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|  | Welsh Chess Union |
| Selection Policy Proposal  Defining the Selection Committee Roles and Responsibilities  Appeals Process. |

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| Author | Version | Date |
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# Introduction

In 2003 a survey went out to gauge the opinion of WCU members as to what they thought a selection policy should look like. This was due to a series of, shall we say, passionate discussions regarding selection ‘behind closed doors’. The results would form the basis of a selection policy that would be presented at AGM the following year (2004). The survey was open for 12 months and received moderate feedback in terms of numbers, but covered a range of views and ideas, many of which were incorporated in the recommendation. See Appendix 1 for a summary of the views. A study of other Federation’s Selection Policies were also considered.

# Motivation

One of the criticisms of the current type of selection policy is that decisions are made behind closed doors and are not subject to scrutiny or appeal. There is also little visibility on where a player stands in the selection process throughout the time leading up to a selection committee (SC) meeting for a particular event. It needs to be emphasised that there is no justifiable criticism that selectors are not doing their best to select what they perceive as to being the best team or individual for a particular event. Indeed, it is management board policy to give the SC the right to select whomever they wish, without recourse to question.

The current (as of Sept 2018) litigation regarding Olympiad team selection, highlights the nature of the problems that can occur with this kind of methodology. Therefore, the time is right for a review of selection policy. Indeed, the WCU also has an obligation to do so after a recommendation from the FIDE Ethics Commission to review our processes. Much of the feedback at the time gave support not only to transparency of selection, but also wanted selection policy to include participation in qualifying events, not just the Welsh Championships. This would tie in with the WCU development plan to encourage the main Olympiad candidates to participate in WCU events and also to give transparency to those players around the periphery of selection, to know what they need to do to secure a place in the squad. It is proposed that these two factors should form the basis of a new selection policy.

# How to Select

There are two types of thinking when it comes to selection decisions that of objective verses subjective selection criteria.

An example of objective selection criteria would be: Players who finish first and second in the Welsh Championships will be automatically selected for the Olympiad. Or the player with the highest FIDE rating will automatically be selected for the Olympiad.

An example of subjective selection criteria would be: The selectors will choose a team that in their opinion will, for example, stand the best chance of finishing above their seeding. Within this another consideration is how a player contributes to the team during the event. A weaker player may be considered first if a stronger player doesn’t, or is unlikely to, get on with, or contribute to the rest of the team.

This proposal doesn’t consider subjective verses objective thinking per se, but attempts to combine both aspects with the idea to be transparent and as fair as possible to all.

# Selection Policy Outline

The focus of this proposal are that of

1. Fairness and Transparency
2. Welsh Chess Development

## Fairness and Transparency

It has long been established that players are more likely to be unaware if they are in line for an Olympiad place until an invitation arrives. Some may have a good idea if they are in line because of rating or Championship placing, but most will not know for sure, especially those in contention for the lower boards and reserve places. The proposal will centre around the publication of an Invitational Rating List (IRL), based on criteria that will be set out below, gleaned from research and WCU member comments from the original survey. It will be a weighted calculation based on current and recent historical grades, both FIDE and WCU, with a bias towards current ratings. Participation in WCU events are also included in the calculations. This list will be published online, so that players can see where they stand it terms of automatic selection. The USCF use a similar system, but their system is almost fully automated.

A fair selection process is paramount. Transparency will help this motif. However, it is important to allow some flexibility in choosing the squad and not to leave it all down to a mathematical process. Therefore it is proposed that there should be the option of a wildcard place, to be decided by SC. This is an option, and not mandatory, but will allow some flexibility in selection where, for example, a player has not made the squad because of a genuine reason, but would normally be selected.

Board order will be decided by the team captain.

## Welsh Chess Union Development

The proposal, outlined above, encourages players to enter qualifying events. This can map into a development plan designed to encourage participation in such events.

# WCU Selection Policy Proposal

The following is the proposed method for selection for Olympiad Teams. It incorporates qualification through performance, ratings and qualifying event attendance. There are 4 players per team, plus a playing reserve.

## Welsh Champions

The winners of the Welsh Championships, both Open and Women’s events, will get an automatic place subject to a minimum rating (the SC to decide on this rating). This practice can be seen in many organisations and is generally thought to be the correct thing to do amongst the membership.

## Selection of other Boards.

Two places will decided by their invitational rating (IR), 3 if the Welsh Champion is too weak and therefore cannot be considered. The SC will offer places, in IR order from the final list. If a player declines the invitation, then the next player is asked, down to a defined minimum rating. The final place (not necessarily the reserve player) will be a wildcard selection determined by the SC. Players should be encouraged to give the SC their own thoughts on why they should be considered for a wildcard, e.g. recent results against strong players, GM/IM coaching report etc. If the players that have qualified on the IRL all decline their places, then the SC will treat all places as wildcards and select accordingly. This includes ignoring the minimum rating requirement.

The SC has the authority not to send a team or individual to an event if they are deemed too weak.

The SC will select team captains.

# Invitational Rating List

The IR will be calculated using a mathematical weighting that puts more emphasis on recent ratings. It will consider both the FIDE and national ratings, with a bias towards national ratings, which are deemed to be more reflective of a player’s current strength. An adjustment to the final rating will applied, the value of which depends on the player’s attendance at nominated events.

The calculation is based on ratings over the 18 months prior to the SC meeting that sits to finalise the squad.

Formula:

(0.5 x Current WCU Published Rating) + (0.25 x Current FIDE Rating) + [0.25 x (Highest Rating on the WCU live list + Highest Rating on FIDE list)/2]

There will be an adjustment to the IR based on attendance of nominated events. A value of 1 means that they have attended the event. This is calculated as follows:

i.e. the sum of all the weightings multiplied by the IR.

For example,

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| **Name** | **Ratings** | | | | **Tournament Weightings** | | | |  |
|  | Current National | Current FIDE | Peak National | Peak FIDE | Event A (Welsh) | Event B (SWI) | Event C (4NCL) | Event D (WCPL) | IR |
| C.Strugnell  (Welsh Champion) | 2327 | 2327 | 2337 | 2334 | 0.98 | 0.99 | 1.0 | 0.99 | 2306 |
| J.Blackburn | 2268 | 2202 | 2271 | 2205 | 0.98 | 0.99 | 1.0 | 0.99 | 2223 |

So using the formulae above for C.Strugnell;

(0.5x2327)+(0.25x2327)+[0.25((2337+2334)/2))] = 1163.5+581.75+583.875 = 2329.125

So, 2329.125 is the maximum IR the player could get, if he attended all the qualifying events.

Applying the attendance weightings gives:

(.98 + .99 + 1 + .99)/4= 0.99

So the final IR is:

0.99 x 2329.125= 2305.8

So in this case, because the player only played in 1 of the nominated events (i.e. in event C where the weighting = 1), his IR is lower than his other ratings. Note that there was a higher cost because he didn’t play in the Welsh. Also note that a lower weighting can have a severe impact on the final rating, e.g. if the penalty for not playing in the Welsh was adjusted to 0.95, then the IR would become 2288. This may be entirely acceptable if it is deemed that attendance at the WCU championships a high priority. The adjustment, therefore, can be weighted in terms of how an event is valued and can potentially have a big impact on the final IR.

Note that to be active on the IRL, the players has to meet eligibility criteria and have played at least 24 approved games of chess over the period covered in the IR calculations (18 months).

# Further Work

Throughout FIDE member organisations, there are many different methods used to select players for events. However, researching national federation policies where published, shows a common theme, that of transparency.

## Selection Committee Roles.

On the WCU web site, there is little information regarding the workings of the SC. It is mentioned in the constitution (Replicated in Appendix 1 for reference). It mentions the Director of Rating, which is ambiguous as the role, although it has a place on the MB, it is not a Director’s role (as stated on the MB Board page on the website. Needs clarification).

The actual roles of the SC chair and the delegates are not defined. It is suggested that the roles should be defined and published. A template for discussion is found in Appendix 3.

## Right of Appeal against the SC.

As mentioned, the WCU has agreed to a recommendation from FIDE, to discuss the right of appeal for players who believe they should be selected for a particular event. If it is decided that an appeals process is appropriate, a template can be found in Appendix 2.

# Appendix 1

Reference to the SC in the Constitution

C: Other Committees

a) Selection Committee

The selection of individuals or teams to represent the Union in international tournaments or matches, excluding events within the responsibility of the Junior Selection Committee, shall be decided by a committee comprising:

* the Chairman of Selectors,
* the International Director,
* an elected representative from each zone, and
* the Director of Rating.

# Appendix 2 Appeals Process

This is an appeals process template for discussion.

A player may appeal the decision of the SC, 7 days after it has been made and published.

The player should notify the SC chair of the intention to appeal, accompanied by a £100 appeal fee, to be refunded if the appeal is upheld, and any written evidence to support the appeal.

Appeals shall be on the basis that either:

* + The status of the player had changed, e.g. they have changed affiliation to Wales and the SC were not aware.
  + That the appellant believes their rating has been miscalculated (e.g. they know of events that weren’t considered). Evidence must be supplied.
  + That the appellant believes a selected player’s rating has been miscalculated (e.g. they know of events that weren’t considered). Evidence must be supplied.

Note: It is not sufficient to appeal on the basis that a player thinks that he/she *should* have been selected. The decision of the IRL calculations, have to be clearly incorrect.

If an appeal is made, all those that have been selected, and the Executive Director, will be notified that an appeal has been lodged.

If there has been an appeal lodged by someone against a selected player, then the player will be notified and the evidence presented for comment.

The composition of the selection appeals committee (zonal VP’s?) is to be decided by the MB. Thought should be given as to whether to include this in the constitution, or indeed whether appeal panel definitions should be placed under board policies rather than in the constitution.

The conclusions of the appeals committee, will be published on the WCU website.

# Appendix 3 Selection Committee Roles and Responsibilities Template

Olympiad Qualification Considerations and Selection.

1. Aims

The following are the aims of the WCU Selection Committee (SC) when considering squads for the Olympiads;

* For the team to finish above their seeded placings.
* For players to be ambassadors of Wales.
* For the team compositions to work harmoniously together.
* To give the possibility to players to obtain titles and/or improve their ratings.

1. Team Structure

The WCU will be represented by an open team and a women's team.

* 1. Open Team

The open team shall consist of five players and a non-playing captain.

* 1. Women's Team

The women's team shall consist of five players and a non-playing captain.

1. Financial Support

The WCU will make enquiries to FIDE to ascertain if funds are available to support the team members and officials. Team players are naturally entitled to seek funds individually. Anything raised by them will not affect any contribution to them from the WCU from funds received from either FIDE or from sponsorship or donation.

1. Selection Committee

The selection of individuals or teams to represent the Wales in international tournaments or matches, excluding events within the responsibility of the Junior Selection Committee, shall be decided by a SC comprising:

* Chairman of Selectors
* International Director
* An elected representative from each zone
* International Rating Officer and/or the National Rating Officer
* An individual nominated by the Chairman (see below)

Members of the Selection Panel should preferably be strong players with a good knowledge of the relative playing strengths of Welsh players.

* 1. Appointees

The chairman of selectors may make secondments to the SC as appropriate to support any deliberations regarding the selection of an individual or team.

1. Chairman of Selectors

The Chairman of Selectors is appointed by membership vote at the annual AGM.

His/her remit is as follows:

* To coordinate the SC meetings
* To ensure that the selection procedures, as defined, are followed.
* To provide advice to SC members on selection procedures.
* To provide adequate information on players under consideration to the SC and to
* To provide a report to the MB as to the decisions made.
* To inform the MB of any issues that arise from selection, including any procedural improvements that should be considered.
* To encourage players to provide details of why they think they should be selected as a wildcard, e.g. to notify the SC that they are receiving GM training.
* To decide on the parameters associated with the Selection Calculations;
  + Tournament participation weightings
  + Minimum rating requirements of the winners of the national championships so that they may be considered for the competition
* To discuss with the WCU Home and Development directors as to which tournaments should be included in the selection calculations.
* To decide on the voting process for any wildcard selection
* To decide whether or to send a team or individual if they are too weak to be competitive.

The Chairman of Selectors may appoint a member of the SC to deputise at a SC meeting if they are unable to attend.

The names of the selectors shall be made public, including any secondments on the WCU website.

1. Selection Criteria

See Selection Proposal above