

Op 2 februari 2021 om 11:33 schreef vladislavs.vesperis@dambrete.lv:

Dear President of the FMJD, dear colleagues,

I hope that this e-mail finds you well.

On behalf of Latvia Draughts federation I write to all of you because there are number of questions as concerns the World title match. The latest information that is available (Main FMJD Council conclusions) on the webpage of the FMJD states that FMJD is talking to all potential participants of the men's World title match and a decision is to be expected on Feb. 1st at latest. Today is a 2nd February and unfortunately nothing new is known what is going to happen with regard to this match. It should also be noted that none from FMJD was talking to Latvian player Guntis Valneris who is next in a row to play against Mr.Roel Boomstra after Mr.Alexander Georgiev who rejected to play and Pan Yiming who according to informal information has also rejected to play such a match.

I would like to announce officially that Latvian player Mr.Guntis Valneris is ready to play such a match if he is offered this opportunity. I would like to ask you to clarify what is current situation regarding this match, in particular, is it planned to organize this World title match at all and if yes, we would appreciate it very much if conversation on these matters will be started as soon as possible with Mr.Guntis Valneris and Latvia Draughts federation.

I look forward to hear from you soon. Should you need any clarification, please, do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,
Vladislavs Vesperis

Head of the Executive Board of the Latvia Draughts federation
Web: www.dambrete.lv
E-mail: vladislavs.vesperis@dambrete.lv
Phone: 00 371 26344090

Harry Otten @ 2021-02-02 12:43 rakstīja:

Dear Mr. Vesperis,

Thank you for your mail. It is not so much that Mr. Georgiev and Mr. Pan refuse to play. They just don't want to come to the Netherlands

with the current COVID-19 situation. This is understandable.
However, FMJD cannot solve COVID-19 and this will call for inventive measures that we are still talking about.

Best regards,

Harry Otten

Op 2 februari 2021 om 12:41 schreef vladislavs.vesperis@dambrete.lv:

Dear Mr.Otten,

Many thanks for your swift reply and explanation.

While I fully understand your rather complicated situation on this subject, still I guess that everyone of us expect that FMJD will respect deadlines set by itself and make decisions instead of long talking. Next World championships are to be held in Tallinn in June this year so there is no plenty of time to postpone decisions on this matter. Sure, none of use can cancel or solve Covid-19 and it will be source of number of problems in nearest future, it is pretty understandable. However, if some players refuse to go to the Netherlands to play the match due to Covid-19 it means that other options should be considered.

It means, in my view, two available options:

- 1) match will not be played and Alexander Georgiev remains a World champion until Tallinn tournament where title will be subject to tournament results;
- 2) match is to be played between Boomstra and Valneris as Valneris is ready to go to the Netherlands despite Covid-19 and play this match.

I leave it, of course, to the Council of the FMJD to decide what option is better in this current situation or whether some other good option how to proceed would be available but we surely will be grateful for making some decision and getting clarity on this matter as soon as possible and informing us about decision that was made.

Best regards,

Vladislavs Vesperis

Harry Otten @ 2021-02-02 14:38 rakstīja:

Dear Mr. Vesperis,

One thing is very clear and that the organization in the Netherlands sees no possibility to organize a match before the summer. The COVID-19 situation has deteriorated in the Netherlands and may not improve considerably over the next months. Therefore option number 2 that you mention is not possible. There also would be no money available.

Option 1 is a possibility as it is very likely that nothing will be organized before the summer. The Chinese draughts organization, by the way, suggested having the match played online and they would want to contribute to the prize money. However, for such important events, it's not desirable at all.

My personal preference would be to organize the match between Boomstra and Georgiev in the fall of this year for an administrative world title where the winner would go into the books as the World Champion from February 2021 until the end of the World Championship in Tallinn. There is a precedent here as Baby Sy was declared world champion years after the Russians refused to give him a visa to enter the Soviet Union.

This is all I can say for now.

Best regards,

Harry Otten

Op 2 februari 2021 om 16:01 schreef vladislavs.vesperis@dambrete.lv:

Dear Mr.Otten,

Many thanks for your reply and clarification. So I do assume that matter is clear and cancelling the match will be announced rather soon.

Still it is unclear if organization in Netherlands is very clear about not having the match at all then my question is what else is expected and why such decision was not be made already by the FMJD Council. Perhaps, there is still some hope of someone as Covid-19 situation is not that bad in the Netherlands taking into account that number of Covid-19 daily cases in the Netherlands has constantly decreased from

more than 13 thousands of cases on 20th of December down to about 3100 cases just yesterday so I doubt if this can be considered as deterioration, but, of course, we are not prophets to tell that it will continue that way.

As concerns potential option of having match between Mr. Georgijev and Mr. Boomstra in fall this year I am not sure if there is worth to have such a match to play for a title for the past period and for a period of just four or five months, especially if there will be a new World champion (in case Mr. Georgijev does not win a title) from Tallinn tournament. I am not also sure that precedent with Baba Sy could be used as an argument in this respect.

Best regards,

Vladislavs Vesperis

Subject: Re: World title match

Date: otrd., 2 febr. 2021, 17:50

From: Harry Otten <harry@harryotten.com>

To: <vladislavs.vesperis@dambrete.lv>

Dear Mr. Vesperis,

At this point in time, the British variant of the virus is becoming dominant. Therefore the experts fear that we will see a rapid rise in the number of infections in the course of this month. It is with great fear that elementary schools will be opened next week.

It is important to play the match for the title as the winner will have the right to a match when he loses the title in the World Championship in Tallinn.

Cheers,

Harry Otten