90th FIDE Congress
FIDE Extraordinary General Assembly and FIDE Council Meeting

ECU visit to Slovenia
ECU delegation paid a working visit to Slovenia & inspected the venue of #EICC2020

Europe plays Chess in February!
Aeroflot, Graz and Prague Chess Festivals
February is traditionally the month of major European Chess festivals in all parts of Europe.

The 90th FIDE Congress took place from 27th to 29th February 2020 in Abu Dhabi, UAE with the most important decision the approval of the new FIDE Charter.

ECU visited Slovenia and Austria, while ECU EDU Commission presented the ECU teachers courses in Armenia.

ECU Arbiters Council implements the new policy of selection of foreigner match Arbiters in European Competitions setting new standards for the selection procedures.

ECU Brand book for the 2020, dedicated to its 35th anniversary was released.

FIDE Candidates Tournament 2020, one step before the final World Championship match will take place from 15th March - 5th April in Yekaterinburg, Russia.
All the organisational issues were discussed and agreed in the key areas of accommodation, press and live coverage, arbiters and technical teams, following the new ECU guidelines. It has to be noted that playing venue and all hotels are located in the same complex.

The President of the Slovenian Chess Federation Mr. Milan Brglez and the Secretary General Ms. Nina Rob accepted the ECU delegation which expressed its satisfaction about the modern infrastructures and the preparations on progress.

ECU inspected the venue of European Chess Championship 2020

On 24th and 25th February, European Chess Union made, a scheduled inspection in Terme, Olimia, Slovenia where will be held the European Individual #Chess Championship 2020.
Meetings in Austria

ECU Secretary General, Mr. Theodoros Tsorbatzoglou, visited Graz & Vienna on 26th and 27th of February.

During his visit to Graz, Mr. Tsorbatzoglou accompanied by ECU Vice President Mr. Johann Poecksteiner met with Professor Kurt Jungwirth the founder and 1st President of European Chess Union, which was founded and established in Graz in 1985.

At the age of 91, Professor Jungwirth is still active in chess and in his official city duties.

Besides the 35th ECU Anniversary, Austrian Chess Federation founded in 1920 this year celebrates its centennial anniversary! On this occasion, during the meeting in Vienna the President of Austrian Chess Federation Mr. Christian Hursky presented Mr. Tsorbatzoglou with one of the selective 100 years anniversary watches.

Vienna: President of Austrian Chess Federation, Mr. Christian Hursky, presents to Mr. Theodoros Tsorbatzoglou the 100 years anniversary watch.

Mr. Boris Kutin was honoured for his decades-long career in chess, receiving a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Mr. Boris Kutin served as ECU President from 1998-2010, ECU Honorary President from 2011 till 2014, and from 2014 till now is member of the ECU Board of Trustees. He was also a member of the FIDE Presidential Board for more than 20 years. He has organised several top chess tournaments including the 35th Chess Olympiad 2002 in Bled, Slovenia.
The 90th FIDE Congress took place from 27th to 29th February 2020 in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

The 90th FIDE Congress Board started with a Workshop by the Planning and Development Commission, led by Sonja Johnson. She pointed that 77 Federations have already benefited from this funding program, totaling 1.1 million USD.

FIDE’s Executive Director Victor Bologan presented to the attendants the “Chess-ID” project, aimed at uniting all chess players, officials and other stakeholders involved in chess activities around the world, under one/unique FIDE umbrella.

Marco Verdoia, who recently joined FIDE’s marketing department, gave a brief speech in which he highlighted the importance of brand-building.

His Highness, Sheikh Sultan Bin Khalifa Al Nehyan opened the FIDE General Assembly on the 2nd day of FIDE Congress: “It is an honor for me to welcome you all to the 90th FIDE Congress here in Abu Dhabi - my home. UAE and chess share a long association. Chess is a passion shared by all of us, including myself.”

FIDE President, Mr. Arkady Dvorkovich, addressed the attendees of the 2020 FIDE Extraordinary General Assembly. FIDE president Dvorkovich confirms that the 2020 WC match likely will be moved and begin in Dubai on December 20th.

Cayman Islands, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Grenada, St. Lucia, and St. Kitts and Nevis, were confirmed as a new FIDE member federations.

That brought total membership to 195 federations, making FIDE the 4th largest sports federation by number of member countries.
FIDE General Assembly approved the new FIDE Charter by an overwhelming majority.

ECU President Mr. Zurab Azmaiparashvili noted in his speech the work and contribution of ECU and its members to the new FIDE Charter.

Day 3 of FIDE Congress the FIDE Executive Board started with the Report of the FIDE Treasurer and the Financial Statements for 2018. Transformation of FIDE Finance functions were presented, as well as the FIDE budget for 2020.

FIDE General Assembly approves new FIDE Charter

The venues for the FIDE 2021 World Championships were selected.

Regarding the 2024 Chess Olympiad, the FIDE President reported that Hungary and Argentina/Brazil (jointly) have expressed their interest in hosting this event.

Yuri Averbakh, Khalifa Mohammed Al-Hitmi, and Maya Chiburdanidze have been elected FIDE honorary members, as a recognition to their career and their outstanding contributions to chess.

90th FIDE Congress

The 90th FIDE Congress took place from 27th to 29th February in Abu Dhabi, UAE. Commission meetings, Development Workshop and PB meeting took place during the first day. FIDE General Assembly and Zonal meetings took place on 28th of February, while FIDE Executive Board and other meetings were held on the last day, 29th of February.

Details on the 90th FIDE Congress can be found on FIDE Website.
Photos from: FIDE Website
16 years old Grandmaster Firouzja Alireza became a Winner of Prague Chess Masters 2020 after very intense finish of the event.

Vidit Santosh was leading before the last round, but suffered two losses in the two final games, scoring 5 points, and tied for the first place with 4 players with the same score: Firouzja Alireza (2726), Duda Jan Krzysztof (POL, 2755), Anton Guijarro David (ESP, 2697) and Shankland Sam (USA, 2683).

Firouzja Alireza (2726) and Vidit Santosh Gujrathi (IND, 2721) proceeded to a playoff blitz match. With score 2-0, Firouzja Alireza became the Winner of the 2nd edition of Prague Chess Masters.

The Winner of the Challengers event became Van Foreest Jorden (NED, 2667), who scored 6 points to be the sole winner of the event. Abasov Nijat (AZE, 2670) and Esipenko Andrey (RUS, 2654) tied for the silver, but according to tiebreaks, Abasov Nijat came second and Esipenko Andrey ended on the third place.

Final rankings
The International Chess Festival Aeroflot Open 2020 took place from 19th-27th February in Moscow, Russia. The Winner of the strongest A event (open for players rated over 2550 with number of extra players allowed to play) is the 14 years old Suleymanli Aydin (AZE, 2474).

After 9 played rounds, four players tied for the top, each scoring 6.5 points: Suleymanli Aydin, Jumabayev Rinat (KAZ, 2646), Mamedov Rauf (AZE, 2643) and Aravindh Chithambaram Vr. (IND, 2630). According to tiebreaks criteria, 71st seed on the starting ranking list, Suleymanli Aydin won the event, Jumabayev Rinat took second place, Mamedov Rauf ended on the third place and Aravindh Chithambaram came fourth.

The best ranked women player was 18 years old Badelka Olga (BLR, 2404) with score of 4.5 points and rating performance 2584.

Final rankings- A tournament

In B sections (for players rated 2300-2550) three players tied for the first place, each with score of 7 points. Harutyunian Tigran K. (ARM, 2538) won the event thanks to the best tiebreaks, Afansiev Nikita (RUS, 2498) won second place and Bogdanovich Stanislav (UKR, 2546) was third.

Final rankings- B tournament

The Aeroflot Open 2020 featured the total prize fund of 140 000 EUR, with 18.000 EUR reserved for the Winner of the main A event.

More details about the event are available on the Official Website.

Photos by: Eteri Kublashvili
18 years old Ukrainian Grandmaster, Shevchenko Kirill (UKR, 2580) won the Graz Chess Open 2020, scoring 7.5 points.

He was followed by 5 players who tied for the second place, each with 7 points: Vorobiev Evgeny (RUS, 2520), Dragnev Valentin (AUT, 2549), Gavrilescu David (ROU, 2455), Blohberger Felix (AUT, 2448) and Santiago Yago De Moura (BRA, 2488). According to tiebreak criteria, Vorobiev Evgeny came second, Dragnev Valentin was third, Gavrilescu David finished on the 4th place, Blohberger Felix went 5th and Santiago Yago De Moura finished the event on the 6th place.
The ECU seminar took place on 24th of February at the Institute of Psychology with attendance of professors, researchers, teachers and chess trainers. The seminar was chaired by Jesper Hall. Mr. Hall visited also a Yerevan primary school, and took part on a chess workshop during the class.

The Chairman of ECU EDU Commission was invited by Mr. Smbat Lputian, Chairman of FIDE Educational Commission to discuss on Chess in Schools progress and future plans. Swedish Embassy in Yerevan accepted the two Chairmans in a meeting with agenda the common operations between FIDE, ECU, Armenia and Sweden.
The ECU Arbiters' Council came up with a new idea for appointing arbiters for official ECU Championships. The first step was to create this possibility at all, so we proposed the idea to the ECU General Assembly and they gave us a green light. Next thing on the list was to have some interested people and a new piece of legislation based on which the candidates will be appointed. But how does it work exactly now?

First, we prepared a new regulation and we launched the Call of Interest based on it. We received 176 valid applications from titled arbiters from 40 federations. We are very happy to see that so many people wish to participate. Last year 20 % would mean a little over 30 spots for arbiters from this pool of candidates since it only concerns foreign match arbiters or arbiters, not the principals.

Based on answers provided by arbiters in our online application we assigned points according to the new regulation. In this way we created a graded list from the arbiter with the highest number of points all the way to the arbiter with the lowest number of points. During this process, we also asked for the cooperation of the ECU Federations which were able to submit their remarks on the arbiters who applied.

Now simply once an event is coming up, we look at the top of the list for the first arbiter, who is interested to be appointed to this particular event. If there is more than one spot to be granted, we look for the next highest score with an interest of the same event. These names are send to the organizer who has a right to send us their remarks. Then the spot is officially offered to the chosen arbiter who can then make arrangements.

In case he or she is no longer available for this tournament for serious reasons, it is also possible to decline and we just repeat the process. Unless they decline, their name is then crossed off from the list for the rest of the year and arbiters with lower score may get the opportunity to be appointed next time.

This whole process is happening two months prior to the event.

Almost 80 % of the arbiters can still be selected by the organizer, excluding the Principals, such as the Chief Arbiters and Deputies who are appointed by the ECU President. With our 20 % we would like to give a chance to those who are hopefully the most qualified for the job, as well as give an opportunity to those who didn’t have much chance to prove themselves yet.

That may sound logical and right maybe even noble but it is not so easy to turn it into a reality.
We are very well aware that we will never be able to create a completely fair system. That is just not possible, there are too many variables and viewpoints and so on. Everybody can have their own opinion on what is fair and we can argue about it. And we did. And at the end we agreed on some compromises.

Let us state just a few examples. We all want to have arbiters who know the Laws and Regulations perfectly, who are not afraid to act, who can resolve situations in a polite manner, who can behave properly and who can handle the clock with no troubles, etc. etc. But we cannot really test these things in the online application and we have no resources to do it otherwise. And how would we?

At least not until we have enough evaluations from tournaments, which is our long term goal. But you can still argue whether is it the right choice.

Is the person writing those evaluations able to observe everyone properly and judge them fairly? Does the person have the same "grading system" as another person at the next event? And, how hard is it to evaluate your colleagues and friends?

In any case it is good to have people with experience. So we decided to ask about their tournaments in the last two years. Of course we don't know how they got there and whether they did their job well, but they were there and that is enough right now, don't forget, we are only at the first step and the system can get better and better.

On the other hand some people can be very good at their job and just couldn't show the world yet, because there are no such events in their federations and they don't know any organizers. So they get at least something to start with.

WHAT ELSE IS THERE?

To be continued in the next March edition of the ECU E-Magazine...

Authors:
Members of ECU Arbiters Council:
Marco Biagioli and Jirina Prokopova
Grand Chess Tour 2020 features five events: two classical and three rapid and blitz tournaments, which will be held mainly in European cities. Three events will take place in: Bucharest, Romania, Paris, France, Zagreb, Croatia, while two events will take place in Saint Louis, Missouri USA.

Due to busy chess calendar in 2020, the 6th edition of Grand Chess Tour will not have “GCT Finals” as in 2019 and the final tour standings will be based on the GCT points accumulated by the participants over the course of the five tournaments.

The following ten players signed full tour contracts for the 2020 season:

> Carlsen Magnus (NOR, 2872), World #1
> Caruana Fabiano (USA, 2822), World #2
> Ding Liren (CHN, 2805), World #3
> Grischuk Alexander (RUS, 2777), World #4
> Nepomniachtchi Ian (RUS, 2774), World #5
> Aronian Levon (ARM, 2773), World #6
> Vachier-Lagrave Maxime (FRA, 2770), World #7
> Giri Anish (NED, 2768), World #9
> So Wesley (USA, 2765), World #10
> Nakamura Hikaru (USA, 2736), World #21
The 2nd Schengen Youth Championship Chess for Peace will be held from 8th-10th May in Echternach, Luxembourg.

The event will be played in 6 age categories: U7, U9, U11, U13, U15 and U17, in two groups: A (for players regardless on their title or rating) and B (for players rated less than 1600).

A event will be played in 7 rounds, with time control: 25 minutes + 10 seconds of an increment, while the B tournament will be played in 5 rounds with time control: 50 minutes + 10 seconds of an increment.

The event is open to all players coming from countries without Visa requirements to EU. The event is registered for the worldwide system Smart Kids.

Registration deadline is 6th March 2020. After the deadline, the registration fee will be increased.

Accommodation deadline is 1st March 2020. Registrations shall be done online and sent to Mietek Bakalarz on the following e-mail address. The event will be played in Youth Hostel Echternach.

Each participant will receive the diplomas and special gifts, while the best individual players and teams of each age category will be awarded with medals and trophies.

Official Website of the event

Contact information
Mietek Bakalarz
E-mail: info@schachzentrum.com
Phone contact: +352 691502677
GOLDEN YOUTH CUP 2020

The 2nd edition of the Golden Youth Cup 2020 will take place from 19th-25th July 2020 in Vinnytsia, Ukraine.

The event will be played in 6 age categories: U6, U8, U10, U12, U14 and U16 in 9 rounds, Swiss system, with time control: 1 hour and 30 minutes for the whole game with an addition of 30 seconds per move starting from move one.

The total prize fund of the event is more then 40.000$!

Already over 550 players registered for the event, and the number of participants is limited to 1010. Registration can be done via e-mail goldenyouthcup2020@gmail.com or by filling out the google-form on the following link.

Registration deadline is 18th July.

The playing venue of the event will be Ice-hockey stadium in the «Megamoll», the biggest shopping center in Vinnytsia where organizers provided 550 seats for parents and spectators. Also, the organizers provided live transmission of over 50 boards.

The current starting rank list for each section is available through the Official Website of the event.

Starting rank lists

The event is organized by Vinnytsia Regional Chess Federation with the help of the city of Vinnytsia.

Regulations for the event can be downloaded here.

Golden Youth Cup Information:

The official hotels provided by the organizers are the 4* Holiday Resort Butterfly and 4* Hotel France.

Detailed information about the event can be found on the Official Website, or Official regulations.

Official Website
**World Senior Teams Chess Championship 2020**

World Senior Teams Chess Championship 2020 will take place from 5th-15th March in the capital of Czech Republic, Prague.

The event will be played in two age categories: 50+ and 65+, open and women, separately with a total prize fund of 10,000 EUR.

**FIDE Candidates Tournament 2020**

FIDE Candidates Tournament 2020 will take place from 15th March - 5th April in Yekaterinburg, Russia. Eight top grandmasters will contest in a double round-robin tournament for the right to challenge the current World Champion Magnus Carlsen (Norway).

Details are available here.

**Lausanne Women's Grand Prix**

3rd Tournament of the Women's Grand Prix Series will take place from 1st-14th March 2020 in Lausanne, Switzerland.

The two players who score the most number of cumulative points in WGP Series qualify to the FIDE Women Candidates Tournament to be held in the first half of 2021.

[Official Website](#)

**St Louis Spring Chess Classic 2020**

The 2020 Spring Chess Classic is the first of four tournaments each year featuring international chess professionals.

The Spring Chess Classic will take place from 18th-26th March in Saint Lous, USA, with a total prize fund of 36,000 USD.

Details available on the official website of the event.

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For this edition of the ECU monthly magazine, we prepared 4 positions with mate in 2!
White is on the move!

Mark Dvoretsky said about chess:

> Emotional instability can be one of the factors giving rise to a failure by chess players in important duels. Under the influence of surging emotions (and not necessarily negative ones) we sometimes lose concentration and stop objectively evaluating the events that are taking place on the board.

> Black is now in desperate need of a good idea. Or, to put it standard chess notation, +-.

> I do not know to whom the aphorism 'There are no sound studies, only ones that haven’t been busted yet' belongs, but it has measure of truth in it.

> In positions of strategic manoeuvring seek the worst-placed piece. Activating that piece is often the most reliable way of improving your position.

Solutions from January

#Puzzle 1
1.h5+ Kh6 2.Nf7#

#Puzzle 2
1.Rf5+ Rg5 [1...Bxf5 2.Nf4#] 2.Rfxg5#

#Puzzle 3
1.Bh6+ Kg6 2.Qg5#

#Puzzle 4
1.f7+ Ke7 2.Bg5#
European Chess Union was founded on 30th August 1985 in Graz, Austria, and this year celebrates its 35th anniversary. A special designed anniversary logo will be used in all 2020 European Championships.

ECU Board selected two logo variants among a number of proposals presented by its Marketing Office and run a poll among them in the social media.

Together with the logo, European Chess Union publishes the special ECU Brand Book for its 35th Anniversary.
"Chess makes you smarter!"