

BCCF E-MAIL BULLETIN #143

Your editor welcomes any and all submissions - news of upcoming events, tournament reports, and anything else that might be of interest to B.C. players. Thanks to all who contributed to this issue.

To subscribe, send me an e-mail (swright2@telus.net) or sign up via the BCCF webpage (www.chess.bc.ca); if you no longer wish to receive this Bulletin, just let me know.

Stephen Wright

[Back issues of the Bulletin are available on the above webpage.]

HERE AND THERE

Canadian Chess Challenge (May 18, 19)

Occurring over the Victoria Day weekend was the National Chess Challenge, held this year in Edmonton. This is a scholastic team event; each province sends one champion from each grade (12 in total) to do battle with the respective champions from the other provinces. The B.C. team, consisting of Jingzhi Xu, Jonah Lee, Janak Awatramani, Jeremy Hui, Frank Cheng, Tanraj Sohal, Yifei Han, Joshua Renaud, Richard Huang, Elliot Raymer, Tedging Pan, and Sam Churchill, finished in third place, behind the two traditional powerhouses of Ontario and Quebec. In fact the overall placements were exactly the same as last year, with the exception of B.C. scoring enough points to take sole third, rather than sharing that honour with Alberta as we did in 2007.

- 1 Ontario 91.5/108
- 2 Quebec 84.5
- 3 British Columbia 73
- 4 Alberta 64
- 5 Manitoba 61
- 6 Nova Scotia 41.5
- 7 Newfoundland 41
- 8 New Brunswick 38
- 9 Saskatchewan 36
- 10 Prince Edward Island 9.5

In the individual board prizes B.C. garnered a total of four trophies:

Grade 2 Jonah Lee, second place, 7/9

Grade 3 Janak Awatramani, first place and national champion, 9
Grade 6 Tanraj Sohal, first place and national champion, 9
Grade 7 Yifei Han, third place, 7

Mention should also be made of Jeremy Hui, who tied for third in grade 4 with 6.5/9 but lost the playoff, and Louie Jiang, who won grade 9 with 9/9 - unfortunately not for B.C. but for his now home province of Quebec. Congratulations to all our representatives, and many thanks to Valer Eugen Demian, Lynn Stringer, Tanveer Sohal, Glen Lee and all the other parents and volunteers who contributed to the success of the B.C. team. Further details can be found at:

<http://www.chess-math.org/ccc2008/>

<http://www.chess.nl.ca/year/2007+2008/ccc/national/results/english/index.html>

Photos:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/gyanawatramani/Edmonton2008?authkey=VTiw0PJYZwQ>

and a detailed round-by-round commentary by Valer Eugen Demian at

<http://www.64funsolutions.ca/article/news-flash/canadian-chess-challenge-edmonton-2008>

Janak Awatramani

Junior star Janak Awatramani was also the subject of a blog article on the online version of Wall Street Journal, also reproduced on Susan Polgar's blog:

<http://blogs.livemint.com/blogs/travel/archive/2008/05/19/day-35-checkmated-in-vancouver.aspx>

<http://susanpolgar.blogspot.com/2008/05/young-canadian-champ-janak-awatramani.html>

Hikaru Nakamura Simul (May 9)

Although the organizers had little time to prepare and promote this junior chess fund raising event, this 37-board simul was a success. In the end, GM Nakamura, often moved with an amazing speed, defeated 35 challengers and only conceded two draws to Len Molden and junior Henry Ji. Thanks to GM Nakamura for his support of BC junior chess, and Junior Coordinator Ken Jensen and Richmond Chess Club organizer Norm Conrad for organizing the event, Kirsten Schrader of Richmond Culture Centre for securing the site with a short notice, parent volunteers Lara, Wolfram and the chess club members for helping out during this exciting evening. [- Jay Zhao]

Bio: http://www.bjdy.com/juniorchess/GM_simul.html

Photos: http://www.bjdy.com/juniorchess/Nakamura_simul/index.html

Molden, Len - Nakamura, Hikaru [E61] Nakamura Simul, Richmond, 09.05.2008

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 d6 3.e3 Nbd7 4.Be2 g6 5.c4 e5 6.Nc3 Bg7 7.0-0 0-0 8.b4 a5 9.b5 Re8
10.Re1 e4 11.Nd2 Nf8 12.Rb1 h5 13.Ba3 N8h7 14.Qc2 Bf5 15.Na4 h4 16.c5 d5 17.b6
c6 18.Bc1 h3 19.g3 Ng5 20.Qd1 Qd7 21.Nb3 Bg4 22.Bxg4 Nxg4 23.Nd2 Qf5 24.Rf1
Re6 25.Qe2 Rae8 26.Nc3 Bh6 27.Nd1 Rf6 28.Rb3 Qd7 29.Kh1 Rf3 30.Ra3 Re6
31.Rxa5 Ref6 32.Kg1 Ne6 33.Ra3 R6f5 34.Nxf3 Rxf3 35.Rc3 Ng5 36.a4 Rf6 37.a5 Nf3+
38.Kh1 Ngxh2 39.a6 bxa6 40.Qxa6 Nxf1 41.Qxf1 Re6 42.Ra3 Re8 1/2-1/2 ("In the
game I accepted his draw offer thinking it was the right thing to do with everyone done,
but I didn't even look at the position on the board!! I have a forced win in a few moves
in the final position. I play Ra7, his Queen moves, then b7 followed by Ra8." - Len
Molden)

May Active (May 3)

Results from the latest active tournament at the Vancouver Bridge Centre:
<http://wcjc.blogspot.com/2008/05/vancouver-may-active.html>. The next events are set
for June 14 and July 6.

Chess League

Congratulations to Port Coquitlam who won the 2008 Lower Mainland Chess Club
Team Championship, full results at:

<http://www.chessmastery.com/teamresults.html>

33rd PAUL KERES MEMORIAL



The eventual winners square off in round 4.

IM Georgi Orlov returned to the winner's circle in the 33rd Keres Memorial last weekend, but this time he had to share the honours with FM Bindi Cheng; both scored 5.5/7. They edged out IM Vicente Lee, who was leading the tournament but fell victim to Orlov in the last round. Cheng had the personal satisfaction of beating Orlov in round 4, but was himself dispatched by Lee the next round. A half-point further back were Roman Jiganchine, Lucas Davies, Tarek Toubale, and Ben Daswani on 4.5; the latter two shared the U2200 prizes. Both had excellent events: Ben is having his best results ever after a layoff of a few years, while Toubale used to sport a USCF 2300+ rating but his only other event in the last ten years was the 2006 Keres.

Changhe Li won the U2000 Section with 5.5/6, a full point ahead of Mike Hosford, Juni Caluza, and Alexandra Botez in second. Jacob Jensen took the U1700 prize with a performance far above his rating; also notable in this regard was the 3.5/6 of Donovan Zhao. The U1600 Section saw Henry Ji emerge victorious ahead of Matthew Cheah, Hector Rathburn-Mackay won the U1300 prize.

In some ways the tournament was a carbon copy of last year's event: same location (Hungarian Cultural Centre), same turnout (79), same personnel running it/helping out (Stephen Wright, Lyle Craver, Katherine Davies, Ken Jensen) - and of course a special thank you to Frank of the Cultural Centre. Thanks to Kirk Gornall for the annotations to one of his games.

Crosstables: <http://www.chess.ca/xtable.asp?TNum=200805110>
<http://www.chess.ca/xtable.asp?TNum=200805109>
<http://www.chess.ca/xtable.asp?TNum=200805108>

Games: <http://www.bjdy.com/juniorchess/games/keres08.pgn>

Previous Keres winners: <http://www3.telus.net/public/swright2/keresmem.html>

Roman Jiganchine's comments on his games: <http://roman-chess.blogspot.com/2008/05/keres-memorial-2008-game-over.html>



A sign which should be prominently displayed at all chess tournaments ...

Orlov, Georgi - Cadman, Charles [A31] Keres mem 33rd Vancouver (3.1), 17.05.2008

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.Nf3 cxd4 4.Nxd4 e5 5.Nb5 d5 6.cxd5 Bc5 7.e3 0-0 8.N5c3 e4 9.a3 Bf5 10.Be2 Nbd7 11.g4 Bg6 12.h4 h6 13.Nd2 Qe7 14.b4 Bd6 15.Bb2 a5 16.bxa5 Rxa5 17.Nc4 Raa8 18.Nb5 Ne8 19.Ncxd6 Nxd6 20.Qd4 f6 21.Qb4 Ra6 22.Nxd6 Rxd6 23.a4 Ne5 24.Ba3 Rfd8 25.Qd4 Qd7 26.Bxd6 Qxd6 27.Rd1 Rc8 28.a5 Rc2 29.h5 Bh7 30.Qb6 Qa3 31.Qd8+ Qf8 32.Qxf8+ Kxf8 33.d6 Ke8 34.Bb5+ Kd8 35.0-0 Rc5 36.Rb1 Nxc4 37.Rfc1 Rg5 38.Kf1 Bf5 39.d7 Nh2+ 40.Ke1 Rg1+ 41.Kd2 Nf3+ 42.Ke2 Rxc1 43.Rxc1 Bxd7 44.Rd1 Ne5 45.Rd4 f5 46.Rd5 Nc6 47.a6 1-0

Lee, Vicente - Selzler, Ricky [E94] Keres mem 33rd Vancouver (3.3), 17.05.2008

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.c4 Bg7 4.Nc3 0-0 5.e4 d6 6.Be2 e5 7.Be3 Ng4 8.Bg5 f6 9.Bh4 Na6 10.0-0 g5 11.Bg3 Nh6 12.dxe5 dxe5 13.Qxd8 Rxd8 14.Rfd1 Be6 15.a3 c6 16.Nd2 Nf7 17.f3 Bf8 18.b4 Rdc8 19.c5 Nc7 20.Nc4 Rd8 21.Bf2 Rxd1+ 22.Rxd1 Rd8 23.Rc1 Rd7 24.Be3 Be7 25.Kf2 Kf8 26.Na5 Nd8 27.g3 Kg7 28.f4 exf4 29.gxf4 h6 30.f5 Bg8 31.Rb1 Kf8 32.a4 a6 33.h4 Kg7 34.hxg5 hxg5 35.Nc4 Nf7 36.b5 axb5 37.axb5 Nxb5 38.Nxb5 cxb5 39.Nb6 Rd8 40.Nd5 Bf8 41.Rxb5 Rc8 42.Bd4 Rc6 43.Ke3 Nd8 44.Bc4 Ra6 45.Rb6 Rxb6 46.cxb6 Bxd5 47.Bxd5 Bd6 48.Kf3 Be7 49.Kg4 Kh6 50.e5 fxe5 51.Bxe5 Bc5 52.Bc7 Be7 53.Kf3 Kg7 54.Be5+ Kf8 55.f6 Bc5 56.Bc7 Ke8 57.Kg4 Kd7 58.Kxg5 Ne6+ 59.Bxe6+ Kxe6 60.Kg6 Bd6 61.f7 Bc5 62.Kg7 Ba3 63.f8Q Bxf8+ 64.Kxf8 Kd7 65.Kf7 Kc8 66.Kf6 Kd7 67.Ke5 Kc8 68.Kd5 Kd7 69.Bf4 Kc8 1/2-1/2



A useful fortress position to remember - White is up a whole bishop but can't win.

Lister, Curtis - Gornall, Kirk [B01] Keres mem 33rd Vancouver (3.10), 17.05.2008 [Gornall,Kirk]

1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nc3 Qe5+ The 'Patzer' variation. The point is to provoke White's bishop to e2 rather than the more active c4. **4.Be2 c6 5.d4 Qc7 6.Nf3 Bf5**

7.Ne5! This is the best move here. Black will end up having to move the queen again after White continues with Bf4. **7...Nd7** 7...e6? 8.g4 Bg6 9.h4+/- **8.Bf4 Nxe5 9.Bxe5 Qb6 10.Na4!** Another good move. The knight kicks the queen away and eyes the c5 square. **10...Qa5+ 11.c3 e6** 11...f6 might have been a better option. **12.Nc5 f6 13.Nb3** 13.Nxb7 Qb6 14.Nd6+ Bxd6 15.Bxd6 Qxb2 16.0-0+/- **13...Qb6** Pawn grabbing with 13...Qd5 14.Bg3 Qxg2 is too risky 15.Bf3 Qh3 16.Na5. **14.Bf4 Ne7 15.0-0 Rd8 16.Re1** Getting ready to unmask an attack on the weak e6 pawn. **16...Kf7 17.g4!** Another good move. The bishop is forced to retreat and no longer protects e6. **17...Bg6 18.h4 h5!?** Sacrificing a pawn, hoping to leave White with isolated doubled pawns on the h-file. **19.gxh5 Bf5 20.Bg4** 20.Bc4 Nd5 21.Bg3 Bd6. **20...Qb5 21.Nc5** Black's position is looking quite bad. The pressure against e6 is immense. **21...Qxc5!?** Black makes a practical decision and sacrifices an exchange, hoping to hold the ending that follows. 21...e5 22.Bxf5 Nxf5 23.Qg4+/- **22.dxc5 Rxd1 23.Bxd1 Nd5 24.Bd6 Bxd6 25.cxd6 Nf4 26.Be2 Ke8** Black will blockade the d-pawn with his king while hoping to create some activity with his remaining pieces. **27.Rad1 Kd7** 27...Nxe2+ 28.Rxe2 Bg4 doesn't win back the exchange 29.f3 Bxf3? 30.Rxe6+- **28.Rd2 Rh6** With the idea of ...g6. **29.Kh2 e5 30.Rg1 g6 31.Bg4** 31.hxg6?? Rxh4+ 32.Kg3 Rh3# is a pretty mate **31...Bxg4 32.Rxg4 Rxh5** Black has won a pawn back and has some chances to hold the draw. **33.Kg3 Rh6** Threatening to trap the White rook. **34.c4** White allows the previous threat and plans c4-c5 protecting the d6 pawn for good. **34...f5 35.Rxf4 exf4+ 36.Kf3** 36.Kxf4 Rxh4+ 37.Kg5 Rg4+ 38.Kf6 c5= **36...c5** Better was 36...Rxh4 37.c5 g5 38.Rd1 b6 39.Re1 (39.b4 bxc5 40.bxc5 Rh3+ 41.Ke2 Rc3-) 39...bxc5 40.Re5 Rh3+ 41.Ke2 Kxd6 42.Rxf5 Rh1 43.Rxg5 Ra1. **37.b4 b6** 37...cxb4 38.c5. **38.bxc5 bxc5 39.Rd5 Rxh4 40.Rxc5 Kxd6 41.Ra5 Rh3+ 42.Kxf4 Rh4+ 43.Kg5 Rg4+ 44.Kf6 Rf4 45.Rxa7 Rxf2 46.Kxg6 Kc5 1/2-1/2**

Cheng, Bindi - Orlov, Georgi [A46] Keres mem 33rd Vancouver (4.1), 18.05.2008

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.d4 e6 3.Bg5 c5 4.c3 h6 5.Bxf6 Qxf6 6.e4 Nc6 7.Bb5 cxd4 8.cxd4 Bb4+ 9.Nc3 0-0 10.0-0 Bxc3 11.bxc3 d5 12.Bxc6 bxc6 13.Re1 dxe4 14.Nd2 Rb8 15.Nxe4 Qf4 16.Nc5 Qc7 17.Re3 Re8 18.Qh5 Rd8 19.Rg3 Rd5 20.Qh4 Rf5 21.Ne4 Ba6 22.Qg4 g6 23.Qd1 Kg7 24.Nc5 Bc4 25.Qa4 Bd5 26.Rf1 Qf4 27.Qc2 Bc4 28.Re1 Rb5 29.a4 Rb6 30.Nd7 Rb7 31.Nc5 Rb8 32.Nd7 Rd8 33.Ne5 Bb3 34.Qb2 Bxa4 35.Rf3 Qg5 36.h4 Qxh4 37.Rxf5 gxf5 38.Qa2 Bb5 39.c4 Qxd4 40.cxb5 cxb5 41.Qb3 Rd5 42.Qg3+ Kf6 43.Nf3 Qb4 44.Qb8 Qd6 45.Qh8+ Ke7 46.Qa1 a6 47.Ne5 a5 48.Qc3 b4 49.Qe3 Qc5 50.Qg3 Qc3 51.Re3 Qa1+ 52.Kh2 a4 53.Qh4+ Ke8 54.Nc6 Kd7 55.Nb8+ Ke8 56.Rg3 Qe5 57.Kh3 Qh8 58.Qxb4 f4 59.Rc3 Qf6 60.Rc8+ Rd8 61.Qb5+ Kf8 62.Nd7+ 1-0

Lee, Vicente - Cheng, Bindi [D15] Keres mem 33rd Vancouver (5.1), 18.05.2008

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Nf3 a6 5.a4 e6 6.Bg5 Be7 7.e3 a5 8.Bd3 Na6 9.Rc1 Nb4 10.Bb1 0-0 11.0-0 b6 12.cxd5 cxd5 13.Ne5 Nd7 14.Bxe7 Qxe7 15.f4 Ba6 16.Rf3 f5 17.Rh3 Nxe5 18.fxe5 g6 19.Ne2 Bxe2 20.Qxe2 Rac8 21.Rc3 h5 22.Rf3 Qd7 23.Qb5 Qxb5 24.axb5 Kf7 25.Rf1 Ke7 26.Rfc1 Kd7 27.Rxc8 Rxc8 28.Rxc8 Kxc8 29.h4 Kd7 30.Kf2 Ke7 31.Kg3 f4+ 32.Kxf4 Kf7 33.Kg5 Kg7 34.b3 1-0

Toubale, Tarek - Orlov, Georgi [B07] Keres mem 33rd Vancouver (5.2), 18.05.2008

1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 c6 4.f4 Qa5 5.Bd3 e5 6.Nf3 Bg4 7.Be3 Nbd7 8.0-0 h5 9.Qd2 Bxf3 10.gxf3 Be7 11.a3 exf4 12.Bxf4 h4 13.b4 Qh5 14.Kh1 Nf8 15.Rae1 N6d7 16.b5 g5 17.Be3 Ng6 18.Qg2 Nf4 19.Bxf4 gxf4 20.bxc6 bxc6 21.Qh3 a6 22.e5 dxe5 23.Bf5 Ra7 24.Bxd7+ Rxd7 25.Rxe5 Qg6 26.Rfe1 Kd8 27.d5 cxd5 28.Rxd5 Rxd5 29.Nxd5 Bd6 30.Nb6 Kc7 31.Qd7+ Kxb6 32.Rb1+ Kc5 33.Qa7+ Kd5 34.Rd1+ Ke6 35.Re1+ Be5 36.Qxa6+ Kf5 37.Qd3+ Kf6 38.Qa6+ Kf5 39.Qd3+ Kf6 40.Qa6+ 1/2-1/2

Roua, Radu-Laurentiu - Selzler, Ricky [B07] Keres mem 33rd Vancouver (5.3), 18.05.2008

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.e3 Bg7 4.Bd3 d6 5.0-0 0-0 6.e4 Nc6 7.c3 e5 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.a4 Nh5 10.b4 Nf4 11.Bc2 Qf6 12.b5 Rd8 13.Nfd2 Na5 14.Qe1 Bh3 15.Nf3 Bxg2 16.Bxf4 Bxf1 17.Kxf1 Qxf4 18.Nbd2 Bh6 19.Rd1 Rd6 20.Qe2 Rad8 21.Nb1 Rxd1+ 22.Bxd1 Qc1 0-1

Lee, Vicente - Toubale, Tarek [C11] Keres mem 33rd Vancouver (6.1), 19.05.2008

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 5.f4 c5 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.Be3 a6 8.Be2 b5 9.0-0 cxd4 10.Nxd4 Nxd4 11.Bxd4 Bc5 12.Bxc5 Nxc5 13.Qd4 Qb6 14.a4 b4 15.a5 Qa7 16.Na4 Nd7 17.Qxa7 Rxa7 18.Nb6 Nxb6 19.axb6 Ra8 20.Ra4 a5 21.Rfa1 Rb8 22.Rxa5 Rxb6 23.Rb5 Rxb5 24.Bxb5+ Kd8 25.Ra7 Rf8 26.Bd3 h6 27.Kf2 f6 28.Ke3 g5 29.g3 gxf4+ 30.Kxf4 fxe5+ 31.Kxe5 Rf2 32.Kd6 Rxh2 33.Rh7 Ke8 34.Rh8+ Kf7 35.Rxc8 b3 36.Rc3 bxc2 37.Rxc2 Rh3 38.Rf2+ Kg7 39.Rf3 h5 40.Bf1 Rh2 41.b4 1-0

Orlov, Georgi - Lee, Vicente [E06] Keres mem 33rd Vancouver (7.1), 19.05.2008

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2 Be7 5.d4 0-0 6.Nc3 dxc4 7.Ne5 c5 8.dxc5 Qxd1+ 9.Nxd1 Bxc5 10.Nxc4 Nc6 11.Bxc6 bxc6 12.Be3 Bb4+ 13.Bd2 c5 14.a3 Bxd2+ 15.Nxd2 Ba6 16.Rc1 Rfc8 17.f3 Rab8 18.Kf2 Kf8 19.Rc2 Ke7 20.b3 Nd7 21.Nb2 f5 22.Rhc1 h6 23.Rc3 Rd8 24.R1c2 Bb5 25.Nf1 Rb6 26.Ne3 Rb7 27.g4 g6 28.gxf5 gxf5 29.Ng2 e5 30.Re3 Kf7 31.Rd2 Re8 32.Rc3 Re6 33.Ne3 Kf6 34.Rd1 Re8 35.h4 Ke6 36.h5 f4 37.Nec4 Bxc4 38.Nxc4 Reb8 39.Rd6+ Ke7 40.Rxh6 Rxb3 41.Rxb3 Rxb3 42.Ra6 e4 43.h6 e3+ 44.Kg2 Rb8 45.Kh3 Rg8 46.Rxa7 Ke6 47.Ra6+ Ke7 48.h7 Rh8 49.Rh6 Nf6 50.Kh4 Rxh7 51.Rxh7+ Nxh7 52.a4 Nf6 53.a5 Kd8 54.Nb6 Nd5 1-0

Cheng, Bindi - Cadman, Charles [A45] Keres mem 33rd Vancouver (7.2), 19.05.2008

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 c5 3.d5 Qb6 4.Nc3 Qxb2 5.Bd2 Qb6 6.e4 d6 7.Rb1 Qd8 8.Bb5+ Nbd7 9.f4 a6 10.Bxd7+ Qxd7 11.Nf3 g6 12.0-0 Bg7 13.Qe1 0-0 14.a4 Qc7 15.h3 b6 16.Qh4 Bb7 17.f5 Rae8 18.Bh6 Nh5 19.Bxg7 Kxg7 20.Ne2 e6 21.g4 exf5 22.gxh5 h6 23.Nf4 fxe4 24.hxg6 fxg6 25.Nh2 g5 26.Qg3 Kh7 27.Ne6 Rxf1+ 28.Rxf1 Qe7 29.Ng4 Bxd5 30.Nf6+ Kh8 31.Nxe8 Bxe6 32.Qxd6 1-0

BCCF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The BCCF AGM took place between rounds on Saturday, May 17 at the site of the Keres Memorial. The full minutes plus executive reports will be available on the internet shortly, but for the time being here is the new BCCF Executive for 2008-2009:

President: Roger Patterson

Vice Presidents: Dan Scoones (Lower Mainland)

John Niksic (Northern BC)

Wally Steinke (Interior BC)

Secretary: Lyle Craver

Treasurer: Lyle Craver

Junior Coordinators: Ken Jensen, Luc Poitras

Clubs Coordinator: Len Molden (pending acceptance)

Tournament Coordinator: Stephen Wright

E-Mail Bulletin Editor: Stephen Wright

Publicity Coordinator: vacant

Webmaster: vacant

Members-at-large: Katherine Davies, Mark Dutton, Bruce Harper, Paul Leblanc, Howard Wu

Immediate Past-President: Stephen Wright

Governors of the Chess Federation of Canada: Lyle Craver, Mark Dutton, Paul Leblanc, John Niksic, Dan Scoones, Howard Wu.

CANADIAN ISMAILI GAMES (May 3-5)

The Ismaili, the second-largest branch of the Shia Muslims, are currently celebrating the golden jubilee of His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan as the 49th hereditary Imam (spiritual leader). A part of these celebrations are national sports competitions, culminating in the Golden Jubilee Games to be held in Nairobi, Kenya at the end of June. The Canadian Ismaili Games took place on the campus of the University of British Columbia in Vancouver on the weekend of May 3-5 and included a chess component. This may seem surprising, given that chess appeared amid the likes of Badminton, Basketball, Cricket, Soccer, Squash, Swimming, Track and Field, and Wrestling. Without getting too deeply into the debate, it should be noted that there are over 120 countries around the world which recognize chess as a sport, many of these African. In the case of the Ismaili games, countries were asked to list the five sports they wished to see included, and many African countries voted for chess. By comparison hockey received only one vote and thus was not one of the sports selected.

The Canadian games attracted a total of 938 athletes, including ten in the chess component. The organizing committee had never dealt with a chess tournament before; this led to the imposition of certain organizational ideas appropriate to a soccer game or badminton event, but which create problems for a chess competition. For example,

originally the players were to determine colour allocation and who moved first via a coin toss, it wasn't appreciated that the games of the same round could be played simultaneously rather than consecutively, and the rules of the games indicated a player should be forfeited for being five minutes late. Most of these issues were resolved before the games began and the main problems during the event were caused by no-shows. The organization for most sports was predicated on the idea of preliminary competitions followed by finals; in the chess event this equated to preliminary round robins qualifying players to a final knockout segment. Four four-player round robins were planned, but by the time of the games two players had withdrawn, leading instead to the formation of two seven-player preliminary round robins. Of these fourteen expected players four never showed up (fortunately two from each division), leaving in essence two five-player round robins, although in practice the seven-player schedule was largely maintained with several forfeits per round.

The playing conditions were adequate but not ideal: held in a room below the Thunderbird gym and adjacent to a weight and exercise facility, the hardwood floors and mirrored walls did nothing to shield the players from occasional intrusive noises (basketball games, weights crashing to the ground, a cheerleading squad from the prairie team which passed through the building periodically). Spectators were generally not an issue, except for one round when about a dozen young people from Ontario showed up to (silently) encourage one of their teammates, Sadiq Juma. The strangest visitor was a samurai warrior who was obviously used to using the space as a practice room. He turned up on the Saturday morning after the games had just begun, stripped down to his underwear in the course of donning ceremonial robes, and proceeded to make a few overhead swings with a rather formidable looking sword. He was eventually escorted off the premises by event security, who deemed his presence inappropriate for a public gathering.

There was a wide range of strengths amongst the players, ranging from A Class downwards. Several of them had ratings, and on this basis the favourites were Sadiq Juma of Scarborough (1889) and Calgary's Hafiz Karmali (1971). They each justified these expectations in the preliminaries, each winning their respective round-robin with a perfect score. (Apart from the province designations, PR = prairie region and ED = Edmonton.)

Division A

			1	2	3	4	5	Total
1	Sadiq Juma	ON	*	1	1	1	1	4
2	Arif Kassum	PR	0	*	1	1	1	3
3	Aseef Alizada	QU	0	0	*	1	1	2
4	Aamir Hasnani	BC	0	0	0	*	1	1
5	Karim Dhanani	ON	0	0	0	0	*	0

Division B

			1	2	3	4	5	Total
1	Hafiz Karmali	PR	*	1	1	1	1	4
2	Nizar Tajdin	QU	0	*	1	1	1	3
3	Rahim Khataw	ED	0	0	*	1	1	2
4	Hussein Waljee	BC	0	0	0	*	1	1
5	Noorali Lasi	ON	0	0	0	0	*	0

The top four players from each round robin went forward to the knockout finals. These consisted of a game at 45 minutes per player (the standard time control for the event), followed if necessary by a second game/45. If this was insufficient to establish a winner there was provision for a final armageddon blitz game, although this option turned out to be unnecessary. The quarterfinals were straightforward, but in the semifinals Juma was eliminated by a dark-horse player from Quebec, Aseef Alizada, through an endgame blunder which lost a piece. The other semifinal pitted Hafiz Karmali against Rahim Khataw, another A-player from Edmonton who had played Karmali several times in the past. In their first game the ending of rook, f and h pawns vs. rook was reached, which meant a possible claim under article 10.2, but it turned out the attacker's king was so badly placed that progress was impossible. Karmali eventually won the second game to set up the Alizada - Karmali final. Likely tired from his previous two games, Karmali drifted into an inferior position until a blunder on move 25 decided his fate:

Karmali, Hafiz - Alizada, Aseef [E38] Canadian Ismaili Games, Vancouver, 05.05.2008

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Qc2 c5 5.dxc5 Nc6 6.Nf3 Bxc5 7.e4 e5 8.Bg5 Be7 9.Be2 0-0 10.0-0 b6 11.Rad1 Bb7 12.a3 Rc8 13.Rd2 Ng4 14.Bxe7 Qxe7 15.Nb5 Nf6 16.Nd6 Rc7 17.Nxb7 Rxb7 18.Rfd1 Rd8 19.h3 h6 20.Nh2 Nd4 21.Qd3 Rc7 22.Nf1 Rdc8 23.Ne3 Rc6 24.Rc1 Rd6 25.Qc3 Nxe4 26.Qb4 Nxd2 27.Nd5 Nxe2+ 28.Kh1 Qe6 29.Re1 Rxc4 30.Qxd2 Nf4 31.Nxf4 Rxf4 32.Qc3 Rfd4 33.Qc8+ Kh7 34.Qc7 a5 35.Qc3 Qf5 36.Re2 Qf4 37.g3 Qf5 38.Kg2 Rd3 39.Qc2 Qf3+ 40.Kh2 f5 41.g4 Qxh3+ 42.Kg1 Rd1+ 0-1

Knockout Playoffs

	Quarterfinals	Semifinals	Final	Winner
A1	Sadiq Juma	Sadiq Juma	Aseef Alizada	Aseef Alizada
B4	Hussein Waljee			
B2	Nizar Tajdin	Aseef Alizada		
A3	Aseef Alizada			
B1	Hafiz Karmali	Hafiz Karmali	Hafiz Karmali	
A4	Aamir Hasnani			
A2	Arif Kassum	Rahim Khataw		
B3	Rahim Khataw			

Thus Aseef Alizada won the gold medal, Hafiz Karmali the silver. Alizada was not necessarily the strongest player in the competition, yet on this day he prevailed. His

style is that of a tactical opportunist, somewhat superficial, but he plays quite fast. In games of short length (as these were) the psychological pressure on his opponents of being substantially behind on the clock must have been considerable. Good luck to Aseef and Hafiz in Kenya.

The chess competition was run by Hussein Lalani and Fareen Koorjee, Stephen Wright was the arbiter.

Further information:

<http://www.multiculturalcanada.ca/ecp/content/ismailis.html>

<http://www.theismaili.org/cms/1/The-Ismaili-Home>

<http://www.nationalsportstournament.com/home.html>

UPCOMING EVENTS

Junior events

July 14-17 National CYCC, Quebec City

UBC Thursday Night Swiss

6:30 pm, **Thursdays**, Buchanan Building room D 214, University of British Columbia
Contact Aaron Cosenza, xramis1@yahoo.ca

June Active

June 14, Vancouver Bridge Centre

Ogopogo Summer

June 21-22, Vernon

Details: <http://chess.bc.ca/events3.html#Ogopogo>

July Active

July 6, Vancouver Bridge Centre