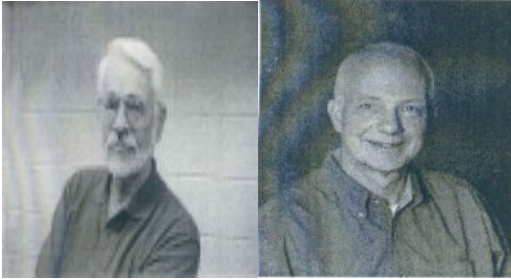




The Check Is in the Mail September 2006



BRANDHORST AND SCHAKEL 2003 USCF ABSOLUTE WINNERS

Scoring undefeated 9-3 results, Wesley (Ted) Brandhorst and Corky Schakel have tied for first in the 2003 USCF Absolute. There are still two games remaining, but no one else can equal their scores. Ted Brandhorst's victory is his second in a row in this his sixth Absolute (and undefeated in his last three Absolutes!) Ted, born 9 May 1933, retired in 2000 to play tennis, golf, and chess. OK, Ted – next stop Wimbledon or Atlanta ?

Corky Schakel started playing chess in 1972, finished third in the 1992 Golden Knights, was awarded the IM title in 2004, and admits to a sense of relief at “finally having won something.” That *something* is only the strongest tournament conducted by the USCF!

Game of the Month

In the Game of the Month, Schakel defeats Richard Title who was Absolute co-Champion himself in 2000 and finished third in the 2003 Absolute.

Readers who would like to see more detailed information on the 2003 Absolute are invited to check January 2007's Chess Life for complete coverage.

SICILIAN DEFENSE (B44) White: Corky Schakel (2354) Black: Richard Title (2435) 2003 Absolute Tournament

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nc6
5.Nb5 d6 6.c4 Nf6 7.N1c3 a6 8.Na3
Be7 9.Be2 0-0 10.0-0 Qa5

This is a new move, but Black has been doing very well with 10...b6 and heading toward a hedgehog formation.

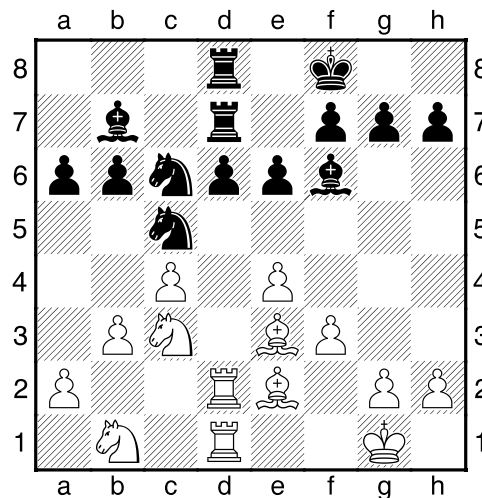
11.Be3 Rd8 12.Qb3

White forces a defensive play before offering an exchange of Queens.

12...Nd7 13.Qa4 Qxa4 14.Nxa4 Rb8
15.Rad1 b6 16.Nc3 Nc5 17.Rd2 Bf6

17 ...Bb7 now rather than later will help Black defend. -- Schakel

18.Nab1 Rb7 19.Rfd1 Rbd7 20.b3 Bb7
21.f3 Kf8



22.Na4!

White pinpoints the weakest square in Black's formation.

22...Nxa4 23.bxa4 Ne5

With the b6 Pawn disappearing with minimal compensation, Black strikes out for piece activity as compensation. White's well -placed pieces drive black further in the hole.

24.f4 Ng6 25.e5 Be7 26.Bxb6 Nxf4 27.Bxd8 Nxe2+ 28.Rxe2 Rxd8 29.Rb2

The struggle with 29...Bc6 would only last longer, not better.

29...Be4 30.Nc3 Bf5 31.Kf2 dxe5 32.Rxd8+ Bxd8 33.Kf3 Ke8 34.Rb7 Bd3 35.c5 f5 36.c6 e4+ 37.Kf4 Ba5 38.Ke5

The ending is easy for such a difficult game. A possible conclusion would be – 38. ...Bxc3+ 39. Kd6 Ba5 40. c7 Bxc7+ 41. Rxc7 f4 42. Kxe6 Kd8 43. Rxc7 e3 44. Kd6 Ke8 45. g3 e2 46. Re7+ Kf8 47. gxf4. **1–0**

USCF NEWS ITEMS

“The Check Is in the Mail” is back online at the “old” US Chess Federation web site – www.uschess.org/cc. If you would rather download from the web site than receive the check as email, let me know !

From now on (25 August) all newly-created tournaments will be listed online. I have entered two John Collins and a Golden Knights. Soon you will be able to look up the crosstables and results on line. How soon? I asked but did not get an answer.

XV OLYMPIC FINALS

The USA has fielded a strong team, five Senior IM's and a GM, for the XV Olympiad Finals. In Board order: Daniel Fleetwood, Jason Bokar, Timothy Murray, GM Joseph DeMauro, Gary Kubach, and Stephen Jones. The reserve is Kenneth Reinhart and the Team Captain is Tom Dougherty. Their opponents will be Germany, Lithuania, Netherlands, Ireland, Norway, Slovenia, Poland, Russia, Latvia, Austria, Kazakhstan, Portugal, and Estonia. Good skill, gentlemen!

August Winners

Swift Quads

Kendrick Aung 05DQ17 6-0

WALTER MUIR E-QUADS

Kerry Williams 06W04 5-1

Brian Higgins 06W05 5 ½-½

Trophy Quads

Joseph Daudish 05QA09 4 ½-1 ½

Gregory Durham 05QA09 4 ½-1 ½

Frank Spooner 03QCD23 5-1

Fredrick Toenies 05QA06 5-1

Quote

In correspondence chess, you can smoke during the game. -- John Knudsen

Letters to the Editor

When will the CC Ratings Search page be updated? There have been no changes since June 5th. I know Alex Dunne has submitted the results and he keeps reassuring me that they will be posted, yet week after week passes with no postings....

Harvey E. Watson

I have asked Joan DuBois and Mike Nolan (the USCF programmer) about the problem with the unrated games. Right at the moment I have no good answer for Harvey. The MSA (Membership Service Area) has the cc ratings, and it does the lookup form on the correspondence web page now. Joan is pushing for a patch-up program to get all the old ratings into the system. Mike's (current) solution is to enter crosstables for every existent cc tournament and let the ratings flow from that. Mike's solution will take some time (A year or more anyway) so Joan's solution is favored by me. I will let you know what happens as soon as I find out.

EXECUTIVE OPENING ICCF-US Secretary

Max Zavanelli has been ICCF-US Secretary since 1987, and I [Ruth Ann Fay] have been helping him for the last 9 of those 19 years. Due to business and personal reasons, we are now ready to retire from these duties. Our hope would be that we could provide a seamless transfer of duties to the next ICCF-US Secretary. Any player interested in this position should send their questions to Ruth Ann Fay and their resume to their domestic chess club with a copy to Ruth Ann Fay at zprchess@aol.com.

The position requires these minimum duties and skills:

Email skills - I have over 5000 emails sorted and "filed" in about 125 folders. OK, I admit, if I had time, a lot could be deleted. I receive 10-50 emails a day, depending on what is happening at the time.

Processing entries: Players, some through the ICCF Webserver, send emails regarding tournament entry. I reply with payment procedures. I then receive PayPal payments or checks. Probably 90% of correspondence is by email, but there are still some players who write and send checks.

Answer other inquiries: I have set up generic responses to cut and paste into the replies or to print out for postal inquiries. Post has greatly diminished over the years, most of what I receive now is from prisoners.

Organize USCCC, historically a bi-annual event. We switched to alternating post and server events.

Form USA teams for the ICCF Olympiads and other zonal team events. Jason Bokar as Deputy Zonal Director has been helping with this.

Organize country matches. I haven't had the time for this job. It could be moved to an assistant. It's great for the player looking for fun rather than titles.

Host Invitationals and team matches for NAPZ and PATT: The best way to get our players into a tournament with title norms is to organize them. I haven't had enough time to do this well.

Find players for Invitational matches. One needs to know the top players and to keep track to some extent of their game load. When we receive an

Invitation from another country, we sometimes have very little time to provide a player. These are for players looking for title norms.

Keep Website updated, I haven't been good at this...

Publish "Top 50" list twice a year.

Ability to use DOS databases. Both the ICCF Eloquery database and the USA Database are DOS programs. For the USA database, we use Alpha 4. It is time to move the USA players up to either a newer version or another program, but this would be very time consuming.

Note that with every inquiry and entry, I check the player's contact information. For entries, I verify the ICCF number and rating. I must make certain that the players enter the correct level of event. The players frequently click on "Open Class" through server entry system when they belong in a Higher or Master Class section.

Keep track qualifications: ICCF now has a Qualifications report, but it is not updated often enough. I need to be able to tell players what their result in a certain tournament qualifies them for.

Fairly award the USA federation nominations to the ICCF World Championship Cycle.

Apply for ICCF Titles: The federation must make formal application for titles once the players have earned the correct number of norms. I maintain a log of players who only have 1 norm and try to get them into tournaments in which they can earn the remaining norm(s).

Forward announcements and updated Order Forms to the Webmaster for Posting. For example, World Cups and

Champions League start in alternating years.

Recruit, advise, and otherwise help Td's.

Sale of postcards and scoresheets. I plan to stop this activity once the remaining stock is sold. Most players have moved to the server environment and do not require postcards and scoresheets.

Pay ICCF annual dues - only after verifying that we are paying on the correct number of players and entries. The financial object on the above duties has been to mark up tournament entries enough to cover the headcount portion of the ICCF dues. We do not charge separate, annual player dues as all players should be paying USA club dues.

NAPZ Director: The USA has about 75% of the players in the North America/Pacific Zone. This has traditionally been the ICCF-US delegate. This position is a seat on the ICCF Executive Board. This position can only be done properly by attending ICCF Congresses and being active on ICCF Committees. This is the only way to represent and protect USA interests and to keep our players informed of ICCF changes and events. We have been on Statutes, Appeals, and Rules Committees, for example. This could be handled by a second person. This is obviously the expensive portion of the job. The person has to be willing to make his vacation into a working vacation. Most Congresses have been in Europe, but we have also been to Argentina and India and hosted here in Daytona Beach in 2000. The Congresses are usually in the fall.

I cannot properly allocate the time I spend on these duties. I spend 3-4 hours most days, but to do everything, I could

easily spend more.

Ruth Ann Fay
NAPZ Director
ICCF-US Assistant Secretary

Obituary

Chester Gall, Fountain Valley, CA, died on 5 July 2006.

Classified Ads

LEARN CHESS BY MAIL ! Lessons given by mail, telephone, ICC – many different ways. I specialize in players rated 800-2100 who would like to improve their game. Contact me for information. Alex Dunne, 324 West Lockhart St., Sayre, PA 18840 or alex.dunne@cqservices.com

Tournaments I would like to fill

These tournaments all need just one more player to be assigned. If you qualify, enter now on a first come first served basis!

John Collins – Class D,C,B and Ex/M
Walter Muir – Class A

Lightning Match -- 2 games:
Class D,C,B

Trophy Quad – Class C, B, A

Postal Match 2 games: Class C, Ex/M
4 games, Class C, A

Swift Quad C/D

Prisoner Donations?

A special thanks to those of you who sent in donations to “The Check.” The money will be used to supply some prisoners with a free subscription.

Speaking of prisoners, Jevon Jackson is another prisoner who has been forced to drop out of postal chess because the prison authorities fear 1. e4 c5 is a secret code. If your prisoner opponent is faced with a similar fate, try switching to the old form of descriptive – 1. I play my Pawn to c5 in response to your opening Pawn play of 1. e4. That usually works.

In this issue of Check! magazine, it was noted that Zoltan Sarosy of Ontario, Canada, reached age 100 on 23 August. Zoltan, an IM, still has an active cc rating of 1810. Happy Birthday to you, Zoltan !

In this game, Brandhorst seems to refute the laws of materialism. He attacks and attacks, with seemingly little regard to material until White simply has no moves left.

GIUOCO PIANO (C54)

White: Kristo Miettinen (2342)

Black: Wesley Brandhorst (2389)

2003 Absolute Championship

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 Nf6
5.b4 Bb6 6.d3 d6 7.a4 a5 8.b5 Ne7 9.0–0
Ng6 10.Nbd2 0–0 11.d4 Bg4 12.Qc2
Qe7 13.Re1 Nf4 14.h3 Bh5 15.Nh4 Rfe8
16.Ndf3 Bxf3 17.Nxf3 N6h5 18.g3
N3f4 22.gxf4 Nxf4 23.Bxf4 Qxf4+
24.Kg1 Re6 25.Bh3 Rh6 26.Kg2 g5
27.Nh2 Rh4 28.dxe5 g4 29.Nxg4 Kh8
30.exd6 Rg8 31.f3 h5 32.Rh1 Rg6
33.Rad1 Kg7 34.Rd3 cxd6 35.Qe1 Bd8
36.c4 Bf6 37.b6 Kf8 0–1

White’s strategy is a time-honored one: Steal a Pawn in the opening and use the Pawn plus to win in the endgame. In this case, it also takes a lot of good moves.

SICILIAN DEFENSE (B33)

White: Laurence Coplin (2330)

Black: James Fisher (2317)

2003 Absolute Championship

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 e6 6.Ndb5 d6 7.Bf4 e5 8.Bg5 a6 9.Na3 Be7 10.Nc4 0-0 11.Bxf6 Bxf6 12.Qxd6 Be6 13.Nd5 Bh4 14.g3 Bg5 15.c3 Rc8 16.h4 Bh6 17.a4 Kh8 18.a5 Rb8 19.Qxd8 Rbxd8 20.Rd1 f6 21.f3 f5 22.Be2 g6 23.b4 Rg8 24.Ncb6 fxe4 25.fxe4 Rgf8 26.Na4 Bxd5 27.Rxd5 Be3 28.Rf1 Rxf1+ 29.Bxf1 Rf8 30.Bc4 Bf2+ 31.Ke2 Bxg3 32.Rd7 Nd8 33.Nc5 Bxh4 34.Nxb7 Nxb7 35.Rxb7 g5 36.Rf7 Rxf7 37.Bxf7 g4 38.b5 Be7 39.b6 Bc5 40.Bh5 Kg7 41.Bxg4 Kf7 42.Bc8 1-0

Richard Title shows some of the moxie that drove him to his third place finish. White gets aggressive and sacrifices a Bishop for two Pawns, then three, then four, and wins by Pawn superiority.

SICILIAN DEFENSE (B87)

White: Richard Title (2435)

Black: Lawrence Coplin (2330)

2003 Absolute Championship

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Bc4 e6 7.Bb3 b5 8.0-0 Be7 9.Qf3 Qb6 10.Bg5 Nbd7 11.Rad1 Bb7 12.Bxe6 fxe6 13.Nxe6 Kf7 14.Bxf6 Bxf6 15.Qf5 Nf8 16.Nd5 Bxd5 17.Ng5+ Ke8 18.Rxd5 Rd8 19.Rfd1 Bxg5 20.Qxg5 Ng6 21.e5 Rf8 22.R1d2 Kf7 23.Rxd6 Rxd6 24.exd6 Kg8 25.d7 Qd8 26.Qc5 Nh8 27.Qd5+ Nf7 28.Re2 Qg5 29.Qxg5 Nxe5 30.h4 Nf7 31.Re6 Nh6 32.Rxa6 Rd8 33.Rd6 Kf7 34.Kf1 Nf5 35.Rd5 Ke6 36.Rxb5 Rxd7 37.Rb4 Ne7 38.a4 Nd5 39.Re4+ Kd6 40.Ke1 Rb7

41.b3 Rc7 42.Kd2 Rf7 43.f3 Nf4 44.g3 Nh5 45.g4 Nf4 46.b4 Ng2 47.c4 Rxf3 48.h5 Ra3 49.a5 Nh4 50.Kc2 Nf3 51.Kb2 Ra4 52.Kb3 Ra1 53.Rf4 Ne5 54.h6 g5 55.Rd4+ Ke7 56.c5 Kf7 57.Rd6 Nxg4 58.Rd7+ Kg6 59.c6 Rb1+ 60.Ka4 Ne5 61.a6 Kh5 62.Kb5 Nxc6 63.Kxc6 Rxb4 64.a7 Ra4 65.Rxh7 Kg6 66.Kb5 Ra1 67.Rc7 Kxh6 68.Rc6+ Kh5 69.Ra6 Rb1+ 70.Kc4 Rc1+ 71.Kd3 Rd1+ 72.Ke2 Rd8 73.a8Q Rxa8 74.Rxa8 Kg4 75.Rf8 Kg3 76.Kf1 g4 77.Kg1 Kh3 78.Kf2 g3+ 79.Kf3 Kh4 80.Rg8 Kh5 81.Rxg3 1-0