validity of new ratings. Ratings should be available on the webserver two weeks before their validity.

The current rating list (2008/2) was based on results from 01/01/2008 till 30/06/2008 and would be valid from 01/10/2008 till 31/03/2009. In 2009 three lists would be released, at 1st of April, July and October. The list 2009/1 to be based on the results from 01/07/2008 to 28/02/2009. From 2010 onwards four lists to be published, each of them at the first day of a new quarter.

Change in Tournament Rules:

§ 7.4 to the definition of start ratings the following sentence was added:

In case of a wrong or obviously inappropriate value the Ratings Commissioner may adjust such a start rating to a more realistic value, even if the tournament is already ongoing.

§ 7.6 concerning the contents of a published ratinglist: The lines b (list of rated events) and f (distinguish marks for inactive players) to be deleted.

The Ratings Commissioner was thanked by Congress for his continued excellent work with the ICCF Rating System.

17. World Tournaments and Tournament Arrangements

The ICCF Honorary President referred to contents of the report of World Tournament Director Frank Geider (FRA)

Congress received a proposal from Spain to organise World Cup 17, to be played exclusively on the webserver and it would start in March 2009. Congress thanked AEAC for its kind offer, which was accepted unanimously.

Congress approved a proposal made by the WTD concerning half qualifications to World Championship semi finals. Since ICCF was no longer offering half qualifications for semi finals, a player holding a half qualification should be given a full entry right to a World CC Championship Preliminary section.

Due to very low numbers of entries to Email Promotional Tournaments, as well as Email Title Tournaments (Master Norm, Grandmaster norms, World Championship Preliminaries, Semi-final, Candidates), ICCF should discontinue those Email tournaments. This was carefully discussed by the Congress and the WTD's proposal was agreed.

The ICCF President's thoughts about the ongoing tournament calendar were intimated to the Congress and have been taken into account for probable start years in the draft financial plan.

Congress discussed the case of late withdrawals from Team Tournaments and Congress agreed with the World Tournament Director that players should be penalised as in an individual tournament (already allowed by the Rules)

Congress decided that the facility of conditional moves would be discontinued for all mainstream ICCF organised and rated tournaments to be started from 01/01/2009. This was approved by the Congress by a significant majority.

Gino Figlio (PER) had worked on a new draft of the Arbiter Manual. This should be referred to the Arbiter Committee for review and recommendations to the 2009 Congress. It was also noted that more work on the Arbiter Manual was needed on the assessment of "quality" of arbiting, as many previous arbiter duties were automated in the webserver.

TD leave had been discussed previously and was already covered in the current version of the Arbiter Manual but it was agreed by Congress that the webserver should be updated in order to allow a TD to indicate that he/she would be taking leave and to inform players as to whom an email should be sent during the TD's leave.

The World Tournaments Director provided a schedule of tournaments which he had approved under his delegated powers since the last Congress and these were confirmed by Congress, as follows:

North Atlantic Team Tournament NATT-VI (FRA)

Webserver, Team tournament, 10/11 teams, 8-10 boards, Teams: FRA, ESP (2), POR, ENG, SCO, IRL, NOR, CAN, USA, ISL Start date: June 2008, Not an invitational tournament (The Federations nominated the teams), No prize fund, TO: Eric Ruch (FRA).

France - Afrique Team Tournament (FRA)

Tournament to be played on the server (10/50, no conditionals, games to be seen by player and public with 3 move delays) Start date: 7 May 2008 Teams of 4 players. Entries limited to French players with ICCF ELO < 2100 Entries for African players with no ELO limit. Single round if 13 teams or less. Sections if more than 13 teams. No prizes TD : Ole Jacobsen Entries collected by AJEC for the French players and by the ZD Zone 4 for the African players

Nimzowitsch Match (NED)

Organisation: NBC Organiser: Nol van 't Riet (NED) Sponsor: Jan van Reek (NED) Players: Gert Timmerman (NED) Mikhail Umansky (RUS) Official start date: 10 July 2008 Prize money: 1st place 3000 € 2nd place 2000 € ICCF Webserver Playing Rules: 10 moves in 60 days Live coverage: no delay Tournament Director: Nol van 't Riet (NED)

Game 1. 1.e3 e5

Game 2. 1.Nf3 d5 2.b3

Game 3. 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4

Game 4. 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5

Game 5. 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 d6

Game 6. 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 b6

Ghana Jubilee Tournament (GHA)

Webserver, Invitational event for chess players from Ghana and neighbouring countries. Players: Minimum 9 players, no maximum. Maximum 12 games for each player. Preliminary Groups if more than 13 players. Prizes: Certificates to all participants. Conditions: Simple Round Robin, 10/50, Rated Entry fee: No entry fee. Mentor: Dr. Ole Jacobsen TD: Iain Smuts (RSA) Starting date: 6 March 2008

Jules Sachetti Memoria (ROM)

Webserver, 13-15 players, Category I-III. Start date: May-June 2008, Invitational tournament.

Memorial David Godoy 2008 (CHI)

Webserver, 19 Players (3 Chilean players, 16 non Chilean players), Category VII Start date: 15 May 2008, Prize Fund: 1st First Place 200 €; 2nd Place 150 € and 3rd place 100 €. Invitational tournament

Robertas Sutkus Memorial (LTU)

Webserver, 15 players, Cat. IX-XII, Start in December, 2008. Prizes to be announced before the start of event. Invitational tournament in memory of Robertas Sutkus (1953-2008), Lithuanian grandmaster of ICCF.

"1000 years to Lithuania" (LTU)

Webserver, 15 players, Cat. IX-XII, Start in January, 2009. Prizes to be announced before the start of event. Invitational tournament to mark the thousandth anniversary of Lithuania.

BdF "Diamant" 2008

ICCF-Server, 13 players (6 German and 7 non German players) Cat. XI (Ladies) Start date: 1st December 2008 Price fund 600,- € Ladies invitational tournament

BdF Smaragd 2008

BdF-Server, 13 players (6 German and 7 non German players) Cat. III or IV (Ladies) Start date 1st December 2008 Prize fund: 300,- € Ladies invitational tournament

BFCC Vs Schemingmind.com (ENG)

Webserver rated 20 players per team No Category Start date : 1st September 2008 TD : Andrew Dearnley A rated international team match between BFCC (ENG) and Schemingmind.com's non-English members to encourage play on ICCF webserver for existing players and 'new to ICCF' prospects from Schemingmind

Vladimir Simagin Memorial (RUS)

Webserver 15-17 players Cat. XI+ Start date: January - February 2009 (Vladimir Simagin (1919-1968) - grandmaster FIDE, USSR correspondence chess champion) Invitational tournament.

"RCCA-Gold" (RUS)

Webserver 15-17 players Cat. X- XII Start date: January - February 2009 Invitational tournament.

"RCCA-Silver" (RUS)

Webserver, 15-17 players Cat. VII-IX Start date: January - February 2009 Invitational tournament.

"RCCA-Bronze" (RUS)

Webserver 15-17 players Cat. IV-VI Start date: January - February 2009 Invitational tournament

The Finance Director reminded all National Federation of the need to inform the WTD before the start of a Tournament so that the proper fee could be applied. Congress approved that the webserver be upgraded so tournaments set up on the server must have been approved by the TO or WTD, before they could be started.

Observations about management of foreign players in national tournaments was noted for ongoing consideration.

Congress approved that a free webserver tournament (up to 105 games) should again be given to all National Federations in 2009.

Congress expressed its thanks to Frank Geider (FRA), his Commissioners, Officials, TOs and TDs.

18 Postal Tournament Office

The Report of the Postal Tournament Office Commissioner, Gian-Maria Tani (ITA) indicated that, although there had been some decrease (approx 10-15%) in postal entries, there was still significant interest and participation in these events. Postal play continued to be popular in Germany, USA and Italy and several other countries. Mr. Tani expressed his thanks to the Postal TDs for their excellent work.

19. Other Tournaments

Money Prize Tournaments

Michael Millstone reported to Congress that the Money Prize Tournaments decided during 2007 Congress had been very successful. It was reported that some players could not receive their prizes and Congress asked the Direct Entry Commissioner and the Finance Director to find solutions so that players could always receive their prizes. It was also reported that some players had expressed an interest in playing for higher stakes.

Thematic Tournaments:

Leonardo Madonia (ITA), responsible of the Thematic Tournament Office, reported the success of the webserver thematic tournaments. Congress approved the start of 7 sections of Thematic Tournaments to be played on the webserver and 7 sections to be played by post.

Congress expressed its thanks to Leonardo Madonia (ITA) and all TDs working in the Thematic Tournament Office.

Interzonal 2008

In the past, Zone 4 had organised Interzonal Team Tournaments but in the absence of the Zone 4 report and having no plan for the organization of the IZT2008, Congress asked that the ICCF President should arrange the start of this tournament. Dinand Knol (RSA) volunteered to organise the IZT 2008, but would await Executive Board approval.

Veterans World Cup

Congress approved a proposal to start a new Veterans World Cup every year, beginning in 2009. This event should be organised in three stages providing that the number of entries was sufficient. The Veterans World Cup should be organised by the NTTC Office and help would be offered to Valer Eugen Demian (CAN) for organising of this event.

Champions League

In 2007, Congress appointed a working group to propose new arrangements for the league in the future. Congress reviewed and approved the following proposals

A) Promotions/ relegations:

Keep the structure of 4 divisions (A, B, C and D) plus Fast Track

Division A to be extended at the beginning of the next cycle to 13 teams (from 11); bottom 6 teams would be relegated at the end of season 3 and top 2 teams from each of the 4 division B groups promoted (5 + 8 =13)

Division B should continue to have 4 groups: top 2 promote (8 teams), bottom 5 relegated (20 teams)

Division C should continue to have 8 groups: top 2 promote (16 teams), bottom 4 relegated (32 teams)

Division D should have as many teams as necessary: top 2 promote

Fast Track should have as many teams and groups as necessary; the only rule would be that each team could play only 1 season (of their choice) using this option. The promotion/ assignment system to be worked out around the other 4 divisions.

B) Provisional ratings:

These ratings had been adjusted by the Ratings Commissioner at the beginning of season 3, so they could remain the same

C) Viewing rules:

The public to be able to see completed games only and when at least 10 games have been finished in the event. Team captains and team-mates to be able to see the games live after 0 games have been finished in the event.

D) Players to play in only one team:

E) Registration: by Direct Entry only.

Regulations about reflection time, conditionals and vacation times were discussed under Rules matters.

Congress expressed its recommendation that the new season should be started as soon as possible. It was also considered that the promotion/relegation plans should be issued before play begins in a new cycle and that the planned structure for the subsequent cycle should also be published. It was observed that to maintain maximum player interest and regular flow of income, it would be ideal for new cycles of CL to be started at two-yearly intervals.

Schools Tournaments

Andrew Dearnley (ENG) reported about the success of the prototype Schools Tournaments. The first cycle of these tournaments should be completed by Summer 2009. Congress asked Andrew Dearnley to prepare a questionnaire to send to all participating teams to obtain feedback. Conclusions should be presented to next year's Congress.

Rapid and Blitz Tournaments

Congress approved the organisation of Rapid (10/20) and Blitz (10/10) correspondence chess tournaments. Entries to be available via the Direct Entry system only. These tournaments initially would be unrated, with their success to be evaluated by the next Congress for ongoing decision, including any appropriate rating arrangements.

20. Africa/Asia Zone

Congress noted with disappointment that no report had been received from the Zonal Director of Africa / Asia Zone Michael Millstone (USA) indicated he had received a message from Dr. Ole Jacobsen (GHA), Zonal Director and he asked to read it to Congress. The message expressed disappointment at perceived lack of ICCF support for Zone 4. Congress expressed its concern that it only dealt with activities of a small part of the Zone and that nothing was said about activities for Asia. Prior to the Congress, Dinand Knol (RSA) had intimated his resignation as Deputy Zonal Director, due to personal and professional reasons.

21. Europe Zone

Zonal Director, Gian-Maria Tani (ITA) presented his report and thanked all of his helpers, TO Commissioners and Tournament Directors. He announced that Germany had won the 6th European Team Championship and that Lithuania was the runner-up. Czech Republic and Israel were still fighting for third place.

The Final of the 7th European Team Championship would start at the end of 2008 and the Preliminaries of the 8th European Team Championship would start in February/March 2009.

The Semi-finals of the next European Individual Championship were scheduled to start in May 2009

The Harry Otte Memorial for national teams with lower ratings had been very popular, with 29 countries participating and was a great success. 9 qualifier teams were already known.

A similar postal tournament (4 boards, 3 players with ELO < 2000 and 1 player with ELO < 2100) open to all European national federations would be organised and dedicated to the memory of **Gerhard Radosztics (AUT)** who, for a long time, was TO of the European Class III tournaments.

22. Latin America Zone

Nol van 't Riet (NED) presented the report of Carlos Cranbourne (ARG), Zonal Director of CADAP, which included a comprehensive list of the tournaments started since last year's Congress.

23. North America / Pacific Zone

The Zonal Director, Corky Schakel (USA) presented the activities in the NAPZ

24. Other General Secretary proposals

Anti Drug Convention

Congress agreed that ICCF, as an affiliated international organisation, should be covered through FIDE to WADA

Other Membership Matters

Congress regretted there was nothing to report on work done towards attracting new Member Federations to ICCF

25. ICCF Rules

The ICCF Rules Commissioner, Per Söderberg (SWE), introduced the work done by the Rules Commissions.

Playing Rules

He reported that no agreement could be found in the Playing Rules Commission members about rules for nodes (see item 15 of these Minutes).

The Rules Commissioner reported that no agreement could be found on the unnecessarily prolonging of games. Congress agreed that, after a player had been considering a move for a specified long period of time, the reflection time should begin to be doubled. The specified period of time was agreed as 20 days for webserver play and 12 days for postal play (as had applied hitherto) ie 2/5ths of the respective standard rates of play. This rule should be effective for tournaments which start after 01/01/2009 or as soon as the webserver system could be reprogrammed.

It was agreed to move the paragraph about the limitation of reflection time for the rating of events (as decided by the 2007 Congress) from § 6 of Playing Rules to § 7.2 of Tournament Rules.

Congress approved the following wording of webserver rule 2c):

“Players are responsible for monitoring the progress and time utilisation for all of their games on the Webserver”

Congress discussed the possibility to cancel the first ETL in postal tournaments, but this was not carried.

Tournament Rules

The ICCF Rules Commissioner, Per Söderberg (SWE) expressed his sadness that the chairman Witold Bieleicki had passed away. Witold would be missed very much by everyone who had the pleasure and opportunity to know him.

The ICCF President had asked the ICCF Rules Commissioner to deputise for Witold until a new Tournament Rules Commissioner could be appointed. Tim Harding (IRL), had intimated that he wished to retire from the Commission and he was thanked for his contributions and help in the work of the Commission over many years.

Congress approved the following change in Tournament Rule section 6 (withdrawal and substitutions):-
“However, in team events such changes do count against the number of changes per team which are allowed in 8d of the playing rules concerning teams”

Congress approved the deletion of section 1.1.2(b), ie
“those players who achieve 1st place in a 7 player Master Class group, or 2nd place in a 15-player Master Class group (old Master Class tournaments)” since there were no more 15 player Master class sections.

Congress also decided that in Team Tournaments the Team Captain should be able to see the games of his/her team members with no move delay. This had been included in section 8.6 of the Tournament Rules.
A proposal to set minimum ratings for participation in World CC Semifinals and Candidates was not approved as it was considered that a player qualifying by promotion from a lower stage in the WCCC, should not be so restricted.

The Rules Commissioner proposed that Duncan Chambers (ENG) be approached to become Chairman of the Tournament Rules Commission

The Rules Commissioner sincerely thanked all members of the Playing Rules and Tournament Rules Commissions.

26. Other Rules Matters, including Arbiter Committee, Appeals and Arbitration Committees

Reports from the Arbiters Committee, the two Appeals Committees and the Arbitration Committee had been received and the Chairmen and their Committees were thanked for their valuable work

27. External matters

A few days prior to Congress, the ICCF President had received an offer to display live the forthcoming OTB World Championship on “iccf.com”. Congress expressed the view that it would not have any added value for ICCF since their live display would be available on many other websites.

Alan Borwell (SCO), as ICCF liaison officer to FIDE, hoped to attend the FIDE Congress in Dresden in November. If he was able to attend, he would make contact with FIDE Delegates, especially those of countries which were not ICCF members. It would be helpful if an attractive ICCF information pamphlet could be prepared for distribution.

28. Internal Matters

The ICCF President's report included a proposal to increase the Congress allowances. Congress agreed that the allowances should be increased from 1/1/2009, to CHF 1500 (outside zone) CHF 1200 (within same zone) and CHF 800 (within own country) The existing conditions regarding eligibility for the allowances, would remain unchanged.

For the period 1/12-2007 – 30/11-2008 it had been agreed that Zones 2 and 4 could play their zonal tournaments on the webserver at no cost. In order to support correspondence chess development in Africa and Asia, the Congress decided to renew the concession for free tournaments for Zone 4 in period 1/12-2008 – 30/11-2009, but considered that Zone 2 should pay fees as in the other two ICCF zones.

Congress decided to form a small working group comprised of the FD, WTD and SD – to create clearer definitions of the different ICCF tournaments.

There was discussion about the memberships of ICCF Commissions and Committees (as updated in **Appendix A**)

29. Future meetings

The ICCF Delegate for England, Andrew Dearnley, addressed the Congress and confirmed his federation's offer to host the next Congress in Leeds from 12th – 18th September 2009. Mr. Dearnley showed an informative video of Leeds and Congress accepted the BFCC offer, with acclamation. The ICCF Honorary President thanked Mr. Dearnley and said that ICCF looked forward very much to the 2009 ICCF Congress in his country.

Tunc Hamarat (AUT), proxy holder for Turkey, indicated Turkey was a possible candidate for the 2010 Congress.

ICCF Honorary President indicated to all delegates that any Federation interested in hosting the Congress in 2010 and subsequent years should inform the ICCF President as soon as possible. He reported that if no Federation was willing to host any future Congress, ICCF would have to organise it on its own, but this would be "as a last resort".

No information had been received from Finland about the possible organisation of Congress in their country in 2011.

30. Congress Minutes

Daily reports had been kindly provided for the ICCF website by Neil Limbert, Andrew Dearnley and Raymond Boger.

It was intimated that it was hoped to be able to distribute a first draft of the Congress Minutes at the closing banquet but this would depend upon the work being completed before then. In any event, draft Minutes would not be ready for wider publication until a short time after the Congress. Any suggested corrections or additions to the text of the first draft should be forwarded to the ICCF Honorary President, within a few days after the end of the Congress.

In closing the ICCF Congress 2008, on behalf of the ICCF President, the ICCF Honorary President thanked the host federation BCCF for arranging a superb Congress and programme of excursions and events. In particular he thanked its President, Mr. Petyo Marinov, the BCCF Delegate, Prof. Georgi Sapundjiev, and Ms Anna Evstatieva for her great assistance throughout the Congress and also the local authority in Pleven for its support and sponsorship.

In declaring the 2008 Congress closed, the ICCF Honorary President hoped that all would meet again in England.

Alan P. Borwell
Congress Chairman

Nol van 't Riet
Congress Deputy Chairman

Eric Ruch
Congress Secretary

ICCF Commissions/Committees

Tournaments Commission

Frank Geider (FRA), (Chairman), Roald Berthelsen (NOR), Gerhard Binder (GER), Tunc Hamarat (AUT), Leonardo Madonia (ITA), George Pyrich (SCO), Gian-Maria Tani (ITA), A. Alpert (RUS)

Tournament Rules Commission

Vacancy (Chairman), Dario Biella-Bianchi (PER), Gerhard Binder (GER), Leo Lahdenmäki (FIN), Carlos Cranbourne (ARG), Sergey Grodzensky (RUS), Leonardo Madonia (ITA), Ralph Marconi (CAN), Josep Mercadal Benejam (ESP), George Pyrich (SCO), Eric Ruch (FRA), Per Söderberg (SWE),

Playing Rules Commission

Per Söderberg (SWE), (Chairman), Tunc Hamarat (AUT), Leo Lahdenmäki (FIN), Ralph Marconi (CAN), Josep Mercadal Benejam (ESP), Kristo Miettinen (USA), Nikolay Poleshchuk (RUS), George Pyrich (SCO), Kenneth Reinhart (USA), Wim van Vugt (NED), Ragnar Wikman (FIN)

Rating Rules Commission

Gerhard Binder (GER), (Chairman), George Pyrich (SCO), Nol van 't Riet (NED), Jo Wharrier (ENG), Ragnar Wikman (FIN), Valery Myakutin (RUS)

Note: The ICCF President and the General Secretary are *ex-officio* members of the above Commissions

President's Council (PC)

Mohammed Samraoui (GER) (Chairman), Alan P. Borwell (SCO), Josef Mrkvicka (CZE), Roald Berthelsen (NOR), Ragnar Wikman (FIN), George Pyrich (SCO)

Finance Committee (FC)

Mohammed Samraoui (GER) (Chairman), Alan P. Borwell (SCO), Carlos Flores Gutiérrez (ESP), Michael Millstone (USA), Josef Mrkvicka (CZE), Søren Peschardt (DEN), George Pyrich (SCO)

Marketing Committee

Eric Ruch (FRA) (Chairman), Michael Blake (ENG), Luz Marina Tinjaca' Ramirez (ITA), Tunc Hamarat (AUT), Hirokaz Onoda (JAP), Michele Rinesi (ITA), Pierre Ruiz Vidal (FRA), Wes Green (USA), Laurent Tinture (FRA), Holger Blauhut (GER), Ole Jacobsen (BUR)

Arbiters Committee (ACO)

Dmitry Lybin (BLS) (Chairman), Alan P. Borwell (SCO), Frank Geider (FRA), George Pyrich (SCO), Per Söderberg (SWE)

Historical Research Committee (HRC)

Ivan Bottlík (Chairman), Carlo Alberto Pagni (ITA), Tim Harding (IRL), Eric Ruch (FRA)

Websaver Development Steering Committee (WDSC)

Gino Figlio (Chairman), Gerhard Binder (GER), Franklin Campbell (USA), Ambar Chatterjee (IND), Frank Geider (FRA), Ron Langeveld (NED)

Appeals Committee (Playing Rules)

Ragnar Wikman (FIN) (Chairman), Leo Lahdenmäki (FIN) (Secretary), José Amorim Neto (BRA), Ian Brooks (ENG), Marco Caressa (ITA), Carlos Flores Gutiérrez (ESP), Cecilio Hernández Fernández (ESP), Ralph Marconi (CAN), Gustavo Paz y Barriga (PER), Wes Underwood (USA)

Appeals Committee (Other ICCF Rules)

Alan Rawlings (ENG), (Chairman), Dr. Ambar Chatterjee (IND), Artis Gaujens (LAT), John C. Knudsen (USA), Pablo Salcedo Mederos (CUB)

Arbitration Committee

Richard V.M. Hall (ENG) (Chairman), Nol van 't Riet (NED), Alan P. Borwell (SCO), Ragnar Wikman (FIN), George Walker (SUI)