

ICCF CONGRESS, BENALMÁDENA 2007

A summary by Alan Rawlings...

Congress was overshadowed by the arrest on the Monday morning of ICCF President Med Samraoui in response to an international arrest warrant issued by Algeria accusing Med of desertion and other serious crimes. Med had served as a senior officer in the Algerian Secret Service, but in 1995 was granted political asylum in Germany. He subsequently published a book that was very critical of the Algerian regime and its record on human and democratic rights, and was a major figure in the Rachad opposition movement in exile (<http://en.rachad.org>). Following media and political pressure he was eventually released from prison on October 31.

Before Med's arrest he had been re-elected for a full four-year term as ICCF President. The other successful Executive Board candidates were General Secretary Pedro Hegoburu (ARG), Finance Director Hans-Jürgen Isigkeit (GER), Marketing Director Michael Blake (ENG), World Tournaments Director Frank Geider (FRA) and Services Director Gino Figlio (PER).

We should congratulate Ian Brooks, Duncan Chambers and Jo Wharrier on the award of the Bertl von Massow medal in silver for more than 10 years meritorious service to ICCF.

As far as England's players are concerned, the significant decisions concern a range of new tournaments and the discontinuation of some that have lost popularity. In no particular order, the new tournaments are (all webserver unless noted explicitly):

- World Cup XVII, start January 2009
- 3rd Webchess Open, start March 2008
- 1st veterans World Cup for players over 65, start April 2008 – this event replaces the Foglar tournaments run in recent years by the Czech federation
- 1st Junior World Cup for players under 20, start 2008
- Possible 1st European Cup for players below 2400, start late 2009
- European Team Championships 7 Final and 8 Preliminaries, start late 2008
- 65th (server) and 66th (postal) European Individual Championship Finals, plus new semi-finals, start February 2008
- ICCF Money Prize Tournaments, to start as soon as possible
- Harro Otte Memorial 2 (server) and 3 (postal) for national teams of players rated below 2000, start 2008
- European Master, Higher and Open class promotion tournaments by server, start as soon as possible
- Slovenia Member of ICCF 15th Anniversary Open, start 15.3.2008

While the discontinued tournaments are:

- Postal Grandmaster Norm
- Email European promotion tournaments
- Email Thematic tournaments.

Details of the new tournaments will appear here as soon as each is announced.

Next year's Congress will be held in Pleven, Bulgaria in late September, and its major business will be the usual four-yearly review of Playing and Tournament rules. [Duncan Chambers](#) is a member of the Playing Rules Commission, and will be happy to receive your suggestions on that subject; suggestions for revisions to the Tournament Rules, including ratings and titles, should be sent to [me](#).