

Second GSC Meeting

took place in Wijk aan Zee from January 25th to 27th 2019.

Report by Pavel Tregubov (with valuable contribution from Emil Sutovsky and Bassem Amin)

Present:

FIDE President Arkady Dvorkovich

GSC Chairman Emil Sutovsky

GSC Secretary Pavel Tregubov

GSC Councillors:

Bassem Amin

Ken Rogoff

Darmen Sadvakasov

Jeroen van den Berg

Adviser Ignatius Leong

Councillor Ali Mortazavi is absent with apologies.

Emil Sutovsky, on behalf of the entire commission, expresses his gratitude to Jeroen van den Berg for hosting the meeting in Wijk aan Zee in perfect conditions.

Summary

1. Concrete steps approaching corporate world and VIPs

Many ideas aired, mainly by Ken Rogoff. The key points are:

- The group discussed names of top executives of global companies that might be approached, although in the near term it will be important to identify potential sponsors who are comfortable with legacy commitments to earlier sponsors that remain even after renegotiating old FIDE contracts. Until these legacy commitments expire, this may be challenging. Over the longer term, the possibilities should be greatly expanded.
- Image of FIDE matters a lot. It was going down for many years and must be improved.
- Transparency and clearness in all major decisions, including bidding procedures and sponsorship agreements.
- There are a lot of wealthy people (especially in the US); the sponsors/partners may also be found among them, not only among big companies.
- The real market value of chess in general and of the World Championship Match are currently unknown and are to be determined.

2. World Championship Match Format

All members share the feeling that the current format should be modified.

Long discussion regarding the format. Polls among the chess professionals might be useful. The most considerable options are:

- a) Odd number of games (15). A player having more White games needs to win. If the final score is level, the player having more Blacks is declared the winner of the match.
- b) 14 games. If the score is level, one more standard game is played. White needs to win. In case of draw, the player having black wins the match.
- c) Rapid match is played before the standard 14 games. If the score of standard games is level, the winner of the rapid match is declared the World Champion.

One more aired idea: abolishing increments for the first 40 moves (using the old time limit of 120 min per 40 moves) to make it more attractive for the audience.

Decision*

The match should consist of at least 14 games.

The schedule should be more dynamic: 3 games + day off, followed by 2 games + day off, etc.

3. Bidding procedure for the World Championship Match

Long discussion, main points are:

- The clash of interests between the FIDE sponsors and the Organizers' sponsors is to be avoided
- The bidding procedure is to be transparent (hiring an audit company like PwC as outside supervisor is an option)
- Title Sponsorship – very complicated issue. Some additional income (for FIDE, the Organizer and players) might eventually be generated.

Decisions*

Minimum prize fund of 2 million euros is to be set.

Darmen Sadvakassov is in instruct of drafting the FIDE presentation of the World Championship Match

4. Qualification for the Candidates Tournament 2020

Long discussion regarding the two remaining spots.

Decision*

- a) 1 spot is to be given to the player having the highest average Rating from February 2019 to January 2020 FRL, providing that he played 30 standard games within this period, including 18 games from August to January FRL.

- b) 1 extra spot (3 spots altogether) is to be given to the World Cup (match for the 3rd place should take place)
If Carlsen or/and Caruana is/are among the three winners, the additional spot(s) go(es) to average Rating (see above).

5. Average Rating Range to determinate the qualifiers by Rating to the World Cup 2019

Emil Sutovsky proposes to take into consideration the range of FRL closer to the beginning of the event compare to the previous editions.

Decision*

FRL from August 2018 to July 2019 are taken for calculating the average Rating.

6. World Cup 2021 format

Arkady Dvorkovich proposes to make the World Cup as representative as possible. Many different formats have been considered.

Proposal for the new World Cup format.

Approx. 300,000 \$ additional budget is required.

Number of participants – 206.

I. 26 spots are distributed among the following categories:

- World Champion
 - Previous World Cup semi-finalists
 - Junior World Champion
 - Woman World Champion
 - Average rating
 - President's Wild Cards
 - Organizer's Wild Cards
- (to be specified).

II. 100 participants are decided according to the Final Ranking of the Olympiad 2020. The top 100 federations are to be represented by their national champions or highest rated players (to be specified).

Maximum 40 federations per Continent may get the "federation spot". If there are more than 40 from the same Continent, the "federation spot(s)" go(es) to the next federation(s) in the Final Ranking.

If the "federation spot" is given to a player qualified by average Rating, the additional spot goes to the average Rating.

III. 80 spots are distributed among the four Continents as follows:

- Each Continent is granted 3 spots – 12 spots;

- 8 spots are distributed according to the number of each Continental representatives in the Top 8 players according to the average Rating of twelve standard FIDE junior (under 20) RL from Feb 2020 to Jan 2021.
- 60 spots are distributed according to the number of each Continental representatives in the Top 60 according to the average Rating of twelve standard FIDE RL from Feb 2020 to Jan 2021.

Example of application of point III.

If the calculations are made according to the January 2019 FIDE RL and FIDE junior (under 20) RL, the distribution would be as follows:

Europe – 48 (3 + 3 + 42)
 Asia – 18 (3 + 3 + 12)
 America – 10 (3 + 2 + 5)
 Africa – 4 (3 + 0 + 1).

7. Wild Cards for the Team World Championship 2019

Decision*

Following Arkady Dvorkovich's proposal the wild cards in both sections are given to India (first reserve in both sections).

8. Data Project

GSC stipulates an importance of a massive Data Project, that will allow FIDE to have a clear concrete data that is essential for building up a proper work. The detailed breakdown of questions has been prepared for three categories: rated players, online players, people interested in chess. FIDE needs to learn a lot about people who are interested in chess. GSC feels that it would be very difficult to approach any serious commercial sponsor or to implement any substantial changes, without having a clear picture. The project will help literally every FIDE commission in their work.

9. Eventual introduction of shorter time controls

GSC acknowledges the growing popularity of the rapid time controls. Though, reducing time control in the existing events of the World Championship Cycle does not seem as a good idea at the moment. Over 170 answers came from the polls conducted in this regard at the end of 2018. Clear majority of Grandmasters prefer the existing time controls (the long one for the Candidates and the Match, and the faster for the World Cup and Grand Prix). It is important to measure general public's preference (see Data project). GSC keeps monitoring the situation.

10. Draw offer

Common opinion – the draw offer option should be restricted.

Decision*

Draw offer cannot be made:

- before Black's move 40 in the World Championship Match and the Candidates.
- before Black's move 30 in the World Cup and in the GP Series.

11. Dress-code for official events

The "classical" approach is preferred.

Decision*

Formal dress code is to be applied for the following events:

- World Championship Match;
- Candidates Tournament;
- World Cup
- GP Series.

Business casual code is applied for the Grand Swiss.

12. Asian boom - new countries and ways to expand

Asia is experiencing the real chess boom now. And not only in India, e.i. South Korea. The ways to use this potential are to be found (eventually finding organizers for World Cup 2023, Olympiad 2024).

13. World Rapid & blitz 2019 format

The discussion unfolds around the following aspects:

- Optimal Rating Bar
- Possible integration of the KO format.
- Number of rounds
- Distribution of prizes

14. Proposal for the team Swiss pairings system

Based on numerous complains related to the current pairing system, GSC recommends PB to instruct the Systems of Pairings and Programs (SPP) revising the current pairing and tie-break system for the Olympiad.

15. Proposal for the individual Swiss pairings system

Pavel Tregubov expresses his concern regarding the pairing system currently used in individual Swiss Tournaments, as it does not ensure equal chances for all the participants:

statistically, players with lower ratings encounter much stronger opponents in order to reach the top of standings compared with higher rated competitors.

GSC recommends PB to instruct the Systems of Pairings and Programs (SPP) with finding the fairer pairing system (Dubov's Pairing System is to be tested).

16. Proposal for the individual Swiss tie-break system

Common opinion is that the number of wins and personal encounters are not good tiebreak criteria for the Swiss tournaments being part of the World Championship Cycle

Decision*

The Swiss tournaments being part of the World Championship Cycle should use the following criteria in order of priority:

- Average rating of all opponents (maximum difference of 400 rating points to be applied) rounded up to the nearest whole number;
- Median Buchholz;
- Buchholz;
- drawing of lots.

17. Taking into consideration "extra Black game" for tie-break system in Swiss tournaments

Pavel Tregubov proposes to introduce the "extra Black game" adjustment – a number between 10 and 15 (to be specified) added to the Rating Performance (when the latest is used as a tie-break criterium) for players having played more games with Black in a Swiss tournament.

GSC recommends PB to instruct the Systems of Pairings and Programs (SPP) introducing this rule.

18. GM title attribution based on the result of one single tournament

Bassem Amin expresses his concern regarding the current rule allowing the winners of the African Continental and the Arab Championship to get GM title provided their standard ratings are above 2300.

GSC considers this rule damaging the GM title image and recommends PB to instruct the Qualification Commission (QC) revising this rule.

19. Fischer Chess 960 panel

Jeroen van den Berg shows his interest in joining the Fischer Chess 960 panel from GSC and gets the other members' support.

*All decisions are subject of approval by PB.