

BCCF E-MAIL BULLETIN #91

Your editor welcomes any and all submissions for this Bulletin - news of upcoming events, tournament reports, and anything else that might be of interest to the BC chess community.

To subscribe, send me an e-mail (swright2@telus.net) or sign up via the BCCF (www.chess.bc.ca) webpage; 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.]

FERNDALE ELEMENTARY SPRING TOURNAMENT

Following on the heels of the Chess Jam in February, Ferndale (just north of Bellingham, Washington) was the site of another large junior chess event, this time at Skyline Elementary School on March 11. One hundred and sixty-five players participated, including at least two from B.C. (my apologies if I've overlooked anyone else from Canada). As has become somewhat of a tradition in Ferndale, both Canadians finished in the prizes: Tanraj Sohal tied for first in the grade 4-6 section with Ryan Chang (Washington), while Jonah Lee won the kindergarten section outright. All the sections were won with perfect 5/5 scores. Congratulations to Tanraj and Jonah!

Complete results and photos: <http://mysite.verizon.net/kaech/chessfest06.html>

MARCH SUNDAY/JUNIOR OPEN

Twenty-five players took part in the last of these monthly events, held at the Vancouver Bridge Centre on March 5. Ties were the order of the day in the Sunday Open, with eight out of the ten players taking a share of the prizes available. Lucas Davies won first overall; Louie Jiang, Noam Davies, Vlad Gaciu, and Arik Milner shared second, while the U1700 prize was split between Jack Cheng, Michael Wee, and Alex Sabaratnam.

The U1500 junior section was run as a round robin. Alexandra Botez and Foster Tom were both undefeated, but Foster drew an additional game, allowing Alexandra to claim first with 3/4. The Booster section was won by Janak Awatramani with 4.5/5. Janak has consistently placed at the top of the Booster sections this season, amassing two third prizes and three firsts from the five events he played in. Another junior player on the rise! In second place was Jonah Lee, and third was split between Jacon Jensen, Algerd Karavai, and newcomer Matthew Ching.

http://www.bjdy.com/juniorchess/sunday_open_6.html

<http://www.chess.ca/xtable.asp?TNum=200603041>

<http://www.chess.ca/xtable.asp?TNum=200603062>

LOWER MAINLAND CHESS CLUB TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP

The winner for the 2005-2006 season is the Vancouver Chess Club - congratulations! Full results can be found at <http://www.chessmastery.com/teamresults.html>

B.C.'S FIRST CHESS TOURNAMENT?



Miners at Williams Creek, 1867; the gentleman third from the left is John Adair.

The early history of chess in B.C. is largely undocumented. When the province's fledgling cities grew large enough, organized chess followed almost as a matter of course, e.g., the Victoria Chess Club in 1892. However, before that time chess, along with horse racing, gambling, and other more adventurous activities, served as a social outlet from the hardships of pioneer life, and thus is not often mentioned in contemporary sources. One important early account, describing what was perhaps B.C.'s first chess tournament, occurs as a letter to the editor of the Victoria newspaper *The Daily British Colonist* of March 18, 1865:

Williams Creek, 18th February 1865

To the editor of the *British Colonist*

Sir,

It may not be uninteresting to your readers, at least that portion of them who are chess players, to receive an account of a chess tournament which lately took place among the players on the creek.

A public notice was put up by some of the most enthusiastic players that a meeting for the purpose of getting up a chess tournament would be held on the 10th ult.

At this meeting twelve gentlemen gave in their names as competitors for the championship. It was decided that the players should be divided into pairs by ballot, to play five games, and the first three games won by either of the contestants to decide

between them; the winners of these first games to be again paired off to play a like number of games, and so continue to pair off until only one winner remained, who should be declared the champion of the tournament.

Accordingly the players in the first ballot were as follows:

J.A. Fraser vs. D. McNaughton
J. Elliott vs. B. Bellenbur
Jas. T. Steele vs. W. Reynbow
W. Dodd vs. E. Hodgens
J.S. Thompson vs. J. McLaren

[the sixth pairing, involving John Adair, is missing from the original]

Second Ballot

J.A. Fraser vs. John Elliot [*sic*]
John Adair vs. James T. Steele
Edward Hodgens vs. J.S. Thompson

Third Ballot

The players were now reduced to three, Messrs. Thompson, Fraser and Steele. On drawing for partners the lot fell upon Messrs. Thompson and Fraser to play together and the winner to play Mr. Steele. In this match Mr. Fraser was again the winner. This gentleman had now played three matches without losing a single game, and his friends felt confident that he would come out the victor in the next, but his opponent Mr. Steele proved a tough customer, and after playing five well contested games, they stood two each the fifth one having been a drawn one; then came the deciding game of which I annex a copy, which was won in good style by Mr. Steele, who was accordingly declared the champion of the tournament.

I am, yours, &c.

A Chess Player

Fraser, J.A. - Steele, J.T. [C55] Williams Creek, 10.02.1865

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.d4 exd4 5.e5 Ne4 6.0-0 d5 7.Bb5 Bd7 8.Bxc6 Bxc6
9.Qxd4 Bc5 10.Qd3 0-0 11.Nbd2 Ng5 12.Nb3 Nxf3+ 13.Qxf3 Qe7 14.Bf4 Bb6 15.Qg3
Qe6 16.Kh1 d4 17.Rad1 Rad8 18.Bg5 Rd7 19.f4 Re8 20.Rfe1 Qf5 21.Bf6 g6 22.Qh4 d3
23.Qh6 Bxg2+ 24.Kxg2 Qg4+ 25.Kh1 Qf3# 0-1

Williams Creek was the focus of the Cariboo gold rush of the 1860s. Inundated with miners and other individuals hoping to make a fortune, the creek acquired several towns almost overnight, including Marysville, Cameronton, Richfield, and the best known,

Barkerville, which claimed to be the largest city west of Chicago and north of San Francisco. [At its height, Barkerville and environs had a population of some ten thousand; by comparison, Victoria's population at the beginning of the gold rush was substantially less than a thousand.]

The site of the tournament is not given by the correspondent; the first library in Williams Creek had opened in Cameronton in 1864, so it seems likely the event was publicized via the library, if not actually played there. The format, a series of knockout matches, had been standard since London 1851, and was only gradually supplanted by the round robin in the coming decade. With a minimum of sixteen "rounds" apparently occurring on the same day as the tournament was organized (the letter specifies that the printed final game was played on February 10), the games must have been played at a pretty fast rate. One wonders about the level of play at that speed; although the published game is relatively well-played, this may just reflect on the abilities of the finalists.

And what of the players? There is no way of knowing for certain if they are the same persons, but there is a J. McLaren and J.A. Fraser buried in the Barkersville cemetery. John McLaren was a grammar school headmaster before coming to the Cariboo in 1864; for a time he edited the local newspaper, the *Cariboo Sentinel*. He was killed at age thirty-one by a slide of sand and tailings in 1869. John Alexander Fraser was the fourth son of explorer Simon Fraser; he came to Cameronton in 1864 as an engineer. Money woes over his family's mortgaged farm and an unhappy love affair led him to commit suicide on May 20, 1865 - he was thirty-two. The next day one of the companies he had invested heavily in struck a rich lead. John Adair is identified in the photo at the beginning of this article. A James Steele worked for John Cameron's company, and can be identified in a photo of the latter. There was also a Steele Claim on the creek, said to be the richest piece of ground in the area; in 1861 it was producing thirty to forty pounds of gold a day.

THIS WEEKEND: NORTH SHORE OPEN

Site: Mollie Nye House, 940 Lynn Valley Road, North Vancouver, East of Kirkstone Dr., parking west of the site under the power lines.

Date: March 18-19, 2006

Format: 4 Round Swiss CFC rated

Time control: 90 minutes + 30 second increments

Entry fee: \$25 for Adults; \$17 for Juniors and Seniors

Registration: Pre-registration is recommended. Send cheques payable to Chess First! Enterprises to: Suite 408-1641 Lonsdale Avenue, North Vancouver, BC, V7M 2J5. Or Saturday in person 9-9:30 am

Rounds: 9:30am; 2 pm; 6 pm; Sunday 1:00 pm.

Prizes: Entry fees-less expenses; 50% of that money. First prize 12 Month ICC membership. Best Junior prize is donated by Chess First! Enterprises www.chessfirst.com

Sponsors: Schlockbuster Video; Chess First Enterprises www.chessfirst.com ; ICC www.chessclub.com

Organizer and TD. : Joe Oszvald and Vas Sladek

Info: oszisakk@telus.net or chessfm@telus.net

Bring sets and digital clocks CFC membership required: \$10 for the event or \$48 for one year

ABUSE YOUR ILLUSIONS RR

Organized by Chess First! Enterprises and hosted by the North Van Chess Club

Date: April 5, 12, 19, 26, May 3, 2006 (Wednesday nights)

Place: Mollie Nye House, 945 Lynn Valley Road, North Vancouver

Rounds: 5

Type: Regular CFC-rated round robin (6-players)

Times: 7-10pm

TC: SD 90 club control

EF: \$15

Prizes: 1st \$60 plus bonus ChessBase training CD for clear first; \$5 best game prize

Reg/TD/Org: interested players please e-mail or call CTD Vas Sladek, 604-562-3736, chessfm@telus.net

Notes:

- 1) all players must agree to pay a weekly drop-in fee to the chess club, \$1 for members, \$2 for non-members
- 2) training software donated by **Chess First! Enterprises**, BC's online chess store, www.chessfirst.com
- 3) CFC membership required; \$48/year or \$10/event
- 4) score sheets and equipment provided
- 5) ear plugs recommended; all rounds are played on club nights

Registered players:

FM Goran Ivankovic

Vas Sladek

31st PAUL KERES MEMORIAL



Dates Friday, May 19 to Monday, May 22, 2006

Location Hungarian Cultural Centre, 728 Kingsway, Vancouver BC

Sections Open, Under 2000, Under 1600

Time Control 40/120, SD/60

Rounds Open: 7 Rounds; U2000, U1600: 6 Rounds

Round Times Friday 5:30 (Open Section only); 11:30, 5:30 / 10, 4 / 9, 3 or ASAP

Prizes Based on entries. Unrated players may play in any section, but are only eligible for prizes if they play in the Open section. Unrated players who place in the other sections will have their entry fee returned.

Entry Fees (Open / U2000 / U1600)

Before or on March 30, 2006 \$110 / \$95 / \$80

Before or on May 12, 2006 \$130 / \$110 / \$90

At site \$150 / \$125 / \$100

Discounts Born after May 20, 1986: 50% (proof of date of birth required)

Born before May 20, 1941: 50% (proof of date of birth required)

FIDE rated players w/o Titles 25%

FIDE Titled Players Free entry

Surcharge \$25 extra for those players who wish to play in the Open Section, but who have a lifetime highest rating under 2000

Registration please mail cheques (payable to BCCF) to: British Columbia Chess Federation, PO Box 15548, Vancouver, BC V6B 5B3

On-site Open Section: Friday, May 19, 3:00 to 5:00 pm

U2000 and U1600: Friday, May 19, 3:00 to 10:00 pm, Saturday, May 20, 9:00 to 9:30 am

Those registering after the respective deadlines (5:00 pm Friday for the Open, 9:30 am Saturday for the other sections) will receive pot-luck pairings or a half-point bye in the first round

Miscellaneous CFC rated, Open Section also FIDE rated; half-point byes may be requested for all but the last round; sets and boards provided, please bring clocks. The

BCCF Annual General Meeting will be held at 9:00 am on Saturday, May 20

Contact Stephen Wright, swright2@telus.net, (604) 221-7148

UPCOMING EVENTS

Junior Events

Mar. 25 Vancouver Regional Chess Challenge, BCIT

Mar. 25-26 Victoria Regional CYCC

Apr. 15 Provincial Chess Challenge, BCIT

See <http://www.chess.bc.ca/juniorevents.html>

For full details for the events below, see www.chess.bc.ca

UBC Tuesday Night Swiss

Date: Tuesdays - next game February 21

Location: Room 213, Student Union Building, UBC

Format: 5-round Swiss

Time control: 2 hours sudden death

Time: 6:30 sharp

Entry fees: \$20 for adults, \$15 for juniors and UBC club members, \$12 under 1100

(excluding unrated)

TD info.: Aaron Cosenza, 604 327-4714, xramis1@yahoo.ca

North Shore Open

Dates: March 18-19

Place: Mollie Nye House, North Vancouver

Type: 4-round Swiss

Worker's Memorial

Dates: April 14-15

Place: Village Square, Kamloops

Type: 6-round Swiss