

Historical WASHINGTON CHESS LETTER recaps (in the pages of *Washington Chess Letter* and *Northwest Chess*) by Russell Miller

1949-1989 at ten-year intervals

February 1949 (WCL)

A 15-page issue from editor Lawrence Taro of Everett. A letter from George Koltanowski (he was to give an exhibition in Mt. Vernon in February) was printed in which he said that WCL was “just swell.” Arthur Dake wrote that he would be “delighted” to play in Tacoma in April. This Pacific Northwest Master-Expert event had also lined up Olaf Ulvestad, Jim Schmitt and Charles Joachim to take part, plus they were hoping for a couple of players from British Columbia. Taro printed “The Imortel Partie” between Anderssen and Kieseritsky, “the most brilliant game in chess history.” Results for the third annual Northwest Washington tournament were printed; J.A. Naas with a perfect 5-0 in a 6-man round robin. Charles Abbott won the 1947 and Neil Power won in 1948. Olaf Ulvestad’s chess tour was reported upon. He won all 14 games in Everett. Two exhibitions took place in Tacoma with Ulvestad winning 9 games, losing to Crain and drawing Holmes. The second event was a three board simul against Coubrough, Collins and Bier. Ulvestad explained the three games as they were played. 22 players took on the master in Bremerton with Magerkurth winning and Nourse, Rehberg, Jackson and Christer drawing. A blindfold game with Andersen ended in a draw. No report on the Bellingham event was available at press time. Former World Champion Dr. Max Euwe gave a simul in Vancouver BC of 50 boards. He lost to Miller, Fillery and Ostrom.

In a Lincoln High School of Tacoma event Robert Karch was the winner 5-0. Tacoma was leading Puget Sound League play after 4 rounds 4-0. Power of Everett had the best score at 8-2 in league play.

Naas topped the postal chess rating list.

Part IV of Ulvestad’s report on his visit to Soviet Union was printed.

February 1959 (WCL)

Dan Wade of Seattle is listed as editor for this 18 page issue. The names listed on the cover were the players invited to take part in the 1959 Washington Closed. Olaf Ulvestad of Seattle won the qualifying Washington Open event 6-0; Jim McCormick of Seattle scored 5-1 losing to Ulvestad in round 6. Those with 4.5-1.5 were: Dr. David Groenig of Spokane, Dr. A. A. Murray of Seattle, Dan Wade of Seattle, G.S.G. Patterson of Seattle, Oliver LaFreniere of Yakima, Donald Kendall of Tacoma and Edward Diedrich of Tacoma. These folks got a spot in the closed plus Elmars Zemgalis, Viktors Pupols and Viesturs Seglins. 50 players took part in the Washington Open. One of the notes in the story “McCormick won five in a row before his girlfriend showed up, then he lost.” They were to be wed in August. The tournament directors were Al Livingston of Olympia and Buz Eddy of Kent.

The 1958-59 Puget Sound League was won by the Latvian Team of Zemgalis, Pupols, Viesturs and Zigurds Seglins, Ivars Cakarnis, Val Grinhagens, Visvaldis Smits, Raimund Blums and Zuris Dumins. Their match score was 7 wins and 1 drawn match. The league

stars were board 1 McCormick, 2 V. Seglins, 3 Pupols, 4 Oliver Morris and 5 Charles Magerkurth.

The Idaho State Championship was reported upon; Glen Buckendorf of Buhl won the 38 player event. 81 year old C.H. Stewart was 2nd. He had won the first Idaho Championship which took place in 1947.

The election of 1959 officers for the Seattle Chess Club report gave Ted Davidsen as president, Richard Schultz as V-P. The Yakima YMCA Chess Club picked Oliver LaFreniere as their president in 1959. The Yakima Junior CC elected Richard Jerome as president and he was also president of the Davis High School club.

This month's issue of WCL had Northwest Ratings done by Robert Karch. A report was also given on the USCF ratings of some Northwest players: Ulvestad 2253, Dr. Peter Lapiken 2200, Jim Schmitt 2274, McCormick 2022, Wade 2006, Eugene Warner 2136, Pupols 2059, Karch 1839, Eddy 1716 and some others.

R.R. Merk did a full page of 10 years ago in Washington Chess article. Wade was the top on the postal chess rating list.

February 1969 (NWC)

A 16 page issue appeared this month under the editorship of Russell Miller of Yakima WA. The paper on which the issue was printed was changed to newsprint. Jack Schrader provided another cartoon that appears on the cover which can be found on the current NWC website.

The crosstable of the 1969 Washington Open appeared and listed Viktors Pupols of Seattle as the winner with 5.5-.5. The draw was with Peter Biyiasas of Vancouver BC in round 6. 57 players took part with Kent Pullen and Biyiasas tying for 2nd at 5-1. Several of the players taking part are still playing now 40 years later: Pupols, Pat Hickey, Jon Berry, Peter O'Gorman, Ernst Rassmusen, Mike Murray, Jim Hanlen, Tim Kauppila, and James McCormick.

The list of players invited to the 1969 Washington Closed was printed: James McCormick, Robert Holzinger, Pat Herbers, Mike Murray, Gary Holmquist, James Toth, Viktors Pupols and Kent Pullen. Pupols was not expected to take part so the first alternate Eero Jaaska would probably be invited. There was an "alternates cup" list also: Ben Thurston, Lew Henry, Chris Corwin, Steve Thomas, Milo Nelson, Jeff Fox, Alf Oversas and Lyman Johnston. McCormick was the 1968 champion. Several of the spots were decided by the players W.C.F. Master Points.

The March of Dimes Open held in Washougal WA was won by Clay Kelleher of Portland over 27 others with 4.5 of 5. He drew with 2nd place Bill Kiplinger of Portland in round 5. Only players on the crosstable that I know still to be playing today are: Larry Ball of Portland and your writer.

Tim Kauppila supplied a report on the 40-player Northwest Junior held at the Seattle Chess Club in late December 1968. Jeff Fox of Mercer Island won the event with 5.5 of 6. He drew with 2nd place finisher Peter Biyiasas of Vancouver BC in the last round. Only player of the 40 still playing today is Dave Rupel then of Seattle now of Olympia. Lots of the players are still alive but not playing chess that I know of. Willie Skubi

reported on the junior round robin held after the Open. The RR was won by Biyiasas with 3-1.

Bob Eldridge in the B C Bulletin reported on yet another win by Biyiasas, the British Columbia Closed with a 6-0 score. 35 players took part.

In Oregon News by Harry Glidden of Medford it was reported that Dennis Waterman and Clark Harmon tied for 1st with 4-1 in a 30/30 round robin event. In Portland Metro League news the results of two matches was reported: Dark Avengers (with Ivars Dalbergs on board 1) against (Bill Kiplinger) of Rocky Butte Raiders match was 5-5 draw. Black Knights team (lead by Clark Harmon on board 1) downed (Dennis Waterman) the Bookends by 6.5-3.5 score.

Rating director Peter Olson's article "How the Rating System Works" was printed in this issue.

Willie Skubi reporting for the Seattle Chess Club gave the list of 1969 officers, President Bob Burns, V-P Svend Monrad, Secretary-Treasurer Skubi. The club was located at 3424 Fremont North in 1969. The Seattle CC tornado top section held in one day was won by Joseph Toth with 4-0 score over 8 others which included a win over 2nd place player Biyiasas. 27 players took part in the 2nd section which was won by D. Shapiro and Lee Baldwin both 4-0.

Howie Chin reported in "high school in chess" section that Interlake was leading the King County League. Queen Anne was leading team in the Seattle Metro League. Digne deLenea won Seattle Metro League Tornado number 2 of 10 others.

February 1979 (NWC)

Robert A. Karch was editor and business manager for NORTHWEST CHESS at this time in the history of the magazine.

The cover of this issue (which you can find on the NWC website) has a photo of the Bellarmine High School chess team, of Tacoma.

The 1979 Zumi Open to be held in Salt Lake City in March purchased a full page ad in this issue of NWC. The prize fund was \$2,500.00 guaranteed with George Koltanowski as the tournament director.

The 1979 Canadian Open to be held in July in Edmonton Alberta also had a full page ad.

The Washington Junior Closed ended in a tie at 2-1 by Bryon Monohon and Russ Ridderbusch, and Monohon won the Junior Open held the same weekend as the closed, 4.5 of 5.

Yasser Seirawan was the top rated player at 2386 in the computerized Northwest Ratings report.

Larry Swan was doing the Northwest Postal Chess in 1979. 84 people were listed on the postal ratings list. Some of names on the list that I know are still active in chess in 2009 are: John Donaldson, Jim Hanlen, Jack Grigsby, David Surratt, Robert A. Karch, Jack Schrader, Karl Schoffstoll, and Dennis Ambler.

Harold Brown did the British Columbia news for this issue. The Dr. Vladimir Sovilj Memorial event of 22 players was won by Jan Greben 4-0. Gordon Taylor won the 18 player Diamond Jubilee 5-0.

Larry Ball provided Oregon Chess News on the Portland December Amateur, a quad event which drew 60 players. Only 26 players had taken part in a similar event in 1977. The 1979 event was a \$4.00 entry fee and played in one day. Clay Kelleher was the TD and organizer. There were no cash prizes, only \$8.00 worth of books or entry into a future event. None of quad winners are active today to my knowledge. The Portland A team was leading Cascade Chess Club League play.

The tag under a picture of Stephen Christopher in this issue of NWC said he had over 760 Northwest rated games at this point. Cliff Tssi won the Shoreline High Championship.

Three-way tie between David Klinetobe, William Horton and Jack Grigsby was the result of the Yakima Grand Prix #2 when all scored 2.5 of 3. 16 players took part. The winners got \$14.16 each. Denny Monahan won the novice section of the event with 8 players.

Eugene Warner won the Tri-Cities GP #2 with 3-0, and also Tri-Cities Grand Prix No. 3 over 5 others.

February 1989 (NWC)

Nice white paper for this 16 page issue of NWC under editorship of James Blackwood. Cover photo (which you can find on the NWC website) is of NM John Brayley (sic) vs. WGM Elena Akhmilovskaya Donaldson. The photo was taken by Fred Kleist at a Puget Sound League match between teams at INSIDE CHESS and Seattle Chess Club.

Short report and two pictures on the Karpov-Hjartarson quarter final match going on in Seattle was given with a full report to follow in the March issue.

The Editor versus Readers game has gotten to move 5. John Brailey did notes to his win over Viktors Pupols from the Olympia Futurity II of 1988. Yasser Seirawan's 191-move draw with Xu Jun of China from the 1988 Chess Olympiad was printed to show the principals of queen and pawn endings: Kings' safety, queens' mobility and the passed pawn with notes by the editor.

Oregon Chess Federation president Mike Morris had OCF Editor Jay Collins announce THE OREGON GAME of the MONTH CONTEST for a \$10.00 prize.

The Gresham Open was won by Clay Kelleher at 5-0. Scoring 4-1 were: Karl Schoffstoll, Mike Pendergast, Mike Vaughn, Rommel Dizon and Karl Paulson plus D. Hammer. The novice section was won by Del Niemi.

In the 10-player BC Closed Championship in his first attempt Gary Basanta was the winner. He had won the Junior Championship 4 times. The winning score was 7 of 9. Nigel Fullbrook was 2nd.