

29th August 2019



Dear Chess Friend,

I am writing to you as a representative of one of the correspondence chess clubs affiliated to the Welsh Correspondence Chess Federation.

At the recent ICCF Congress in Vilnius, Lithuania, a new rule clarifying the definition of an “international event” was approved and will come into force on 1st January 2020. We believe that there will be a significant impact for some of our affiliated clubs, specifically for those which play their tournaments on the ICCF webserver.

An “international event” is now defined as any tournament in which players other than those of the federation organising the event are represented. It is important to note that ICCF do not recognise any “British” or “UK” correspondence chess organisations; the English, Scottish and Welsh member federations are completely distinct entities in the eyes of ICCF, so a tournament comprising players from more than one of the home nations will be considered to be international in scope from the First of January 2020.

ICCF require all international events to be approved by the World Tournament Director, and all international tournaments are to be played under strict international rules, including ICCF appeals and adjudications.

WCCF see this as a positive move and supported this proposal wholeheartedly, along with a significant majority (38-5) of other ICCF member federations. It will give players a seamless playing experience, and it will remove the often quirky and inconsistent rules which many of us experience when playing in tournaments organised by other national bodies. We do not believe that our affiliated organisations will be disadvantaged by this change, or we would not have supported it, but we do recognise that you will need to change your approach to some of the tournaments which you run on the ICCF webserver (including rated postal events). The reason we are writing this letter to you is to offer our support and advice to you in making this transition.

Some of the implication of the new rule are:

- The member federation organising the tournament will be determined by the national header you assign to your tournament (in most cases England, however WCCF remain willing to host our affiliated clubs’ tournaments).
- An international player will be defined *either* by the flag he or she plays under, *or* by the country shown in his or her postal address; for example if a player who shows the English flag joins a tournament organised by England, he or she will not be considered to be an international player; similarly if a player who shows the Welsh flag but who lives in England joins a tournament organised by England, he or she will not be considered to be an international player; however if a player who shows the Welsh flag and lives in Wales joins a tournament organised by England, he or she *will* be considered to be an international player and the new rules will mandatorily apply to the tournament.

- Unattached players are not counted; so, players from Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, the Channel Islands, Gibraltar, etc. (which are not represented by ICCF member federations) can play in tournaments without it affecting the international status of the tournament.
- A player can change his or her country of residence in his profile settings, however ICCF will be monitoring this closely and will come down heavily on any tournament organiser who attempts to coerce players into changing this setting to mislead.
- All international tournaments will require the approval of the ICCF World Tournament Director with no exceptions (this is not a new rule; however, it will be applied more consistently from next year). Applications for approval must be made by an official representative of the federation nominally organising the tournament at least six weeks before the start of the tournament (so, if you have an agreement with EFCC to run tournaments under their header, then EFCC must make the application on your behalf).
- All international tournaments will be *required* to use international rules; for example, any appeals will be processed by ICCF and not by your organisation, similarly adjudications will be processed using the ICCF adjudication system.
- Any tournament organiser not respecting the new rules will run the risk of having his or her ability to organise tournaments on the ICCF webserver withdrawn.

As I mentioned above, WCCF see this as a positive change and we remain more than willing to assist you with the transition. We are willing to make applications to ICCF for tournaments organised by our affiliated organisations, and we are always available to consult and advise about the application of any international rule.

If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

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