

Dear Members of the Singapore Chess Community,

The work year has just ended, and as always March was particularly busy with many chess activities happening in and outside of the SCF. Here is a quick recap of what transpired in the last month:

National Schools Individuals Chess Championships:

The NSI this year was jointly organised by the SCF and Overseas Family School. OFS is a school which has a rich tradition in chess and one of the very few schools which has chess in its mandatory curriculum. With their support, we had the largest number of participants in the history of this tournament - a mammoth 1364 students played. We also had the pleasure of having Perm Sec and our first Woman International Master Chan Lai Fung as our GOH to share her experiences while growing up as one of our top female chess players.

FIDE and SCF organised "Women in Chess" events:

FIDE representatives, Dana Reizniece-Ozola (WGM and FIDE VP), and WIM Anastasia Sorokina (Chair of Women's Commission) were here in Singapore on the 22nd and 23rd of March to organise a workshop promoting FIDE's Women in Chess initiative. This collaboration is aligned with our mandate to grow the number of female chess players in this country.

There were many sharing sessions from guest speakers who shared their experiences playing chess in a traditionally male-dominated game and the audience also had a chance to play a simul with Dana and GM Thomas Luther. With the launch of the NTP (elaborated below) where we expect many young girls to register, we hope that there will be many more skilled and active female chess players representing our country in time to come.

FIDE, SCF met with MHA and MCCY:

In the morning of 23rd March, Dana, Anastasia and myself had the chance to meet Minister of State, Ministry of Home Affairs & Ministry of National Development, Assoc Prof Dr Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim, and Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth & Ministry of Social and Family Development, Mr. Eric Chua. Dana took the opportunity to introduce FIDE and its many social initiatives. For example, the "Chess for Freedom" project is one where chess is brought to various prisons around the world as a rehabilitation program for inmates. Dana also introduced Chess for Players with Disabilities where we discussed about Chess being an inclusive sport, and the recently concluded Chess Olympiad for People with Disabilities. The SCF is committed to promote para-chess in Singapore and shall develop a long-term program to grow its para-chess community and build future National para-chess teams in the next 5 years.

Launch of the National Training Program (U10, U14, Open, Women) "NTP"

The NTP was developed by Grandmaster and FIDE Senior Trainer Thomas Luther and myself not just to train and prepare our current National players, but also, to start building the foundation of future National teams. As this is a long-term, i.e. 5-10 years project to develop our young talents into responsible and independent future national athletes, we have specifically targeted the Under 10 and Under 14 youth players.

Trainees are required to attend training 3-times a week and compete actively in local and overseas tournaments. The training program is heavily funded by the SCF and we have 32 young players who have committed to this intensive training program. We are particularly encouraged that in the U10 squad, more than 50% of the trainees are female. Members who like to have a sparring game with our trainees are very welcome to reach out!

Year-end Preliminary results:

The Financial Year ended 31 March 2023 has concluded and I am pleased to share that we have generated c.S\$1.4m of revenue in this FY (unaudited). This is mainly due to the generous donations that we have received this year (approximately S\$280,000), a dollar for dollar matching grant from the government's One Team Singapore Fund, and a significant increase in operating income this year due to the increase in training and tournament initiatives. We will share more about our financials in the upcoming months once we close the accounts fully.

However, we will certainly not rest on our laurels and will continue to work hard in utilising our resources to maximize our operational capacity. If you like to make a contribution to support our growth and momentum, you could either make a donation which may qualify for dollar for dollar matching, or explore sponsorship collaborations with us. You can reach me at kevin@singaporechess.org.sg or my mobile 9766 7712 if you like to find out more.

Thanks,

Kevin