

“ SCARBOROUGH COMMUNITY OF TORONTO **CHESS TALK ”**

Newsletter of / Le Journal de
Scarborough Chess Club

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“ FRIENDLY Chess Since 1960 ”

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO BOTH MEMBERS & NON-MEMBERS
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DO YOU KNOW ? / SAVEZ-VOUS ?

CFC “ Conflicting Tournaments “ Motion : Generates --- A Yawn !

David Cohen/ David Gebhardt have launched a motion that the CFC rate tournaments, regardless of whether an affiliated body has designated them as “ conflicting “ with one of their own sanctioned tournaments. We were all anxiously awaiting the comments of Governors from across Canada on this motion, since it has been such a high visibility issue in Ontario and the GTA. What arguments would be raised pro and con ? Would there be any new arguments raised that had not already been covered in the previous raging debate here ? How would the argument be dividing ?

Well, CFC Governors’ Letter # 5 for April came out in the middle of last month and we learned that ----- no one cares ! From all of the Governors across Canada, other than Ontario, how many made a comment at this “ discussion on the motion “ stage ? Only 1 lonely Governor !! And there were only 4 Ontario Governor comments (not counting the mover, and Roger Langen, OCA President, who supplemented OCA’s prior letter’s opposition with his own personal opposition). Few felt stirred to try to influence the vote of their peers in this “ first discussion “ of the motion (a “ second and final “ discussion will be in the June GL # 6) . We can report that the majority of comments were indeed supportive of the motion (this was not totally unexpected, given the division of opinion in Ontario on the matter).

But there is one interesting wrinkle that has arisen. Martin Jaeger (who is also Vice-President of the Ontario Chess Association, which is on record as being against the motion)/ Wilf Ferner pulled a procedural maneuver, which effectively tries to gut the fundamental premise of the motion (i.e. no regulation). They brought a motion to amend. The effect of the amendment is to build into the “ shall rate “ motion, an exception ! The idea is that a provincial body will be allowed to reserve up to 3 dates for its sanctioned tournaments (and define a geographic area where the reservation applies).

This amendment is certainly the exact opposite of what the motion wants. Nice try guys, but we fear you are going to go down in flames on this attempted amendment.

It is interesting that there is no condition built in to this amendment that the affiliate must first obtain CFC endorsement for this date reservation. Wouldn't this make the date reservation a mutual one? It would be an attempt to meet CFC's reticence to regulate. On a case by case basis, it would give them some control. IF the CFC then agreed to endorse the protecting of a date, and if a conflicting tournament did arise on that date, then CFC would have committed itself NOT TO RATE that one particular tournament (every organizer will have known well in advance of the joint affiliate/CFC date reservation). Mind you, so long as CFC believes in NO REGULATION, then it would simply refuse to endorse any dates put forward. But it would put in place a possible process for compromise to occur – perhaps some unanticipated future event would lead CFC to change its position. It's just a thought.

If the motion does not generate heated opposition in debate in this first round, then we can certainly presume that it will not in the second discussion either. Our prediction – the motion will easily pass when voted on at the upcoming CFC AGM .

GTCL's Annual General Meeting - Glad to Leave Last Year Behind !

On Tuesday, April 17, at the Hart House chess room, 13 GTA stalwarts met to start out on what is hoped will be a new, more productive path than that tread by the GTCL during the tumultuous 2000/01 year. The first half of the evening was the Annual General Meeting 2001/02.

Important Outstanding Issues

There is baggage from last year still around, and it reared its head right at the start of the meeting. When merely approving the minutes of the last year's AGM, the old chestnut of "Scholarship-gate" arose (we will return to this item in future Issues). Suffice it to say that the same players took the same old positions. Then there is the withdrawal of Dutton Chess from organizing any GTCL-sanctioned tournaments. Various individuals have been talking, in an attempt to see if there is not some way out of this impasse which has developed. One of these is David Gebhardt, Oshawa Durham CC representative (new and former GTCL Executive member). Unfortunately he could not be present (though he submitted his proxy), and the meeting felt any discussion on this item should involve David; so the agenda item was deferred to the 2nd regular board meeting of the year. In relation to this item, the GTCL/Organizer Contract committee submitted a draft of its proposed new contract to be signed by all organizers who successfully bid on GTCL-sanctioned tournaments. Its intent is to provide legal penalties where a GTCL organizer withdraws at the last minute, as Dutton Chess did. This matter was then adjourned to the 2nd Board meeting. Finally, the Cohen/Gebhardt CFC motion on "conflicting tournaments" was on the agenda, for the purpose of GTCL taking a position on it at the AGM. Martin provided copies of his amendment. For some reason, it was then decided to defer the discussion to the second half of the meeting, which was the first meeting of the new Board of Directors/Executive.

Elections – Some New Blood

The election brought about some changes. The first task was to elect 3 new at-large Board Members (the old ones' terms expire at the AGM). David Cohen is the new member. The other two were active last year – Ari Mendrinos and Peter Bloch. Then, once it was sorted out who were the voting Board members for AGM purposes for election of the Executive, there was also some new blood brought onto the Executive. Bryan Lamb, already on the prior exec. as Secty., became the new President. Other prior exec. members staying in their positions were Mark Dutton, Communications Officer, and David Gebhardt, Club & Team Co-ordinator. But the Vice-President is new : Ceasar Posylek (former rep. for Polonia CC in Mississauga). The new Treasurer is Wilf Ferner (one of the at-large Board members last year). The position of Secretary was unfilled, and the Board will now seek someone to appoint to the position, to complete this year's Executive.

GTCL First 2001/02 Board Meeting

The second half of the April 17 evening was for this meeting, and Bryan Lamb took over as Chairperson, being the new President.

Proposed Ontario CFC Governors

The GTCL, as one of the 6 Ontario Chess Association Leagues, has the right to propose to the OCA a list of persons for CFC Governors for Ontario from the GTA. The OCA has the final say on all Ontario Governors. GTCL proposed 10 names : David Cohen, Mark Dutton, Bryan Lamb, Ari Mendrinos, Peter Boross-Harmer, Caesar Posylek, Roger Langen, Wilf Ferner, Michael Doherty and Tony Cheron. These will now go to the OCA Annual Meeting this Victoria Day weekend in Kitchener-Waterloo. (Note : there will be three other GTA Governors, appointed as past CFC Presidents, and so don't require one of the OCA Governor positions : Maurice Smith, Phil Haley and Martin Jaeger).

Proposed OCA Directors

The GTCL also proposes to the OCA a list for OCA Directors from the GTA. This list however generated some controversy. The list is the same except that Martin Jaeger is substituted for Wilf Ferner.

What generated discussion was the inclusion of Mark Dutton as a nominee for an OCA Director position. The reason is the disaffiliation by his tournament organizing company, Dutton Chess, from the OCA when it did not receive the Ontario Open '01 (it went to Kitchener –Waterloo CC). DC said it would no longer honour the OCA Constitution, and is now running at the Toronto Dutton Chess Club premises, its own tournament on the very Victoria Day weekend of the Ontario Open '01. Is it reasonable for Mark now to seek to sit as an OCA Director, given the hostility between the OCA and his company ?

Mark noted his long personal involvement in Ontario chess politics, in many capacities, and drew the distinction between himself personally, and the actions of his business. He wanted to be allowed to make a personal contribution to the OCA, to the extent he could. One director referred to this distinction as a “ fiction “. He could not possibly be expected to act as an OCA Director, against the business interests of his own company. But it was also pointed out that maybe Mark could simply use the well-known method of declaring a conflict-of-interest when it arose, and withdraw from discussion and voting on the item. Mark’s name was left on the list, but with 2 abstentions, and one opposing vote.

The Toronto Tournament Site Problem

The problem of Mark also having a conflict-of-interest in the GTCL came up (when the loss of the Primrose Hotel as a tournament site for DC was discussed). The difficulties of finding suitable sites in Toronto was reviewed. One proposal is for GTCL to work on finding sites for its sanctioned tournaments, and then make it a term of organizers’ bidding, that they agree to use the GTCL-located site. How was this to be done, when DC is running potentially “ conflicting “ tournaments, and it also is looking for sites for its tournaments ? What is Mark to do when he, as GTCL, learns of possible tournament space that GTCL is trying to contract for ? This topic also generated some hot discussion on the role of “ professional “ organizers, such as DC, and volunteer “ amateur “ organizers, and what each could offer in respect to tournament standards. Mark raised the question of whether now it should even be the role of GTCL to be involved in tournament organizing, though it may have been a legitimate role in the past. Needless to say this did not sit well with some. Item adjourned.....

The CFC Cohen/Gebhardt Motion

The meeting had now been going for 3 ½ hours. What was the last item on the agenda? Yep – the Cohen/Gebhardt motion which had been deferred from the earlier AGM. What do you think happened ? Good guess – adjourned..... This is becoming habit-forming for the GTCL ! They have now abandoned the struggle. The reason is that GL # 6 is the forum for “ second discussion on the motion “. And the deadline to get in final argument, to try to influence the Governors in GL # 6, is May 15. When did the Board fix as its next regular Board meeting ? Yep – Tuesday, June 5 !! - too late to get any opposition to the motion statement in, if it wanted to. Unfortunately we hear echoes of some of last year’s floundering here. The last hope might be if the new Executive Committee meets before May 15, and hammers out a position to put into GL # 6 before the deadline. Vain Hope ?

The Future

What is impressive is that issues were canvassed. And this was done in a more civil and respectful way than was sometimes the case last year. There is good will within this group – maybe this year it can find a way to move forward more solidly. Let’s hope !!

Statement from the New GTCL President, Bryan Lamb

As the Secretary of the Greater Toronto Chess League from 1998 to 2001, I gained a lot of insight and experience in to the conduct of organized chess in Toronto, Ontario and Canada. The role I played was more of a supportive role, and I recognized the greater experience possessed by the majority of the other board members.

The last year or two have seen numerous changes on many levels of chess administration, from the CFC to the OCA to the GTCL to the operation of individual clubs. I see many people who have an interest in trying to bring the game of chess to the level of popularity that it deserves to have in this country. What I have also seen is that there are as many points of view on how to bring this about as there are people around a table.

The Greater Toronto Chess League administers chess in Canada's largest city and thus needs to be a good example and model to the rest of the country. The Greater Toronto Chess League also deals with many of the different points of view of how to keep chess as a popular activity and to increase the player pool. I believe that this year's executive is fairly representative of varying points of view and hopefully this means a greater opportunity to try to see eye to eye on more issues.

There are a number of challenges that the GTCL executive, and more loosely, the GTCL board members and also the players in Toronto will face in the coming year. Generating constructive and progressive ideas will become more important and political infighting will tend to hamper progress. In my new role as GTCL president I hope to bring about a greater and more positive profile for the GTCL, using my visibility to the chess community as a player and organizer to help achieve this. I will try to spearhead some new initiatives and ideas, and to promote harmonious cooperation and sharing of ideas among organizers. My positions as OCA Junior Coordinator and Scarborough CC President I hope will bring opportunity for the GTCL to closely work with organizations above and below it for the good of chess players provincially as well as locally.

Times do change, and chess organization will need to try to change with the times. But this requires a community effort and not just the work of single individuals. The GTCL will be looking for input from players in order to help determine a suitable course of action to pursue to make chess more viable in the city and in the Province.

I wish you all to have a productive and happy year both at the chess board and away from it. The reason why I give time and energy back to chess is because I have gotten so much from it. If everyone contributes what they can, great things can happen.

SCC Spring (Thurs.) Swiss '01

33 players turned out on April 10 to start this new 7 Round multi-week tournament that finishes on May 24. The class breakdown of the players is : Master – 1; Expert – 4; A – 5; B – 11; C – 9; D & Under/Unr. – 3.

NOTE :

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