

Scarborough Community of Toronto Chess News & Views

Newsletter of / Le Journal de
Scarborough Chess Club

“ FRIENDLY Chess Since 1960 ”

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO BOTH MEMBERS & NON-MEMBERS

Issue # 15 – April 15, 2005

Do You Know ? / Savez-Vous ?

FIDE April 1 Rating List

There is still only one player over 2800 : # 1 : Garry Kasparov (Russia), 13th FIDE World Champion – 2812. Although he is now retired, he will be shown on the active rating list for one year after his last game, and then be removed for inactivity.

There are now 18 players in the 2700's, up from 14 in the last list. Viswanathan Anand (India), 2000 FIDE World Champion, is in second with a rating of 2785; in the January /05 list, Veselin Topalov (Bulgaria) moved ahead of Kramnik to the #3 spot, and is rated 2778 (up 21 points); now Peter Leko (Hungary), the challenger to Kramnik in the recent World Championship match, has also moved ahead of Kramnik to the # 4 spot with 2763; Vladimir Kramnik (Russia), current Classical World Champion, is now # 5 and has 2753; Vassily Ivanchuk (Ukraine), with 2739 is # 6; Judit Polgar (Hungary), the strongest women's player in the world, with 2732, is in the # 8 spot.

At # 20 is Ruslan Ponomariov (Ukraine), 2002 FIDE World Champion, at 2695; 12th FIDE World Champion, Anatoly Karpov (Russia) is # 27 – 2674; 2004 FIDE World Champion, Rustan Kasimdzhanov (Uzbekistan) is # 33 at 2670; 1999 FIDE World Champion, Alexander Khalifman (Russia) is # 42 – 2658;

Here are a number of the younger players we're watching : Etienne Bacrot (France) is # 9 – 2731 (up 16 points); Alexander Grischuk (Russia) is #11– 2724 (up 14 points); Francisco Vallejo Pons (Spain) is # 28 (down from # 18) – 2677; Teimour Radjabov (Azerbaijan) is # 29 – 2673.

The three highest FIDE rated Canadians are : GM Kevin Spraggett, former Canadian Champion, at 2585; GM Alexandre Le Siege, 2001 Canadian Champion, at 2528; GM Mark Bluvshtein at 2519

Canadian Chess Timeline (History of Chess in Canada) – Part I (to 1899)

(Written, compiled and copyright 2005 by David Cohen)

[Ed. – this is a lengthy article, and so we are breaking it up into a series of parts over the next few Issues.]

300 B.C.-1600 A.D.

Chess is a game played on a board by two players. It originated in India over 2,300 years ago. The chessboard represents the battlefield, and the pieces represents the components of the Indian army (infantry, cavalry, elephantry, chariots). Alexander the Great of Macedonia invaded India. He was a proponent of merging the cultures of Greece and India. So, for example, his Greek officers took Indian wives. I follow the theory of Yuri Averbakh, who proposed that chess was an outcome of the merging of the race (board) games of India and the logic games of Greece. We can see this in the way the pawn races up the board to the last rank, and in the logic of the moves of the pieces.

Many variants of chess were developed as it spread in different directions. Chess flourished in the Middle East around 800 A.D., and moved with its players through Northern Africa into Europe. Regional variations of the game again developed, with a settling down of the rules largely achieved by 1600.

1000

Scandinavian countries had their own board games with pieces, and these were not necessarily derived from chess. Around 1,000 A.D. they arrived in Canada, at L'Anse aux Meadows, Newfoundland. Although no chess boards or pieces were excavated at the site, the National Historic Site's display contains a replica of a Scandinavian 'chess' piece from a period several hundred years later. The Viking crews passed several winters at the site, repairing their ships. It is possible that they brought their games with them, or manufactured them on the spot, so chess in some form may have been played there in Canada for the first time.

17th century

As explorers, armies and emigrants from England and France arrived in North America, they brought their games with them, and these included chess. According to the 1947 Canadian Chess Championship tournament book edited by Léopold Christin, Alexandre de Chaumont, aide-de-camp of de Tracy (Lt.-Gen. of the armies of the King of France in America), was one of the best chess players in France in 1665, and suggests that he would not have spent his two years in the French colony (now Quebec) without playing chess.

18th century

According to Christin, archival correspondence of Louis-Guillaume Verrier, Solicitor-General of Quebec, documents his chess playing with the Intendant of Quebec, Hocquart, 1728-58. This is the earliest documented playing of chess in Canada.

1759

There is a chess set in the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa which was donated by Fred Hale. According to him, this was the set his ancestor, General Sir John Hale, "and General Wolfe played with on their way over to the taking of Quebec."

19th century

Chess played in taverns in Quebec.

Chess played in houses of families in Quebec and Ontario.

In the 1800s, life in Canada was based on a rural, farming economy, so it was slow in the winter-time. It was common practice after dinner in a comfortable home to retire to the drawing room, where the men played games, including chess. A historical display at the home of William Lyon Mackenzie in Toronto contains a chess set.

Another popular past-time was composing and solving chess problems.

There was also a growth in correspondence chess, between individuals and between chess clubs in different cities.

1840s

First chess clubs founded in Quebec City (approx. 1840), Kingston (by 1841), Montreal (1844).

Canadian chess games published in newspapers.

1841

First correspondence chess game in Canada, between Quebec City and Kingston chess clubs.

1872

Organized chess played over the board among players in different cities began with the formation of the Canadian Chess Association (CCA) at Hamilton, Ontario, on 1872.09.24. University of Toronto Professor John Cherriman was elected the first CCA President. The CCA's original purpose was to hold a tournament, the championship of its association and of Canada. The first tournament attracted 16 players from Ontario and Quebec, but was never completed, as the competitors were distracted by the business of the accompanying agricultural fair. Succeeding events were held almost annually up to the turn of the century. The championship was usually held in the main centres of chess activity: Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, Quebec City.

First Canadian chess book, a collection of chess problems, published: '100 Gems of Chess', edited by Thomas D.S. Moore, published by the *Western Advertiser*, London, Ontario.

1873

First Canadian Correspondence Chess Tournament held, won by John Henderson.

First completed Canadian Chess Championship organized by CCA, held at Toronto, Ontario.

First recorded blindfold exhibition, by Albert Ensor, May 19.

1874

First Canadian Chess Championship to be held at Montreal, Quebec.

1875

First Canadian Chess Championship to be held at Ottawa, Ontario.

1877

First Canadian Chess Championship to be held at Quebec, Quebec.

1878

First round-robin Canadian Correspondence Chess Tournament held, won by John Henderson.

1879

Ontario Chess Association was founded, at Guelph on Dec. 12.

1880

First Ontario Chess Championship held, won by W.M. Stark.

1881

George Casey, Member of Parliament for West Elgin, competed in the Canadian Championship.

1884

Future World Chess Championship contestant Johannes Zukertort gave simultaneous exhibitions and 12 board blindfold simultaneous exhibitions in Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal, January-February.

John Henderson competes in his 9th Canadian Chess Championship (1872-84).

1885

Frank Marshall moves to Canada around this time, where he learns to play chess, before becoming U.S. Chess Champion (1909-36).

1888

The CCA's first trophy was permanently awarded to Nicholas MacLeod. His family donated the second trophy.

James Narraway's first of five Canadian Chess Championship first place finishes.

1889

Nicholas MacLeod played in the New York tournament, held to select a challenger to world champion Wilhelm Steinitz; sets record for most losses in one tournament, 31. James Narraway wins correspondence game against famous problem composer Sam Loyd, on Board 1 in Canada - USA match.

1892

Former Canadian Chess Champion Nicholas MacLeod defeated future World Chess Champion Emanuel Lasker, in a simultaneous exhibition given by the latter at Quebec City.

1893

World Chess Champion Wilhelm Steinitz played 16 in a simultaneous exhibition at the Montreal Chess Club, Montreal, Quebec, Nov. 13.

1894

The last eight games of the World Chess Championship, between Wilhelm Steinitz (Champion) and Emanuel Lasker (Challenger) are held at Montreal, Quebec.

1895

William Pollock represents Canada at the prestigious chess tournament held at Hastings, England.

Winnipeg Y Chess Club founded.

1897

CCA's championship moved north, when it was hosted by the chess club in Orillia, Ontario. In the years leading up to the first World War, the association died out and was then revived.

1899

Magnus Smith wins first of three consecutive Canadian Chess Championships..

Rite of Spring Chess Tournament – April 22 – 24

This 5 round swiss is being presented by the Bayview Games Club, 1681 Bayview Avenue. Time control will be Game/150 min.. Rounds are at 6:30 PM Friday, and 11 AM and 5:30 PM on Sat. and Sun. Entry fee - \$ 55 (late fee when entering on the day of the tournament - \$ 10). Non-members of BGC - \$ 15 extra . For further information, call Vlad Dobrich – 416-722-9709.

Greater Toronto Chess League – Annual General Meeting

This will be held Saturday, April 16, at 1:00 P.M. It will be held in the Library, first floor, Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Toronto (GOMT), 86 Overlea Blvd., between

Don Mills and Thorncliffe, turn North at William Morgan Drive, turn East and through gates. It's two doors East of the Macedonian Community Centre, where the annual Labour Day Open has been held for the last dozen years. All are invited to attend and discuss Chess in the GTA.

Below is a campaign statement from Michael Barron who is running for President of the GTCL :

As a number of people already know, I am planning to run for GTCL President at the AGM on April 16.

I would like to give people an idea of what I will be seeking to do if elected, and also to look for any ideas that others might have.

For those of you who do not know me, I grew up in Kramatorsk, Ukraine, learning chess at age 6 from my grandfather. At school age I became the strongest junior player in my city. As you probably know, in former Soviet Union there was a very good system for developing chess. As part of this system talented juniors from all over Soviet Union were gathered in Moscow in special school where they 5 hours a day were studying general subjects like in regular high school and 4 hours a day were studying chess subjects. I was accepted in this special chess school together with such famous now players and coaches as GM Yury Dokhoian (coach of Garry Kasparov), GM Evgeny Bareev (coach of Vladimir Kramnik), IM Georgi Orlov (now resident of Seattle, USA, where he owns a chess school). After graduating from the Moscow chess school I chose a Software Developer career and kept chess as my hobby. After graduating from University I returned back to Kramatorsk and was actively involved in work of city chess organization. Now this small city became a chess capital of Ukraine, and such players as Ruslan Ponomariov, Sergey Karjakin, Kateryna Lahno are well known in chess world. In the success of Kramatorsk chess there is a part of my work too.

Since the year 2002 I have been living in Toronto. In 2003 I founded Antibes Chess Club, which became a winner of the Greater Toronto Chess League Team competition in 2003/2004 season. Since 2003 I am a CFC Governor and OCA Director, in 2004 I was elected Vice President of the GTCL. Now I feel ready to take the leadership in the Greater Toronto Chess League.

What I wish to accomplish might seem ambitious but in my opinion that is far, far better than simply treading water and applying quick fixes to whatever seems to be broken at the moment.

My number one goal would be professionalism in chess organization. It means better using of our experienced chess organizers, professional coaches, certified tournament directors for organization and conducting of various chess competitions.

My second goal would be strengthening of local chess clubs. In my opinion, namely local chess club is the basis of chess life. Together with CFC Governor Kevin Pacey we have submitted CFC Motion 2005-25 about rebate for local chess clubs from new CFC membership fees. The intent of this Motion is – to gain new CFC members and to help local chess clubs. I hope for support of this Motion.

And my third important goal would be development of junior chess in Greater Toronto Area. The junior players are our future. Last few years junior chess was developing quickly in Ontario and in Canada – thanks to Chess'n Math Association and to dedicated OCA and CFC Youth coordinator Patric McDonald. But in GTCL we didn't

pay much attention for junior chess. Our last Toronto Junior Championship was held in 1949! As result, a few of our promising juniors simply quit chess. I believe we should improve quantity and quality of our junior chess competitions. We probably need a dedicated GTCL officer for this purpose – GTCL Youth coordinator.

I realize that I have a lot of ideas but I also have a great team of people already willing to help with these projects. More is always better, though, and if you think you like what you hear I definitely would like to hear from you – the more ideas we could consider, the more people we could get involved – the better results we could achieve for benefit of chess.

And the most important – we all should act together, compete only over the chess board, help each other to develop chess. We in Toronto Area have a lot of experienced chess organizers, arbiters, coaches: Mark Dutton, David Cohen, Barry Thorvardson, Vladimir Dobrich, Martin Jaeger, Brian Lamb, Maurice Smith, Ceasar Posylek, Nicholas Varmazis, Shivaharan Thurairasah, Leslie Armstrong, Roman Pelts, Corinna Wan, Goran Milicevic, Yan Teplitsky, Jura Ochkoos, Michael McArthur, and many others. Maybe we not always agree with each other – but it's impossible: different people are entitled to have different opinions. But we all could and should do our common business – develop chess for benefit of all chess lovers. We need respect each other, only then Canadian society in general would respect chess community and we could proudly describe ourselves as chess players.

We need a leader who could unite all chess players and organizers, regardless of their personal contradictions or past conflict of interests. Everybody could help to develop chess – somebody could donate their money, somebody could donate their time, somebody could donate their professional expertise. And we all could benefit from respectful image of chess.

I am willing and able to do this job.

Cheers :)
Michael Barron

A - Members/ non-members may contact Bob Armstrong, ed. , directly, at bobarm@sympatico.ca or through SCC e-mail, to :

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