

An ICCA Re-Evaluation Function

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ICCA Secretary/Treasurer

Two years ago, I produced a report detailing the financial state of the ICCA (*ICCA Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 52-54). In the interim, a lot has changed and it is appropriate to bring our members back up to date on this subject. The biggest change has been the relocation of Journal production from Delft University of Technology (Delft) to the University of Limburg (Maastricht). Accompanying that, of course, were the usual headaches including some production delays. Now that things have finally settled down, it is possible to get a clear picture of how well the ICCA is doing.

Figure 1 gives the 1988 *ICCA Journal* Profit and Loss Statement. Please note that this statement is for the Journal *only*, not the ICCA. I feel this representation is important so that members can get a proper idea of how the Journal is doing. Note that this statement is a better reflection of our current status than was reported in 1986, where there were several accounting problems which resulted in an *under-statement* of the Journal's losses. These problems have since been corrected. Finally, this statement assumes that all ICCA membership dues go towards supporting the Journal.

Income:	1988 memberships	9083	
	Back issues	1931	
	Interest	1214	
	Miscellaneous	24	
		\$12252	
Expenses:	Printing		8163
	Postage		3619
	Secretary		8837
	Supplies		2697
	Bank Charges		119
	Miscellaneous		202
			\$23637
<i>Net loss for 1988:</i>			\$11385

Figure 1: ICCA Journal Profit & Loss Statement (US Dollars).

In 1988, the *ICCA Journal* lost \$11,385. Superficially, it appears that since the reported loss of \$7,300 in 1986, the Journal has continued to become a major financial liability. Comparing the 1986 and 1988 figures, one discovers that ICCA revenues are up (nearly \$4000) and production costs down (\$1000). The increased revenue is due to both an increase in membership dues (from \$20 to \$25) and back issue sales (1986 data not available). Expenses were reduced and, even considering inflation, they are still less than the 1986 costs. The major difference in the financial statements is the charges for secretarial help, something we did not pay for in 1986.

In addition to membership fees, the ICCA received income from two other sources (Figure 2). This extra money (explained below) is sufficient to offset the loss on the Journal, yielding a net profit to the ICCA of \$12906 - \$11385 = \$1521.

World Micro Championship	10906
Sr. Amador Cuesta	2000
<i>Total additional income</i>	\$12906

Figure 2: ICCA Additional Sources of Income (US Dollars).

Figure 3 shows the balance sheet. The ICCA has reserved \$10000 as a contingency fund, to ensure resources are available in case an emergency arises (as, for example, threatened to occur with the 1988 World Micro Championship). Membership dues paid for 1989 and beyond have been shown as a liability, as they represent money in the bank for services not yet provided. In 1986, the ICCA had a net liability of \$4000. In 1988, our assets exceed our liabilities by \$18384.

Assets:	Bank (Netherlands)	225	
	Bank (Canada)	10060	
	Contingency	10000	
	Accounts receivable	2000	
		\$22285	
Liabilities:	Memberships paid in advance		2601
	Accounts payable		1300
			\$3901
<i>Net balance</i>		\$18384	

Figure 3: Balance Sheet (US Dollars).

Our current state of affairs would not be possible without the help of a number of people and organizations:

- 1) At the time of the move from Delft to Maastricht, the ICCA had accumulated roughly \$18,000 in debt. Delft University kindly wrote off that amount. The ICCA sincerely thanks Delft University of Technology for their generous gesture.
- 2) The University of Maastricht has helped us in many ways. In particular SWOL (Stichting Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs Limburg) has sponsored a portion of the cost of our secretarial help.
- 3) Sr. Amador Cuesta paid \$10000 to the ICCA in 1987, for the right to organize the 1988 World Microcomputer Championship and an option on the 1992 World Computer Championship. Sr. Cuesta continues his association with the ICCA with an agreement for regular payments.
- 4) Our poor financial situation in 1986 prompted several members to donate money to the ICCA. The ICCA again recognizes the support of Tony Scherzer and Stuart Cracraft.
- 5) The 1988 World Microcomputer Championship was a tremendous financial success for the ICCA thanks to an anonymous sponsor who contributed enough money to cover the costs of the event, allowing the ICCA to keep a large portion of the tournament entry fees.

Table 1 shows the breakdown of ICCA members. "Gratis" memberships fall mainly into two categories: honorary ones for past achievements in computer chess, and publicity ones given to individuals or groups who can publicize our organization (such as chess magazines, science writers, newspapers). Part of our cost cutting measures included reducing our gratis members from 73 to 42.

Type	Europe	North America	Total
Subscribers	232	210	442
Institutional	1	1	2
Gratis	33	9	42
Total	266	220	486

Table 1: ICCA Journal Distribution.

Since 1986, the number of ICCA members has remained relatively constant (451 then versus 444 now). The lack of membership growth is something that must be addressed if the Journal is to remain viable. One disturbing aspect not portrayed in the numbers is that each year roughly 20% of the previous year's members decide not to renew. Fortunately, we also gain 20% new members, effectively offsetting this loss. Why do so many members not renew? I have asked many of them and the most common answer is that the Journal is not what they

expected it to be. Many subscribers are interested in the topic of computer chess but are disappointed in the amount of technical material in the Journal. Essentially they believed it to be more of a chess magazine than a computer magazine.

In conclusion, the ICCA's financial picture looks much brighter than it did in 1986. However, the Journal continues to lose a large amount of money each year. As it currently stands, all ICCA income goes towards subsidizing the Journal and this undermines the association's ability to sponsor new activities. We cannot always expect to have generous sponsors to keep our organization afloat. It is imperative that the Journal becomes more of a break even proposition. The best way for this to happen is to increase the ICCA membership. A doubling of membership would go a long way to solving this problem. The ICCA executive welcome any suggestions on this matter.

DEEP THOUGHT RECEIVES THE FREDKIN INTERMEDIATE PRIZE

The Editorial Board

Let us recall that Professor Edward Fredkin, of MIT fame, attached three prizes to three yet undreamed-of achievements in computer chess. The first, worth US \$5000, was for the first computer to attain master status. As is well-known, it was won as far back as 1983 by Ken Thompson and Joe Condon of the BELLE stable (cf. *ICCA Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 4, p. 3) The top award, US \$100,000, is to go to the first computer system to beat the then reigning World Champion in a match.

We all hope to be alive and playing when that prize is awarded, but in most estimates that day is still far off. In between, there is the intermediate prize, worth US \$10,000. This was to be awarded to the first computer system to maintain a rating above 2500 USCF rating points for 25 consecutive games. Deep Thought has won it by a generous margin, actually achieving 2550 according to Murray Campbell, one of its developers.

Over the Thanksgiving weekend, Deep Thought played in the US \$130,000 Software Toolworks Championship with success as reported in *ICCA Journal*, Vol. 11, No. 4, pp. 199-200. It was the first time a computer was a co-winner of a tournament with an over US \$100,000 prize fund, or for that matter, any tournament with GMs playing. (Deep Thought, being a computer, is not eligible to the tournament prizes.) As reported in the previous issue of the *ICCA Journal*, GM Bent Larsen lost to Deep Thought in the third round to become the first GM to lose to a computer in a regular tournament. Larsen's 2560 FIDE rating made him the highest FIDE-rated player so far to lose to a computer. Deep Thought's 2745 (USCF scale) performance in this tournament is also by far the highest ever for a computer. (In passing, it is noted that the USCF rating is usually inflated by about 70-100 points with respect to FIDE rating. Gary Kasparov, the reigning World Champion, is about FIDE 2760, or about USCF 2830-2860.) The 6-month old Deep Thought (December 1988) had then played 42 rated games. It played against International Masters 7 times, and won 5, drew 2, no loss. It played International Grandmasters 3 times, and won 1, lost 2 (the loss against GM Lev Alburt was due to a bug that caused the machine to throw away a repetition draw).

As to the where and when of the prize-giving ceremony, this Journal will try to keep you posted or, failing that, at least give you a blow-by-blow account of toasts proposed, speeches made and possibly moves played on that occasion. Let us note that the Award came earlier than many of us expected and that, the world being such as it is, it will not stop the sneering of some whose opinions are frozen into the paradigm that computers can't play chess.

The Deep Thought team includes: Thomas Anantharaman, Mike Browne, Murray Campbell, Feng-hsiung Hsu, and Andreas Nowatzyk, all with the Computer Science Department at Carnegie-Mellon University. They recognize the help and encouragement of many who made this success possible, and particularly mention Lawrence Butcher, Stuart Cracraft, Jim Gillogly, Peter Jansen, Larry Kaufman, Kai-Fu Lee, Tom Mitchel, Raj Reddy, Danny Sleator, Ken Thompson, Hide Tokuda, John Zsarnay and their advisors Roberto Bisiani, Ed Clarke, H.T. Kung and Bob Sproull.

[For much of this news item, the Editors of this Journal have gratefully relied on Email emanating from Feng-hsiung Hsu and others as well as on other publications.]