**Proposed 2018 British Chess Championship Qualifying Regulations**

**Aim of Changing the Regulations**

The British Championship draws criticism for having a “weak tail”, i.e. players rated well below 2000 who qualify. We believe that this will increase the prestige of the Championship, encourage more stronger players to play, and that this in turn will have increased commercial benefits.

**Process for Changing the Regulations**

The regulations need to be formally approved by the BICC, whose members are: England, Guernsey, Ireland, Isle of Man, Jersey, Scotland, Ulster and Wales. At a BICC meeting on 12th January, there was broad support of the concept moving forward, subject to further internal consultation they would be undertaking. The final regulations will be formalised in a meeting in March, after the closure of the consultation period.

Within the ECF, this document is available on the website for general consultation, and in addition, it has been sent to ECF Council delegates. All people are invited to provide feedback to this paper using the form on the website. The deadline for replies to this consultation is Friday, 10th March.

The final regulations for the 2018 British Championships will be published on the website in April.

**2017 British Championship Qualifying Regulations**

The 2017 Regulations can be found here:

http://www.britishchesschampionships.co.uk/qualification-regulations-2017/

**2018 British Championship Qualifying Regulation Proposals**

1. Who is eligible to play in the Championships?

* There is no change to the existing territories covered by the British Championships.
* Players who are citizens of, or have continuous ordinary residence in, the eight members of the BICC will continue to be eligible. Players who are British citizens, or have continuous ordinary residence in, any of the British Overseas Territories, will continue to be eligible.
* The intention is that this will apply to the British Championship, the Senior Championships, and the Junior Championships only.

2. Qualification from the British Championships

* There is no proposed change to the principle of the 2017 Regulation regarding the qualification scores required from the British Championship or the Major Open. The score to qualify from the Championship will be 5½/9, and the score to qualify from the Major Open will be 6½/9.
* There is no proposed change to the 2017 Regulation regarding the qualification of the British Under 16, Under 18, Under 21 and Over 50 Champion.
* References to the entry fees will be removed from the BICC Agreement, because these will be set by the ECF and will not be subject to BICC approval.

3. Pre-Qualification by Grading, Rating, or Performance Rating

* The regulation stating that all players rated over 2350 qualify will be removed.
* All GM, IM, WGM or WIM titleholders shall qualify.
* All FMs rated over 2300 and WFMs rated over 2100 shall qualify.
* References to the entry fee will be removed, as above.
* References to qualification by domestic grade and rating will be removed.

These titles and ratings must be held by 1st July in the year preceding the Championships, in order to avoid the situation of a player qualifying mid-season, and so potentially mean the season’s qualifying events need to be re-calculated.

4. Qualification from Events

Articles 8-11 in the 2017 regulations will be deleted – please refer to these at the link provided above. These will be replaced by the following:

* The reigning champion of all BICC members will qualify.
* The reigning champion of each of the five English Unions will qualify.
* The highest-placed non-qualified player in a FIDE-rated standardplay Swiss tournament, where IM or GM norms are possible, will qualify.
* The ten highest-placed non-qualified players in the British Championship Qualifying Grand Prix will qualify. This will be composed of results from the Open section of all FIDE-rated Swiss tournaments in BICC territory. For the purposes of this regulation, Open tournaments will now be tournaments without a rating restriction, and not permit tournaments with a rating restriction above the minimum qualification rating limit.

In recognition of the fact that some players may qualify for the Championships shortly before the event, players qualifying from events may play either in the year they qualify, or the year after.

5. Nominated Players

* Delete all references to nominations by BICC members as of right.
* The Director of Home Chess and Manager of the British Championships together may nominate a maximum of one person. This will normally be used to promote a player from another tournament, in order to ensure the number of players in the Championship is even.
* The host Federation, or if the Championships are played in England the host county, will have the right to nominate two wildcards.