

Reasons for the Petition to Recall Bill Goichberg from the USCF Executive Board

To the USCF Delegates and Alternates:

Nobody campaigned harder than I did to make Bill Goichberg the USCF President. Goichberg wanted to be USCF President for many decades and I felt that he deserved the chance. However, now, Bill Goichberg has been USCF President for three years. In every year of those three years, the USCF has suffered serious financial losses, even after juggling the books to make the losses seem to be less than they really were. Bill Goichberg is unwilling to take the steps that need to be taken to stop these horrific losses which are, number one, to cut staff. Rather than cutting staff, Bill Goichberg wants to cut on printing *Chess Life* magazine and *Chess Life for Kids* magazine. He even wants to stop sending membership cards to the members and he wants to stop selling life memberships.

This year, the Goichberg Board is reporting a loss of “only \$73,000”. However, the loss in real money is \$258,000, one of the biggest losses ever. To get the number down to “only \$73,000” the board and the accountants are ignoring the cap of \$50,000 the delegates voted last year to place on the “imaginary money” the USCF is theoretically supposed to receive to service the life members but does not actually get. They are also including as an “account receivable” money they are claiming is owed by Hanon Russell but which Hanon Russell strongly disputes and has no intention of paying.

Now, Goichberg is claiming that the USCF is losing all of this money, not because of his mismanagement, but because of competition from the Internet. Goichberg has a solution. Just phase out the printing and mailing of *Chess Life* and *Chess Life for Kids* magazines and there will no longer be competition for the Internet. Everything will be OK after these simple steps are taken, says Goichberg!

There has been a tremendous outcry from the long established members of the USCF against these changes proposed by Bill Goichberg. Yet, Goichberg will not listen. The Executive Board voted 6-0 without any significant discussion or debate to adopt the Goichberg “New Plan”. However, in view of the tremendous outcry of protest, some of the board members are starting to get cold feet, but not Bill Goichberg. Goichberg is ignoring all warnings and is going forward full speed ahead with his plans. He is supported by Board Member Randy Bauer, who is even more radical than Bill Goichberg. Bauer wants to scrap the printing of *Chess Life* and *Chess Life for Kids* immediately, without further ado.

The Goichberg “New Plan” will come to a vote at the USCF Delegates meeting in Dallas on August 9-10, 2008. Do not think that it is a simple matter of defeating this motion and all will be sweetness and light thereafter. Goichberg is known for his persistence. He will try again and again. I have seen this happen many times. If the delegates vote this down, at the first meeting of the board which takes place immediately after the delegate's meeting, he will propose the same things again, this time labeling it as a “promotion”. Perhaps you are not familiar with these “promotions”. The by-laws wisely give the delegates the exclusive power to set the dues. The Executive Board cannot change the dues. However, the Executive Board or the Executive Director on his own can offer promotions. Goichberg has used this loophole in the by-laws to offer promotions to move the dues up or down as he sees fit. Thus, the by-laws have become a dead letter.

Goichberg says that his plan to turn *Chess Life* and *Chess Life for Kids* into online publications will “save” the USCF \$86,000. However, Hanon Russell, who owns USCF Sales which he bought from the USCF in an outsourcing deal and who has signed a contract under which he is to pay the USCF \$150,000 per year and which gives him the right to publish ads in *Chess Life* and *Chess Life for Kids* magazines, has written three letters to Bill Goichberg stating that he considers the “New Plan”, if

implemented, to be a breach of his contract with the USCF. Translation: If the delegates approve the Goichberg plan on August 9-10, 2008, the USCF can no longer expect to receive the \$150,000 per year it receives from Hanon Russell. Thus, the supposed "savings" will be more than wiped out.

I have known Bill Goichberg since 1961 and everybody who knows him agrees: Once Bill Goichberg has an idea in his head, he will never back down, he will never change it. Trying to convince Bill Goichberg that he is wrong is just a waste of time. Thus, the only course left open is a recall petition.

I am aware of the risks of a recall petition. The number one risk is that Goichberg has a lot of enemies, and some of his enemies are even worse than Goichberg is. There are certain people out there who are truly bad, evil people who would like to get their hands on the USCF and the \$3.2 million in annual revenues that the USCF receives. Goichberg may be misguided, but he is not malicious. Goichberg really does not want to harm the USCF. He just has poor judgment. There are those who really do want to harm the USCF and there is a significant danger that a recall of Goichberg will deliver the USCF into their hands.

In spite of this significant risk, I believe that a recall of Goichberg is required and should proceed. The reason is that the USCF will not survive the Goichberg plan. Goichberg first became USCF Vice-President in the 1996 USCF Election. For most of the years since 1996, Goichberg has held the positions of either President, Vice-President or Executive Director. During that time, the USCF has lost more than two million dollars, whereas up to 1996 the USCF was highly profitable. I am not blaming Goichberg entirely for the \$2 million in losses. Certainly not. Many people should share that blame. However, the fiscal year ended on May 31, 2008 and the USCF racked up another 6-figure loss. Rather than taking appropriate steps like cutting staff and expenses, Goichberg wants to cut the magazines and the membership cards.

The USCF cannot survive another year of a Goichberg presidency. His term of office ends in August, 2009 and it is certain that he will run for another four-year term. (There used to be a rule that the USCF President could not succeed himself, but all such rules were abolished in 1999). It is certain that there will be a tremendous effort to stop Goichberg from being re-elected in 2009, but that will cost a lot of time and money with no assurance of success.

Thus, what needs to be done is a petition to recall Bill Goichberg. It needs to be started now. This is necessary to save the USCF from financial ruin.

I believe that this recall campaign will ultimately be successful and that Goichberg will ultimately be thrown out, but somebody has to start it.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sam Sloan". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a large, stylized 'S' at the beginning.

Sam Sloan