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Tradewise is about ‘the chess family this festival has created’



Gibraltar’s Equality Minister Samantha Sacramento and the Bellon family: daughter Ana, Juan Manuel Bellon and Pia Cramling. Pic: Sophie Triay.

THE TRADEWISE Gibraltar Chess Festival “is about you” Gibraltar’s Minister for Equality and Social Services Samantha Sacramento told a packed Festival Hall at the Caleta Hotel on Tuesday evening. Hosting the Gibraltar Government’s official dinner on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the Tradewise Gibraltar Chess Festival she welcomed all players to the Rock.

“The festival is about the chess family this festival has created. You know that better than we do because you keep returning to Gibraltar year on year. The reason why you come back is because you enjoy it so much,” she said.

“You come back with your families, so you are a chess family and some of you are here with your own family.”

The Minister revealed that this year's tournament not only had the largest number of participants but also the largest number of people accompanying chess players and participants.

The festival, she commented, was all about quality and standard.

Quality was important for all and the quality of the festival was as important for the players who year on year participate in the event as it was for Gibraltar.

“For us it is also about Gibraltar being the destination of the chess festival with a difference. This is a unique destination in which to hold this tournament because it is more than just a chess tournament. It is also about enjoying Gibraltar and what it has to offer. I am sure that those of you who are returners to the festival can say that Gibraltarian hospitality is second to none.”

The Minister paid tribute to organiser Brian Callaghan and thanked him for organising such a “spectacular” event. She also spoke of Mr Callaghan putting Gibraltar on the map through this annual festival.

The chess festival on the Rock was his brainchild, she praised, and it is “fantastic we are celebrating its 15th anniversary”.

“This year is once again the biggest and the best. You surpass yourself year on year and you have achieved it once again this year. I am sure you all agree,” she told all present.

Ms Sacramento made a series of special presentations on behalf of the organisers for having formed part of the event from its inception. They all received special mementoes.

They are: First tournament director Stewart Reuben, chess family Pia Cramling and Juan Manuel Bellon with their daughter Ana who have been coming as a family from the first year, former arbiter and player David Sedgwick, and chess players Odin Blikra Vea from Norway and Enrique Osuna Vega from La Linea.

Also Peter Purland and David Welch, who are part of the festival organisation and over the past 15 years, have taught hundreds of Gibraltarian children how to play chess. They have returned four times a year, every year for the past 15 years, pro bono to pass on their skills.

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NOTE: More photographs are available on our website.

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You can find video interviews and other source material from the days round available to embed from our YouTube Channel.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCa1RTZ95_wMc5dbzl8ugTEQ



All 2017 Tradewise Festival reports are also on [our Facebook page](#). Follow us on Twitter @GibraltarChess #GibChess @Stuthefox with Stuart Conquest.