International Director’s Report

Since I was appointed to this role at the last AGM my focus has been to arrange for the Welsh team to register for the 2016 Olympiad in Baku. This involved registering the players, booking their accommodation, arranging visas for both players and accompanying persons and coordinating the flights to be met by the organiser’s transport at Azerbaijan airport.

Following the Selection Committee Meeting last April, I and quickly registered the party arranged for their passport photos to be verified for visa issue by the Azerbaijani government.

I did encounter problems with several photos early on as they were not on the correct colour background. After contacting the party members concerned, I received amended photos which I was assured would be acceptable by the organisers. It appears that Wales got off very lightly here as the English especially left their photos to the las minute and some of their players had to go looking for photo booths in foreign countries as they were playing abroad prior to the Olympiad.

The visas duly arrived about a week before the Olympiad started but both Olivia’s and Syringa Camp’s visas had spelling mistakes. I urgently contacted the Olympiad organisers who stated that there was insufficient time to change these but that there would be no problems and indeed there were none.

Problems arose regarding accommodation for Richard Jones and Carl Strugnell. Richard paid an extra night’s accommodation through the Treasurer due to his flight leaving a day late. But as he was sharing for the rest of the time the hotel objected to him having a single room for the extra night. As it turned out they let him stay in the twin room on his own fir the extra night without charge. Carl paid for one night too few to save money and originally intended to sleep around in the hotel lounge for the last night as his return flight left early in the following morning. However, he failed to check out so the WCU was billed for the extra night and the Treasurer has now come to an arrangement with Carl to cover this cost.

One final issue arose with the Olympiad surrounding the Team Captains. FIDE now require that all Team Captains must be qualified and certified as Trainers to take part in the Olympiad in that capacity. The WCU took the approach that as there were several levels of qualification on offer both Marian Petrov and Lawrence Cooper should be qualified as the cheapest qualification on offer (Developmental Instructor) and this was done.

I should point out that this requirement to qualify as a Team Captain needs to be considered when appointing a Team Captain to a FIDE event whether it be a Senior or Junior event.

Lastly, I would like to thank all those involved in making my task as easy as possible.