

## Appeal against changed results of ISC 2025

To:

ISC Central controller, WFCC President and all delegates, members of Solving Committee

ISC was established in 2004 after initiative of late Uri Avner. Even then, there was a debate about possible irregularities and cheating. Therefore the first ISC was realized in January 2005 in the nature of an experiment, with no norms or rating points involved. It was emphasized that this is a tournament based on the trust and honour of all participants.

This year results of all solvers in one venue (Azerbaijan) were suspicious. Their results would not be so striking if the results of the other solvers were not significantly lower, which they could not have expected, and which is why their results stood out all the more. Among those with much lower results were world champions Paavilainen, Baier, Comay, Gorski, Pfankuche, Nunn, and many other grandmasters. Only multiple World and European champion Piorun was much more successful but still worse than the best of Azerbaijanis. Central controller found more irregularities, not only suspicious results, and didn't include their results in the table. He explained his decision in a very convincing way, proving that the results of all four solvers from the same country (Azerbaijan) were impossibly high and therefore only possible as a result of cheating. I shall not repeat his reliable arguments. He himself emphasized that cheating cannot be absolutely proven because the competition system itself does not enable this, unless someone admits to cheating. A local controller from Azerbaijan made a protest and a three men commission was established and decided that disputed results should be included in the final table regardless of all the arguments of the central controller.

My protest against this decision of a commission is based on further arguments:

- After the table of results was published on MatPlus no one appeal was sent to the central controller by any of excluded solvers, as required by Article 8 of the Rules for ISC, which means that those four solvers agreed with the published results with them being excluded, and consequently they admitted their cheating. An appeal was sent by the local controller, who has no interest of his own in challenging the decision of the central controller. In legal language, one would say that he is not a party to the proceedings. Even more, controllers are a part of WFCC therefore they have no right to appeal, only solvers can appeal. For this formal reason alone, the appeal should be rejected.

- The members of the committee were nominated on the principle that none of the members of the committee had competed at the ISC themselves. There was no reason for this. Even at WSCS/ECSC, an appeals committee is usually appointed from among the strong solvers themselves. Thus, the only three remaining members were appointed. What if all other members of Solving committee were competing as well? One of appointed was Mr. Selivanov which is an absolutely controversial decision. He comes from a country that is not allowed to participate at the ISC due to sanctions, which in itself may constitute a conflict of interest, as his opinion may be related to this. It is also known that he is in a personal dispute with the central controller. In addition, he himself was repeatedly suspected of cheating, although never proven. The most obvious example was the WCSC in 2003 when he became

the world champion, but the championship director, the late Bo Lindgren, told that he sent problems beforehand to Mr. Selivanov, the main organizer of the WCCC. Mr. Selivanov denied receiving the problems, but unfortunately the director only made this known after the championship was over, when the results had already been confirmed. In this sense, the appointment of Mr. Selivanov to the appeals committee is completely inappropriate.

- Conflicts of interest and influencing the decisions of committee members:

Apart from mentioned above, Mr. Selivanov shared his opinion in solving forums even before appeal from Azerbaijan's local controller was sent which could affect decisions of other members.

As well as Mr. Ott, who was not a member, did share his opinion with members of committee, and by this possibly influenced to their decisions.

- A very weighty and well-argued opinion of world most experienced director of countless solving tournaments Mr. Steinbrink (based on many years of judging experiences) was the same as one of the central controller but unfortunately he was in the minority. The third member of the committee, Mr. Stephenson, distanced himself from the statistical analyses that proved the impossible results of the Azerbaijani solvers, on the pretext that he did not have enough technical knowledge to understand them, even though the analyses were absolutely clear. However, in his opinion, he agreed that the disputed results were very suspicious. Regardless, he decided to follow the practice of the courts, where it is enough to acquit the accused if there is no clear evidence of guilt. This is the most controversial thing about his decision since we are not in a court. In a court a violence of formal procedures (as describes above in my first argument) would stop a case immediately, which should be done also in this case.

- Since ISC is based on the trust and honour the decisions could and should be made differently as in the court. Significant suspicion of the regularity of the results is sufficient to invalidate such results, because the competition system itself does not allow for the existence of clear evidence of fraud.

Conclusion and proposal:

- The appeal of the Azerbaijani local controller should be rejected and the decision of the commission should be annulled.

- The final results should not include solvers from Azerbaijan. They are confirmed at the WFCC congress, as they are every year.

Marko Klasinc  
WFCC delegate of Slovenia  
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