
Wilshire Chess Society

Final Newsletter

OFFICERS

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The WCS: April 12, 1993- May 18, 2003

“Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one.” - Albert Einstein

Yep, it's true. After 10 years the Wilshire Chess Society is closing its doors. Why? Because for the past year our turnout has been, well, miserable. Indeed, at the May tournament only 4 people showed up to play! Despite the poor attendance, SM Mick Bighamian gave a very nice lecture on "Middle Game Pawn Structures." He explained the differences between the 5 major types of central pawn structures: **closed**, **open**, **mobile**, **fixed**, and **dynamic**, as well as provided handouts from *The Art of The Middle Game* by Keres and Kotov, from which his examples were taken. Afterwards, we decided to hold an impromptu blitz tournament. Participating were Randy Higa, Richard Henderson, John Rolston, a student of John's, Dennis Uchimura and Mick (the latter two had not planned on playing, but since it was blitz, agreed to give it a punt). And it was good for them that they did, as although Mick and Dennis had to give up time odds in most of their games (as they were the two highest rated), they ended up winning what turned out to be the final WCS tournament.

So, what happened to our club? The bottom line was members stopped showing up to play! And since I was the one paying for the room each month, directing the tournaments, maintaining our member's database, writing the newsletter, printing out labels, paying for club letterhead and envelopes, paying for postage, running and updating the internet site, and returning club inquirers via both the phone and e-mail, I eventually decided that the return was not worth the time and money I was investing. However, this decision that was not made rashly.

Back in the April newsletter, I made a plea to our members: "Support Your Chess Club or Lose it!" There I talked about the possible reasons for the poor turnout: the internet (yes, I play their too, but it's no substitute for over-the-board play). Membership value? We added Mick's monthly lectures, which were free to members, as a way to attract more people. While a few people came out just for the lecture, it didn't help increase tournament sign-ups. Some have suggested that Sundays are a busy day, and that families have lots of activities to choose from on that day. I don't buy this. Chess tournaments are often held on Sundays, and besides, you could make this excuse for any day of the week! In my opinion, the most likely culprit was the time control. Slow players find that g/45 is too fast for them. And blitz players feel that 45 mins. is too much time! However, since we only had the room for one afternoon a month, longer time controls would mean we could only play one game per month, and some players wouldn't like this. On the other hand, we could have run a blitz tournament each month, but I'm sure that the chess "purists" among our club would have found this solution equally as revolting. Of course, I was certainly open to suggestions, but didn't seem to get much input from our members. Why? Because the truth is most chess players do not like to get involved in organizing and running chess events. They want others to do the work so they can simply show up and play. Indeed, while I don't always agree with the decisions that John Hillary or Randy Hough make, I am grateful that we have them. Because, if they didn't take on the thankless task of running tournaments here in Southern CA, I wonder who would?

However, the reality is that our club is not the only one having problems. There has been a trend country wide of low player turnout (with the exception of scholastic events). Apparently, even being a world champion doesn't assure a good showing these days. According to Norbert Fogarasi's web page, he reports on a conversation he had with former Woman's World Champion GM Susan Polgar, which included this: "*As is the usual Hungarian ritual, she started complaining about hardships in life, which currently exhibited itself in the low traffic of the 'Polgar (Over)*

(Con'd from front) Chess Authority,' which is the official name of her club/store." However, as far as I know, Polgar's club is still going. However, ours has had to tip its king. Before I say good-bye, here is a recap of our club history (this info. is also available on our website, www.geocities.com/mjshark1, which I will leave up for now):

The Wilshire Chess Society (WCS) was founded on April 12, 1993 by Anthony Reynolds, Ray Montalvo, Mike White, and Sanjay Srivastava. They chipped in \$10.00 each, and then immediately sent in \$30.00 from their new treasury to the U.S. Chess Federation to become an official USCF affiliate. Each month they would hold a chess tournament with humorous names such as, *June Juggernaut*, *August Apocalypse* and *October Ooom-pah-pah*. Doug Enright was the winner of the very first WCS tournament ever held. His prize? He got his \$5.00 entry fee back! Eventually the tournaments were moved to the Community Room at the Westside Pavilion Mall in West Los Angeles. In February of 1995, Anthony Reynolds, who was running the WCS and directing its tournaments, moved his family to Virginia. It was at this time that Michael Jeffreys took over as club president and created the WCS newsletter. Raymond De turenne kept our member data base organized, Robert Nunnally was club secretary, and Lisa Edmondson treasurer.

Our first WCS monthly newsletter came out in July 1995. It contained a Black to move and win chess puzzle, along with the story of how we got our club name. (Basically, the four founders listed above sat around the balcony of the UCLA physics building trying to come up with a club name. Nobody could think of anything that the group liked when Ray Montalvo blurted out, "How about the Wilshire Chess Society?" The others said, "Sounds good to us!" And the rest, as they say, is history.) Today, the club is run by Michael Jeffreys who serves as TD at the tournaments as well as editor/publisher of the club's monthly newsletter. Elliot Landaw assists at the tournaments with the pairings and paperwork. In March of 2002, Danny Berman created this web site to display the pictures from the Kasparov simul and to give our club a presence on the web. Lisa Edmondson, who was club secretary, retired in May of 2002. At the May 18, 2003 tournament, only 4 people showed up to play. Since the attendance had been down for the past year and a half, and with summer approaching (a typically slow time for chess tournaments) Michael Jeffreys made the decision to close the club.

I would like to personally thank Anthony Reynolds for starting the club and being its first president, Robert Nunnally for being the first club secretary, Lisa Edmondson for all her help and dedication in running the tournaments for several years, Raymond De turenne for keeping our first club database, Elliot Landaw for contributing both his time and pocket book in helping keep the club going for as long as it went, IM Jack Peters for helping to promote us in his weekly L.A. Times chess column, and SM Mick Bighamian for providing the club with free monthly lectures. Special mention goes to Richard Henderson, who consistently played at the club for longer than any other member--almost all 10 years! Expert Julian Landaw for being the strongest "youngest" player to ever play in our tournament, and Sid Rubin, for being the strongest "oldest" player to ever play in our tournament. IM Tim Taylor for being the highest rated player to ever play in our tournament, and finally, a big thank you to all the club members who showed up each month and supported the club throughout our 10 year history.

Thanks, it was a great ride! -Michael Jeffreys 6/27/03

P.S. Although I did lose money this last year on the club, I don't want any member to feel "ripped-off." So, if you contact me within the next 30 days, I will personally refund the pro-rated amount of your membership dues.



Michael Jeffreys



My girlfriend, Judith :)



Elliot Landaw



Julian Landaw



IM Tim Taylor



Richard Henderson



SM Mick Bighamian

2003 National Open Photo Report

This year's National Open was held June 12-15 at the Riviera Hotel in Las Vegas. While I normally play, this year I decided to just go and have fun, i.e., not play. And what a great decision this turned out to be. I got to attend many of the lectures, including several by GM Sam Palatnik who analyzed player's games. Sam, who co-wrote three great chess books, is from the Ukraine, and has a terrific sense of humor. While perhaps his writing partner, GM Lev Alburt, is more well known, both of these men are wonderful teachers and great ambassadors for the game. I also enjoyed GM Ron Henley's lectures, who went over several interesting Fischer-Benko games, as well as some of the key Kasparov-Karpov match ups. Since Ron was Karpov's second at one time, he has an insider's perspective that makes for great stories and fascinating insights into the mind of ex-world champ Karpov. Another highlight, was getting to see a live demonstration of the world famous "Turk." For those who don't know, the Turk was originally built in the 1700s, and was an "automaton" that could actually play world class chess! Yes, its arm actually moved and picked up the chess piece when it was "its" move, and it would win 99 times out of a hundred. You have to remember that this was before the time of electricity, so people had no idea how it worked, and many considered it nothing short of miraculous. The one we saw was an exact replica built by famed magic illusion builder Johnny Gaughn, as the original was

destroyed in a warehouse fire in the 1800s. Also, I attended the lecture by Gerald Abraham, the world's foremost expert on "The Turk," and the author of a book on the history of this unique creation. Thanks goes to Dr. Joseph Wagner for arranging this very special event. In addition to getting in some solid pool time, I was also able to watch several of the GM games. This is something that when you're playing, you just don't get to do. No doubt the star of the tournament was our newest and youngest GM, Hikaru Nakamura. While it's obvious that he is an extremely talented and aggressive player, in my opinion, he still has some growing up to do. I observed him time after time bang the clock and try to intimidate his opponents throughout the Blitz tournament (which he did in fact win). Hopefully, he will learn that it is a possible to be both a gentleman AND a winner. Finally, the Open section finished in an 8 way tie! You can see a list of all the winners at: www.64.com.



GM Yermolinsky during Simul



GM Ehlvest



IM Akobian vs. GM Nakamura



GM Shabalov during Simul



GM Blatny



IM Saidy vs. GM Nakamura



IM Akobian vs. IM Barcenilla



IM Akobian vs. Sevillano



FM Altounian



FM Tate

2003 National Open Photo Report (con'd)



GM Benjamin



WGM Belakovskaia



GM Shabalov



IM Finegold vs. FM Casella



Johnny Gaughn, builder of the Turk, talking to the audience about his creation



"The Turk"

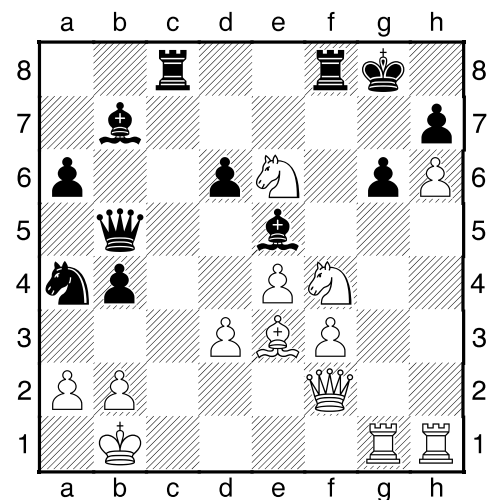
Our Final Game of the Month

Here was the tense final round game between the 15 year old Nakamura and a strong Chinese GM.

Sadvakasov, D (2595) – Nakamura, H (2648)

2003 National Open (6), 15.06.2003

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be3 e6 7.f3 b5 8.g4 Nfd7 9.Qd2 Nb6 10.0-0-0 Bb7 11.Bd3 N8d7 12.Qf2 Rc8 13.Nce2 Be7 14.Kb1 Na4 15.h4 Ndc5 16.g5 0-0 17.Qg3 Qc7 18.Rc1 b4 19.h5 Nxd3 20.cxd3 Qd7 21.Rcg1 f5 22.gxf6 Bxf6 23.h6 g6 24.Nf4 Be5 25.Ndxe6 Qb5 26.Qf2 Diagram



Black
to move

26...b3 27.Bd4 Rc2 28.Nxg6 hxg6 29.Bxe5 Rxf2 30.h7+ Kf7 And White Resigned 0-1

(Fritz 8 says: 1. -+ (13.78): 31.Ka1 Qxe5 32.d4 Rxb2 33.axb3 Qxe6 2. -+ (-14.81): 31.h8Q Rxh8 32.Ng5+ Ke7 33.Bxd6+ Kxd6 34.Ka1 Qxg5 35.axb3 Qf6).