



# Chess Western Province



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## **NOTICE TO CWP AFFILIATED CLUBS AND MEMBERS**

At the recent Chess Western Province (CWP) Executive Committee (Exco) meeting held on 17 May 2020, via Google, the Exco resolved that, due to the current national lockdown by the South African Government in response to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ordinary general council meeting as well as other face to face meetings with clubs will be postponed indefinitely and important matters will be communicated through email notice to clubs and members. **We request that you pass these communications onto all your club members so that everyone stays informed.**

### **ACTIVITIES TO DATE**

Since the election of the current CWP Exco on 21 January 2020, we managed to arrange three very successful chess tournaments, namely the Cape of Good Hope Open (COGH), the Western Province Open (WP Open) and the Western Province Online Blitz Championship (WP Online Blitz). The COGH and the WP Open both attracted record numbers of participants and both events paid out significant prize funds. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 lockdown, the highly anticipated Western Province Closed tournament had to be cancelled.

The COVID-19 lockdown has impacted significantly on the functioning of the CWP Exco as members who rightfully had to prioritize their personal health and safety and deal with the financial impact of this national lockdown.

### **OUR NEW NORMAL**

As an organisation, we must all adapt to our “new normal” reality where social distancing measures will prevail for the foreseeable future. The CWP Exco need to provide leadership, guidance and support to its affiliated clubs and its members during these challenging times.

Due to the suspension of all over the board chess tournaments and prohibition of mass gatherings, our focus for the rest of the 2020 year will be on organising online chess events, including an online rapid league tournament during August and September. It is important that all our clubs, coaches and players continue to find innovative ways to continue with their chess activities so that we can keep the chess flame burning within our communities and schools.

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## **SAJCCC (CLOSED) AND 2020 SAJCC**

We have not received any official communication from Chess SA with regards to the SAJCCC (Junior Closed) or the 2020 SAJCC since the start of the lockdown period and are therefore unable to advise you in this regard. We will, however, continue to engage with Chess SA to get clarity regarding these events.

## **CWP PROJECTS**

The CWP Exco has identified several projects which we will initiate during our term in office, including the following:

- Upgrading of the CWP website
- Establishment of a coaches' forum
- Development of regulatory framework for online chess within CWP
- Development of an adequate CWP policy framework
- Establishment of sub-committees
- Compilation of CWP Yearbook
- CWP Constitutional review
- Establishment of a Chess Grand Master Development Programme

Some of these projects are very ambitious and will require significant amounts of financial resources, expertise, and collaboration with various stakeholders. Persons with relevant skills and expertise that can assist us in the planning and execution of these projects are invited to please contact us in this regard.

## **SUB-COMMITTEES**

The CWP Exco has resolved to establish the following sub-committees:

<u>Sub-committee</u>	<u>Chairperson</u>
• Finance Committee	Marisa Laas
• Constitutional review committee	Burton van Staaden
• Grievances Committee	Andrew Talmarkes
• Regional Selections Committee	Andrew Talmarkes
• Development Committee	Daniel Arendse
• Tournament & Events Committee	Ricardo Minnaar
• Social Media and Marketing Committee	Thando Hlakula
• Chess Trainers Forum	Andrew Talmarkes

Persons with relevant skills and expertise who are willing to serve on any of the above-named sub-committees must please contact the designated chairperson in this regard.

## **ONLINE CHESS EVENTS**

We are extremely pleased with the initiative taken by our clubs and members during the lockdown period to arrange online chess tournaments, online chess coaching sessions and broadcasts through internet streaming.

We are aware that many of our members cannot participate in these online events due to them not having the relevant electronic devices or mobile data to access the internet. Working together with our clubs, we need to find innovative ways to address this situation and ensure that a chess player's lack of economic resources do not become an unsurmountable obstacle that stifle his/her chess development.

We are also aware that, although many of our members do participate in online chess events, only a few of our clubs are active on these online platforms. As the first step in organising our clubs for online chess, **each club is required to designate a person to be their "Online Chess Administrator"** and to forward that person's name and contact details to us. The main responsibility of the Online Chess Administrators will be to ensure that their respective clubs create teams that will be able to participate in online team events. The CWP Exco will appoint a "CWP Online Chess Committee" that will provide guidance and assistance to the Online Chess Administrators in the clubs.

Due to the suspension of over the board chess events, the 2020 Western Province League has been cancelled and will be replaced by an Online Rapid League on the CHESS.COM platform. To get our club teams ready for the online rapid league, we have adopted the following strategy:

- During June 2020, CWP will host two **team blitz tournaments (team battles) on LICHESS**. The objective in hosting these two events on LICHESS is to get as many of our clubs active online and LICHESS is considered the most effective way of doing this.
- During July 2020, CWP will **host two rapid tournaments on CHESS.COM**. The first one will be an **individual rapid** and the second one a **team rapid**. The objective of hosting these two events on CHESS.COM is to introduce players that are not familiar with CHESS.COM to this online platform and to serve as a trial run for the rapid league that will be hosted on CHESS.COM.
- The **Online Rapid League will take place during August and September 2020 on CHESS.COM**. Further consultation will be done with clubs and inputs will be received through the Online Chess Administrators.
- We are aware of the concerns raised in respect of online cheating. We appeal to all our players to play "in the spirit of the game" and not to spoil this beautiful game through online cheating or slandering of opponents. In order to deal with these unsavoury practices, CWP will develop an anti-cheating policy and code of conduct that impose severe sanctions, including suspension and even expulsion from CWP and CWP events, on any player that is either flagged as a cheater by an online platform or otherwise found guilty of cheating or slander by CWP. Some of the sanctions will extend to the team that the player represents.

## **CHESS COACHES FORUM**

The Chairperson of the CWP Coaches Forum, Mr Andrew Talmarkes is in the process of establishing a database of chess coaches and trainers that reside in our region. Chess coaches and trainers are requested to provide him with their names and contact details as soon as possible as this database will be utilised to provide training to coaches as well as the procurement of coaching services.

## **CLUB AFFILIATION AND INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES**

To participate in CWP events, clubs and individual members are required to be in good standing with CWP. Clubs that have not yet done so are requested to settle their 2020 affiliation fees before 31 May 2020 and follow-up with their club members to ensure that their individual CWP membership fees for 2020 has been paid.

## **MOVING FORWARD**

As the chess region with the largest number of chess players in South Africa, CWP should ensure that we remain at the forefront of chess developments in the country. A crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic create significant new risks but also create numerous new opportunities. As an organisation we need to find ways to mitigate these risks and take advantage of the opportunities that arise.

On our own, the CWP Exco will not be able to unleash the full potential that reside with our chess community. We need our clubs, individual members, coaches, parents, and other stakeholders to collaborate with us and assist and support us on our journey to promote and coordinate chess in the greater Cape Town Metro region.

Yours truly,



**BURTON VAN STAADEN**

*President of Chess Western Province*