

# Asian Chess Summit, 28<sup>th</sup> August – September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, UAE

## Report by Paul Spiller

Dear Fellow delegates of Oceania Zone 3.6 and OCC executives the report below is a brief outline of events from the Asian Chess Summit in Al Ain.

### **Oceania representatives:**

**New Zealand:** Paul Spiller, Grant Kerr & Nigel Metge

**Australia:** Gary Wastell

**PNG:** Shaun Press & Stuart Fancy

**Nauru:** Ulrike Vogel

**Guam:** Roger Orio

**Solomon Islands:** Jamie Kenmure

### **Overview**

29<sup>th</sup> August – Asian Chess Symposium & Asian Chess Development Programme  
The following keynote speakers gave presentations:

### **Event Management**

Abdullah Yousuf Al Mulla who is the Director of Protocol with the Olympic Council of Asia and has 27 years experience in sports and event management. He spoke of the impact of major sporting events on a country leaving a legacy of infrastructure and amenities with social media, tourism and economic growth benefits.

He highlighted the importance of building a close relationship with the sponsor during and after an event. Key points when dealing with a sponsor are to present a total package which should include use of the sponsor's logo, making available facilities to promote the sponsor's products and to allow them marketing opportunities and ask the sponsor to be present at any prize-giving ceremony to present medals etc.

For smaller federations he stressed that you needed perseverance in finding sponsors, good proposals should get dividends and the importance of giving any event good social media coverage.

As an organiser the key points were to bring together an excellent team, delegate responsibility (don't try and do everything yourself), make sure you include some experienced people in your team, appoint a technical committee to handle any issues that might arise. Make sure the basics (transportation and accommodation) are sorted. You need a "Plan B" in the event the sponsorship deal falls through.

### **Chess in Schools**

Ali Nihat Yazici spoke on how he built a successful Turkish Chess Federation and the phenomenally success of the Chess in Schools programme in Turkey.

The aim of chess was seen as a beautiful educational tool that will make us better citizens. Two aspects of the brains improvement can be influenced by chess – the logical and visual aspects. Chess develops mathematical problem solving by 15 – 20%. Ultimately the benefactors of a successful programme are the children,

federations, government, chess professionals and sponsors. Growth in the Turkish federation climbed from 300 in 2001 to a staggering 415,000 by 2014. Certified trainers increased from 1,400 in 2005 up to 74,000 by 2016 with 5,000,000 learning chess in Schools.

Some key aspects of this success included a “Golden Children Programme” rewarding young players who achieved the milestones of first GM under 14, under 16, under 18. 24,000 Schools now have a chess elective course in Turkey.

Success is based on a pyramid structure involving Schools, Clubs, Chess Professionals and Government. [Turkish Federation receives a 3 million Euro budget from the Government per annum].

### **Chess Marketing and Promotion**

Presented by FIDE Chief Executive Officer Geoffrey Borg. Stressed that Marketing in chess required a respected brand [i.e. having a product that somebody will pay for].

The estimated global population of chess players is 600 million, skewed towards male [69% in the USA and 66% in the UK]. 55% of players are in the 16 – 34 age bracket. FIDE was recognised by the IOC in 1999 and currently has 181 member countries, one of the largest sports federations in the world.

Values associated with chess as a brand are “sophisticated”, “smart” which can be used to attract potential sponsors.

Important aspects when organising tournaments were highlighted as:

Following up with sponsors after an event

Chess casting

Organise sponsor events

Hold press conferences, special events, dress up the venue, award special prizes, have souvenirs

With regard to chess within smaller federations, it was recommended to start a pdf magazine and in order to attract sponsorship include all the relevant numbers of chess players within a country including all junior players.

### **Asian Chess Development Programme**

Presented by Allan Herbert, chairman of the FIDE Development Commission.

Emphasised that it was important to understand how the Development Commission works. It has been important to set up objective measurement in order to distinguish “developed” from “developing” chess nations. The ultimate goal is for a country to become a contributor to and not a drain on FIDE finances.

What is available to assist chess development within countries are:

Chess Materials Programme: sets, books, clocks, software

Training Grants Programme: for trainers, arbiters, organisers

Travel Grants to help arbiters to attend events for experience and norms.

FIDE has a rebate structure in place for developing countries in Level 3, 4 & 5 as follows: Level 5 a 1,000 Euro rebate on fees, Level 4 a 750 Euro rebate and Level 3 a 500 Euro rebate.

### **30<sup>th</sup> August**

Asian Continental Assembly

The agenda included the Presidential Report given Sheik Sultan, Financial Report by treasurer Mehrdad Pahlevanzadeh, review of statutes and bids for forthcoming events. Significant was the proposal put forward by New Zealand and Australian delegates to amend the fee structure for the Zonal tournaments. The proposal was to have these made exempt in future which was put forward by Casto Abundo and accepted by the meeting. Also it was proposed that Oceania events be allowed to award some automatic titles in future eg Oceania Junior. This was supported but will need confirmation through the FIDE Qualifications Commission.

Following the Assembly followed presentations by Efstratios Grivas on Chess Academies and by Philip Alimo on Traditional and Social Media.

The Asian Excellence Awards followed in the evening with recipients in the Oceania region being Meritorious Service Awards presented to Dr Virgilio de Asa (Fiji) and Bob and Vivian Smith (New Zealand).

[An informal meeting took place in the afternoon with some of the Oceania delegates to discuss some of the outcomes of the Asian Continental Assembly decisions. Present were: Paul Spiller, Nigel Metge, Grant Kerr, Ulrike Vogel, Shaun Press & Gary Wastell. It was also resolved that Grant Kerr would follow up with the incorporation process for OCC to be done in New Zealand. The hope was expressed that the Australian Chess Federation would then agree to join OCC]

### **31<sup>st</sup> August**

Presentations on chess development in their countries were given by representatives of India, Hong Kong, Iran, Laos, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka & Lebanon.

Paul Spiller  
04 September, 2016