

# Welsh Chess Union

Annual General Meeting Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> 2025

## Executive Director's Report

### Events Organised and Supported

This year has been another busy time for the organisers. We have organised around 20 events and supported a number of independent events too, a remarkable achievement considering we only have a handful of active volunteers. These events would not have been possible without the help of our arbiter team, rating officer and the Home Director. The events include:

Welsh Autumn Congress  
London Junior Chess Championship Qualifier  
WCU Senior Chess Championships O50s and O65s  
WCU Under 50s Weekend Congress  
UK Blitz Qualifier  
Glorney, Gilbert, Robinson and Stokes Cup  
South Wales International Open  
UK Chess Challenge - Welsh Megafinal  
Welsh Blitz Championship  
Welsh All Play All  
Welsh Spring Congress  
Welsh Rapid play Championship  
Welsh Winter Congress  
WCPL and U1850 Leagues  
Welsh Junior Rapid play Championships  
Welsh Junior Championships (U 18, 16, 13, 11, 9)  
Welsh Junior Championship (U14, 12, 10, 8)  
Welsh Primary Schools Team and Individual Championship  
Welsh Secondary School's Team and Individual Rapid play Championships  
Welsh Championships

Other events. These are independent events that are FIDE rated through the WCU. The WCU also provides online entry forms and event details for most of these.

West Wales Congress  
Dyfed Congress  
Newport Congress  
Rhyl Congress  
Aberystwyth Rapid play  
Gwent Closed  
Dyfed Congress  
West Wales Congress  
Bridgend Blitz

We also gave support to the Glorney, Gilbert, Robinson and Stokes Cups, held at the Celtic Manor, Newport. Further support is given to local, non-WCU tournaments where we provide online entry forms and payment free of charge.

### Senior Chess

The Senior scene in Welsh Chess is continuing to flourish. This year's WCU Championships were very well attended. Congratulations to Tim Kett (O50s) and Peter Varley (O65s) for winning their sections. Congratulations especially to the Welsh O50s team who finished 4<sup>th</sup> at the European Seniors in Poland this year. They were narrowly edged out in the bronze medal play-offs by a strong English team. Participation in World and European team championships is now a regular event. We are looking to send teams to the European Senior's in April in Albania.

### **Looking Ahead to 2026**

**Website Modernisation:** We have written a technical specification for the web-site redesign. Unfortunately, due to financial constraints, we have been unable to make as much progress as we would have liked. We have, though, developed tournament entry and league control applications. We have also migrated the junior rating system into the WCU domain. Thanks to all who were involved in that.

**Funding:** It's important for WCU to carry on achieving the targets as set out in our development plans, in order to qualify for FIDE funding. This has been an onerous task especially as some key roles remain vacant. We are currently involved in discussing some offers of sponsorship, involving not unsubstantial funding. We hope to make an announcement in the New Year.

**WCU Management Framework Review:** While our current management structure has brought us this far, the demands of modern chess administration and the growing expectations of our membership require us to evolve. Our current single-tier management board structure places an enormous burden on a handful of dedicated volunteers. Key decisions often bottleneck through the same few individuals who are already stretched thin managing day-to-day operations. Therefore, we are proposing a 2-tier structure, with an Executive Committee for strategic decisions and a broader Management Board for operational matters. A copy of the proposal will be posted on the WCU website. We will look to the next AGM for the proposal to be ratified by the membership.

**National Titles:** We are looking to re-introduce the County and National Master titles for Welsh players. Discussions are ongoing regarding implementation.

**Local Initiatives.** It's great to see that many clubs are thriving. Some have applied for and have received Lottery funding to support their projects. Another initiative is the onboarding of chess as an eSport. This is entirely due to Jonathan Blackburn who has been setting up a chess league with eSports Wales. Well done to all. The WCU offers support wherever it can be given.

### **Closing Remarks**

Lastly, I would like to express appreciation to the dedicated volunteers, officials, and sponsors who have supported the Welsh Chess Union over the last year. Their unwavering commitment, passion, and contributions have been instrumental in the successful execution of our events. We also extend our gratitude to our members for their continued support and enthusiasm for the game. Special thanks goes to Ian Eustice, who, this year, retired from his role as one of the main organisers on the Glorney board. A role which has held for many years.

Mark Adams, Executive Director

23<sup>rd</sup> Nov 2025

## International Director's Report

As 2025 is a non-Olympiad year, international chess has been concentrated on the European Senior Team Championship in Poland. Wales Silures represented the WCU and finished in fourth place.

In the 2025 European Club Cup in Rhodes, Greece, the WCU had four teams, The Full Ponty, Morriston and two Cardiff teams.

Matteo Favoni (Morriston), Mark Adams and John Fletcher (The Full Ponty) were all awarded Candidate Master titles.

Peter Bevan 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov 25

## WCU Webmaster's Report

Wordpress has recently introduced block editing which initially caused some practical difficulties but this has now been overcome.

The WCU Website continues to have a minimum 1,071 and a maximum 2,905 visitors every day.

Financially, the website cost £436.73 to run during 2024-25.

Peter Bevan 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov 25

## National Ratings Officer Report

I'd like to take the opportunity to thank a number of colleagues who moved on from their rating activities in the last year.

The rating team would like to thank very much Paul Orton for his exemplary contribution to Welsh chess ratings over a number of years. He was not only National Rating Officer but also acted to keep the ratings going by manually inputting the vast results from many zones in Wales. We wish him well.

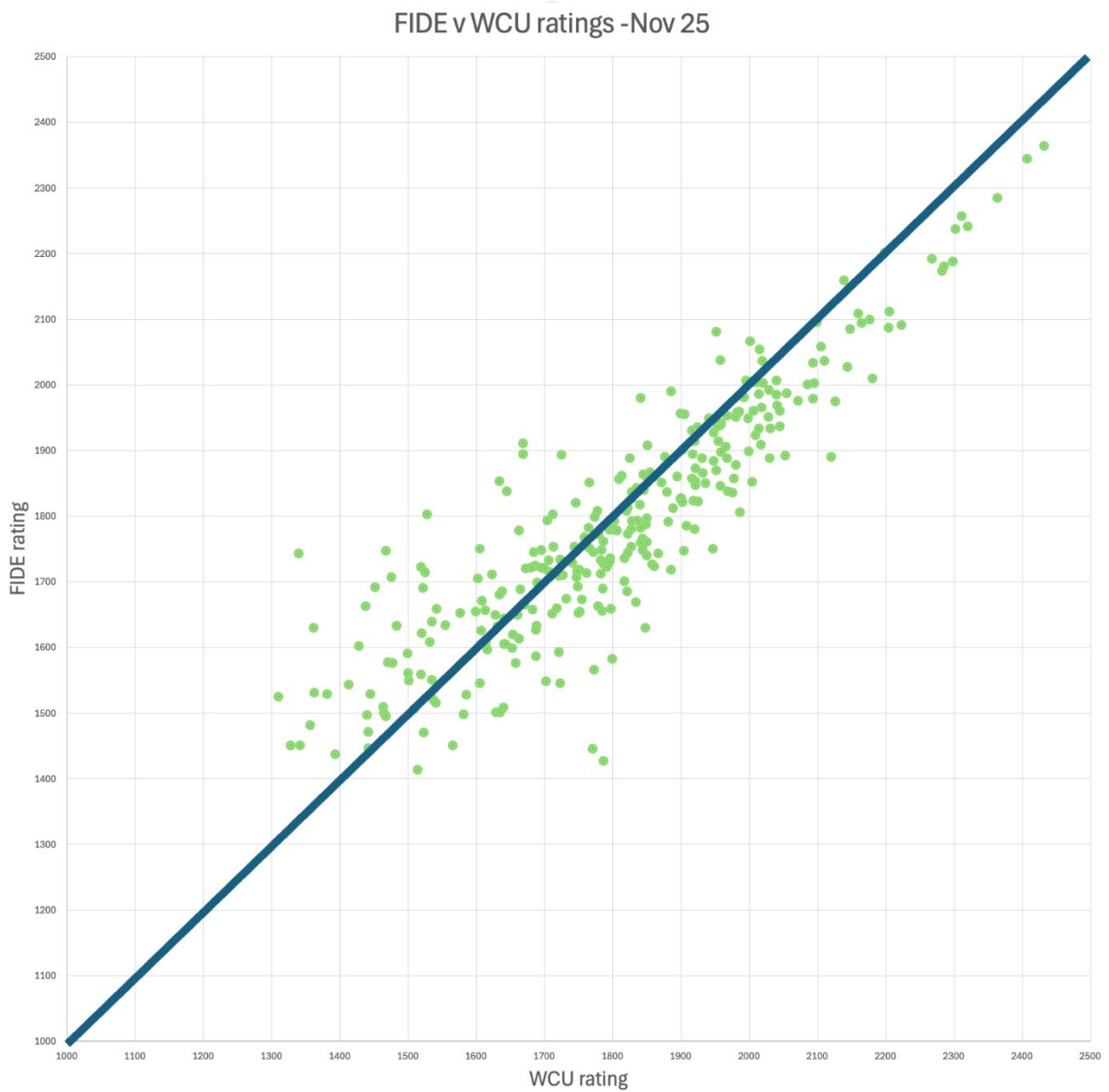
In addition, we would like to thank John Thornton who recently stood down as Junior Rapid Rating Officer. He has been involved in Welsh Chess for many decades and his contribution will have not gone unnoticed. Thanks from us all. Sergei Popov has taken over the responsibility of Junior Rapid Rating Officer and is doing a great job - Thank you. Can I thank Pete Heaven too for considerable help with expats' results and his experience relating to ratings.

I had the task of overseeing 3 zones for manual rating; East Glamorgan, Gwent and Dyfed. Recently, Kevin Heady has taken on the task of rating Dyfed and been brought up to speed with the processing - Thank you. We have Liam Powell-Jones who will in principle take on Gwent and free me up to do the ratings for East Glamorgan which is the most demanding.

There is mention of moving to quarterly period rating updates and this is something which may proceed in the coming year. However, we need to discuss the pros and cons of this in a special meeting.

Also, we have made calculations of how many points per game we gain or lose to people from England and we find that we are losing a small amount per game. Therefore, we expect to continue with the uplifted ENG->WLS rating conversion currently employed.

Below is a current comparison between FIDE and WLS rating carried out this week showing that we are reasonably well aligned and in accordance with previous distributions.



Dave Norris. NRO 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov 25