

# **CHESS FEDERATION OF CANADA GOVERNORS' LETTER THREE 1998-1999**



**Responses may be mailed, faxed or E-mailed to the Chess Federation of Canada, E-1 2212  
Gladwin Crescent, Ottawa, ON, K1B 5N1, fax: 613-733-5209, E-Mail: [info@chess.ca](mailto:info@chess.ca)**

**ATTENTION ALL GOVERNORS: Anyone with an E-Mail address can have their  
Governors' Letter sent to them via E-Mail and save the CFC paper and postage costs.**

**Please E-Mail [info@chess.ca](mailto:info@chess.ca) if interested.**

**Deadline for next Governors' Letter is February 19, 1999**

## Keeping Governors Informed

The Executive voted to accept a plan that structured the rules for Regional and Provincial involvement in the Youth Championships.

The plan was devised by the Business Office and has been sent to Provincial Coordinators.

## General Comments

**(Gordon Taylor)** A change has occurred to the last page of the Governors' Letter which is not for the best. This began with GL#1 and I hoped then that the change was just an oversight but since it's been repeated with GL#2 I think I should now complain. The change referred to is that now there is no mention of what motions are to be commented on. These could be motions for vote, motions for discussion or straw vote topics. It's very useful to have these listed on the last page, as was past practice, as it helps to focus the Governors' comments. One consequence of this omission is that it is very unclear to me what Motions may be up for vote with this GL. So just in case here are some votes:

Straw Vote Topic 98-7	FOR
Motion 99-1	FOR
Straw Vote Topic 99-2	
AGAINST	
Straw Vote Topic 99-3	
AGAINST	
Straw Vote Topic 99-4	
AGAINST	

I hope to see the summary of Motions for Discussion and/or Vote restored to the last page of future issues of the GL.

Regarding the Financial Report for the six month period ending 1997/10:

One thing that struck me as I looked over this report which I think deserves content is that while sales of books and equipment had fallen 28% from the same period last year, the revenue from shipping and handling (S&H) was up 29%. One would expect that when you sell a whole lot less that the S&H revenue would be down. The reason it's up I think is due to the radical increase in the S&H now charged to CFC members. An order under \$60 now requires an \$8 surcharge to cover S&H. Are we cutting off our nose to spite our face? If a CFC member is only interested in buying a single book, will they order if from the CFC or look for it at the local Chapters (or some other supplier)? The President may ask us to support the CFC by buying our books and equipment through the Business Office but it only goes so far. Our members are able to do

simple arithmetic and I think the present S&H charges are hurting our sales.

Regarding the new Rules of Procedure for the Canadian Zonal Championship

Tournament:

The numbering used for these new rules indicates that these will supplant the existing section 8 of the Handbook. Could this be clarified? For example, is section 820 relating to championships in non-zonal years still in effect? What of section 8.5 relating to the Rules of Play?

My bigger concern however is whether these changes are going to produce the desired result -- a less costly and shorter Zonal Championship that will still attract Canada's best players. The problem is: Who will really want to play? A while back I wrote a letter to En Passant critical of how the Ontario Closed was organized. The thrust of my criticism was that the event was very unattractive to any player outside of the greater Toronto area (since it always seems to be held in Toronto). The new regulations seem to allow up to 50 players to compete in this "Swiss Zonal". We may be lucky to attract half that number and they may almost all be local players. Before, the 16 players in the Closed Zonal had their accommodation paid for by the organizer and the entry fee was \$100. Now the entry fee is \$200, and players must pay all their expenses (except that the reigning Champion and Runner-Up get free entry). Ideally the provincial champions will have their expenses subsidized by their provinces but there is no obligation on the provinces to assist them. Suppose the Swiss Zonal is held in Regina? How many masters are likely to pay out the entry, travel, meal and accommodation costs (something in excess of \$1,000) for the unlikely chance of coming top of the heap? In Canada we now have two high-level Grandmasters: Kevin Spraggett and Alexandre Lesiege. Everyone else is a big class below them, so the reality is that the rest of us have almost no chance should either of them play. But even they may find this new format unappealing. Quite likely the Swiss Zonal will be organized once again in Toronto and it will effectively be just another Toronto Championship (just like to Ontario Closed). I hope I'm wrong, but consider this: the purpose of any Championship is not only to produce a winner -- it is also a mechanism to bring the best Canadian players together on a regular basis and produce the best chess Canada has to offer. I remember my first two Zonals (Montreal in 1981 and Ottawa in 1994), and how each one probably improved my play by almost 50 rating points. The new format can easily produce a clear winner but all else may be lacking.

One other point is that the new rules have detailed regulations requiring all players to give 45 days notice of their intention to compete. That's OK. But it cuts both ways. The obligation is now on the CFC to let all the top players know, not just when and where the Zonal will take place, but all other details re accommodation expense, travel discounts, prize fund details,

etc. Will the CFC (and/or the organizers of the Zonal) be up to this commitment? Based on past practice I doubt it.

**(Ron Langill)** Comments from the last few GL's have led me to seek clarification of my position as a governor. Specifically, beyond the subject of purchasing merchandise, what is considered conflict of interest amongst my colleagues? I have helped out and directed a number of school age regional tournaments sponsored by AEM and found it to be very rewarding. I reject Mr. Smith's comparison of company directors and chess governors as being fully legitimate. A retail chain director, for example, is a paid member whose sole interest is the well being of that chain, not focusing on the good of the entire retail industry unless it is seen as a benefit to the chain. A governor is a volunteer who has no financial ties but does his work in the interests of CHESS. The last time I looked, the first objective of the CFC was to promote and encourage the knowledge, study and playing of the game of chess. While these tourneys bring entry fee dollars to AEM, I have seen nothing better locally as far as promoting chess amongst youth. This is chess at its purest level where except for the most proficient players, kids are just having fun and the adversary across the board becomes a playmate while waiting for the next round. In fact, our local chess club membership has benefited from making our club known at these tourneys and using the entry lists to send info on our location, playing times, activities, etc. The players who join our club, in turn, usually end up joining the CFC and participating in our rated club tourneys. I don't view my participation as an affront to the CFC, but as a commitment to promoting the game. I have to wonder if this has allowed me the benefit of a contribution far greater than any idea, vote or comment I have made as a governor. To get to the point, if this is seen as a conflict and harmful to the CFC, please let me know and I'll have to decide where I can best contribute. I fully agree with Mr. Smith's comments that the CFC has made a lot of positive moves and I appreciate his commitment to the CFC. Still, I tend to agree with Mr. Brown's suggestion that there may be a number of governors who don't view relationships with other organizations with the same amount of zeal.

**(Peter Stockhausen)** Re: Appendix "N":

There appears an item (called Motion) to institute an Assembly of Provincial Presidents. Would this not be a constitutional amendment? Or was this part also tabled at the Annual Meeting?

**(Maurice Smith)** Answer to Peter Stockhausen comment: Appendix "N" was put in the previous G.L. record purposes only. It was introduced at the Annual Meeting and should have been included in the Minutes but was inadvertently missed. The main content was replaced by the Bunning/Smith motion at the Annual Meeting concerning revisions to the Canadian Championship. The balance of Appendix "N" was not followed up. Of course, if desired, any part of the contents of that entire proposal can be reintroduced as a motion.

**(Martin Jaegar)** You will have read the new rules for the Closed and the temporary rules which I proposed. Both versions seek to transfer the cost of the Closed away from the CFC in the interests of a balanced budget and a fairer distribution of costs.

Mr. Bunning's version (in force) does this by introduction of a user fee. I am concerned that only potential winners will enter the tournament under the new conditions. Jaeger's proposal (not in force) introduced regional charges which, if paid would cover all qualified entrants from an area.

I believe that all players rather than simply the strong players should bear the cost of the closed and it should not just be all players in area of high concentration of strong players who bear the cost, because strong players tend to migrate in search of competition.

I also believe that the Closed should be a heavy qualifier to the Olympiad so as to attract entrants.

This said, I am in perfect accord with trying the Bunning system for one cycle. Depending on results, amendments may be offered.

With respect to the Youth Championship rules, I believe that it is in error to allow \$100 per player to tournament expenses. The figure is too high. I think that \$50 per player will not cover the travel to the world championships. In my view the \$50 and the \$100 would better be reversed. Again, I will only offer an amendment if experience confirms any apprehensions.

As President Smith understands, holding the AGM before or during the Open each have problems. I think that we should be exploring different alternatives altogether. That is, moving to a biannual format with the annual meeting being held in central Canada during the low cost travel cost period with pooling of travel expenses. I think that a weekend in February in Toronto would get the best consistent turnout.

Mr. Brown's concern of regional voting by former presidents is surely misplaced. This, apart from the fact that the current system most over represents BC not Ontario. In twenty five years of CFC association I have never detected a regional voting bias among former presidents nor has one ever been pointed out. One need only look to the last governors' letter to see the amount of work still being contributed by former presidents. The present rule keeps them involved without restricting access by newcomers to governor ranks.

I would be willing to second a motion to eliminate the number of potential votes by former presidents from the determination of quorum requirements and eliminate former president votes actually cast from quorum fulfillment calculations.

## Second Discussion of Straw Vote 99-1

Note: The President has ruled that this requires a constitutional amendment and as such the wording is not adequate to be presented as a motion. Therefore it becomes a straw vote topic. Subsequently if there is enough interest, it can then be presented at a later date as a motion with revised wording outlining the specific section of the Handbook and the specific changes to the Handbook.

**99-1 (Brown/Watson)** that the CFC by-laws be changed so that CFC Presidents no longer become CFC governors for life, but rather become CFC governors for a period of three years for every year served as President, immediately following their term as President. (To take effect retroactively.)

**(Peter Stockhausen)** The arguments for amending this portion of the constitution again do not strike me as very convincing.

- (i) **Lifetime Governor a “perk”?**  
What perk? A Governor, for life or not, receives to the best of my knowledge no advantage over any other member of the CFC. There is no salary, no discount on merchandise, no discount on tournament entries, and no discount on membership. In most cases, active governors spent money out of their own pocket year over year on CFC affairs. Which “grossly excessive perk” is Watson/Brown referring to?
- (ii) **Too many Governors/Many inactive Ex Presidents/Quorum difficulty**  
Currently we have 1 Governor/50 Adult Members. The correctness of this ratio is a different question. So I will not comment on this.  
The majority of ex presidents continue year after year contributing actively and sometimes VERY actively to the matters of the CFC, sometimes, year after year at the executive level. To mind spring the following individuals: Mr. Phil Haley, Mr. Martin Jaeger, Mr. Les Bunning, Mr. Doug Burgess, and Mr. Yves Farges. Furthermore Ex-Presidents are also very loyal and committed to the CFC. In my seventeen years I have yet to come across a situation of not having a quorum, either at the annual meetings or at any other time.
- (iii) **Ex-Presidents who carry baggage.**  
This could be a minor problem. The reality however shows consistently that Ex-Presidents are rather open-minded on issues. Because of their long-standing involvement in CFC affairs, they also tend

to make constructive and knowledgeable comments, suggestions and amendments to the various motions that come up.

Motions are usually well discussed in GLs and at the annual meetings. Since Governors are not aligned along party lines, each vote is a “free” vote. Motions succeed or fail on their merit. It is doubtful that the comments of Ex-Presidents carry any extra “weight” in these discussions.

### (iv) **The numbers of Ex-Presidents giving a bias towards Ontario**

The current tally is:	Maritimes	0
	Quebec	0
	Ontario	6
	Western Cdn	4

So, numerically, Eastern Canada is at a disadvantage. But numbers tell only part of the story. Ex-Presidents tend to have “national” rather than “regional” or “provincial” views. This can be easily verified by looking at their comments (and votes) when such issues as regional representation etc. came up in the past.

## Second Discussion of Straw Vote 99-2

**99-2 STRAW VOTE TOPIC: (Maurice Smith)** Move the C.F.C. Annual Meeting from its traditional time of during the Canadian Open. The main option is to have it two days before the Tournament.

**(Gordon Taylor)** As unpleasant as it presently is to have to attend the CFC Annual Meetings (long pause) and then play a game of chess at night, I find this preferable to having to pay an extra two or three days accommodations for the same privilege. Accordingly I am opposed to moving the time of the AM to either before or after the Canadian Open.

**(Peter Stockhausen)** Re-scheduling the Annual Meeting would remove the pressure of Governors to attend three and sometimes even four days of meetings (if one is “unlucky” enough to sit on the Executive) and play chess at the same time. I am in favour of shifting the AM by two days.

## Second Discussion of Straw Vote 99-3

**99-3 STRAW VOTE TOPIC: (Alex Knox – Ari Mendrinis)** Moved that the title of Executive Director be removed from the CFC Handbook, and replaced with Business Office Manager.

**(Gordon Taylor)** What is the purpose of this Motion? Who really cares what titles are used by the Business Office staff? Back in 1984 when I first came to work at the CFC Office,

Jonathan Berry, who had always stylized himself as "Business Manager", was about to go on a one year's sabbatical. Stephen Ball and myself decided we needed new titles and we looked at an issue of the USCF's magazine and chose Executive Director for Stephen and Technical Director for myself. Quite informal. Had Jonathan come back maybe the titles would have reverted, but sadly that did not happen.

(**Peter Stockhausen**) Maybe the proponents can elaborate on the intended outcomes (referring to 99-3 and 99-4). Without reasoning, it is hard to comment on these items.

### **Second Discussion of Straw Vote 99-4**

**99-4 STRAW VOTE TOPIC: (Alex Knox – Ari Mendrinós)**  
Moved that all CFC business office employees (as a condition of employment) be prohibited from stating, or making public (in any way shape or form), their personal opinion on CFC business matters (including En Passant) without consent from the Executive.

(**Gordon Taylor**) While I agree that some limits should be placed on what a CFC employee may communicate concerning the wisdom, or lack of it, of CFC policy, I believe it's better to leave this as an implicit understanding. When you are in the employ of an organization, there is a professional obligation not to denigrate that organization. But I do not like this "in any way shape or form" wording. It seems to me that if you could get any employee of the CFC into a bar, and ply him with a few drinks, you would quickly have grounds for dismissal (if this Motion ever becomes implemented).

(**Cecil Rosner**) I would prefer to let normal employer-employee relations apply. I believe business office employees who are members of the CFC have every right to voice their opinions on CFC policy and direction. It's an entirely different matter, however, if they reveal personal or confidential information gained from their special relationship with the organization. If they do, the Executive already has the power to take appropriate measures.

### **New Motions**

**99-5 Motion (Taylor, Hergott):** To lift the sanction imposed upon IM Jean Hebert and IM Jan Teplitsky (announced in GL #1 of 1998), barring them from participation in the next Olympiad.

(**Gordon Taylor**) I was rather hoping someone else would have moved this already. Sanctions of this kind are almost always counter-productive. Both these players have represented Canada well in past Olympiads. Teplitsky was the iron-man in Yerevan, playing every round. The reasons Jean Hebert gave in GL#1 are quite persuasive, and I find it hard to

fault Teplitsky if he, as it appears, found himself "between" passports. However, the real reason I am moving this is because of a lack of due process from the Business Office. Deen Hergott informs me that when he received his invitation to Elista, there was no mention of this sanction. The Business Office should detail all pertinent regulations to the players with the invitation, and failure to do so is a serious omission. The more punctilious of you may argue that they should have known. Well maybe yes, maybe no. I doubt either has access to the Handbook. Perhaps they were aware of past practice, and perhaps not. Or maybe they were quite aware of how things had been done in the past and, getting no notice of sanction with the invitation, assumed the practice had changed. If we weigh the pros and cons, I think the balance should swing in the players' favour, and that the decision made barring them from participation in the next Olympiad should be lifted.

The following comment appears for the record on Straw Vote 98-7

(**Gordon Taylor**) This restructuring of CFC finances is an intriguing idea. What I think it does effectively is transfer the costs of National Championships away from the CFC and over to the Provincial Associations. If implemented it may be necessary to restructure the membership revenues so as to pass along more to the provinces. Since there is only one taxpayer (to coin a phrase) it hardly matters who pays so long as the championships are funded. I half like the idea since it should make the Provincial Associations more accountable. While we all get a good accounting from the CFC of revenues and expenses, the same can not be said of the provinces. For example, in Ontario, while I know that the OCA helped fund a number of events (usually to the tune of \$500 or so) during the past year, I really have no idea of what use the remainder of revenues were put to. Ask yourself the same question: how has your Provincial Association used its revenues this past year? The principal argument against Jonathan's proposal might be that some of the smaller provinces might now be unable to send a representative. Actually, the big loser could be Quebec, which would now be obliged not only to pay travel expenses but a much larger entry fee, for each of its players who might qualify to a national championship.

