

Home Director's Report 2025

The 2024-25 season saw the usual WCU events taking place.

The Premier League along with the Under 1850 League took place in Bridgend. It is now noticeable that the event has become held in a venue with all matches taking place at the same place at the same time compared to the old format of matches being played in various locations. 2024-5 was blighted with more defaults than in previous seasons, both individual boards and indeed matches. The rules for 2025-6 have been updated to take this into account by giving flexibility to bring in reserve players. Other rules have also been updated for 2025-6.

For future seasons we are looking into a way of avoiding byes by having an even number of teams. This is not as simple as it seems.

Another possibility for future seasons is to use the Saturday of some WCPL weekends to organise a new Junior team event. This will be similar to the Junior 4 NCL with a reduced time control and more rounds on a single day (possibly 3) to make it more attractive to younger players. It may also be more restricted to "beginners". We hope to be able to give this idea a trial run at the end of this season.

The 2025 Welsh Championship was once again held in Cardiff and, for the first time, we were able to broadcast all game in both sections live. This is definitely the way to go for the future for the WCU's most prestigious event.

This leads me to one query which does keep recurring. As you will know we are using two hotels, one in Cardiff and one in Bridgend for a lot of weekends. We have a very good relationship with the conference team at each hotel and this is so helpful when it comes to organising the events. The staff at the hotels know us and, more importantly, know what is required. They also, where possible, offer flexibility on the number of rooms booked allowing us, on occasions, to cancel rooms if numbers are low. This is something that is not on offer for many hotels and the helpfulness of the staff at each venue is greatly valued and appreciated.

Also, hotels come with refreshments available from bars etc. This facility would probably not be available if we booked a school or community centre.

The cost of venues is another factor, with prices of some places sky-rocketing over the last few years which have taken them way outside our budget.

Finally for this section, it must be remembered the work that goes into setting up events. It is not just a matter of turning up on the event or hoping all goes OK. A lot of preparation takes place in the lead up and indeed through the event and after it has finished. Just to give those present an idea of what is involved.

The booking of the venue and making sure it is suitable.

Budgeting the event

Creating the entry form (with now most online)

Booking arbiters

Swiss Manager is used to run the event and link with Chess-Results and these files have to be set up.

Getting the equipment to the venue

conAfter the event
Taking equipment away to be stored
Paying prize money
Submitting files to be rated.

So you will see, a large amount of work goes into each event.

Speaking of arbiters we congratulate both Hannah Richmond and Niathan Trickey on achieving their FIDE Arbiter titles. It is a pleasure to have these two at this level and I know that they are a valuable asset to the WCU. We hope they will be active for many years to come.

I would like to thank out sponsors and supporters who have helped financially in 2024-25 with events, especially Mostyn Estates, Tulway Engineering Ltd and Nord Anglia Schools. Their support has been greatly appreciated.

Finally, I would like to thanks Nathan Trickey for acting as Deputy Home Director and also extend my thanks to all those who help in so many ways to ensure the events take place and are successful.

Kevin Staveley
November 2025