

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

*1949-1989 at ten-year intervals*

**September 1949 (WCL)**

Editor Jack Finnigan put another of his chess cartoons on the cover of the September 1949 WASHINGTON CHESS LETTER. If you are reading this in the Sept 2009 issue of NWC look on the NWC website for the cover of Sept 1949.

Much of the editorial in this issue was a discussion of what time control to use for the Puget Sound League play. A poll was conducted. Finnigan also called for information on the history of chess play in Washington State from old time players.

At the half way point of the Seattle City Tournament the leaders were reported as State Champion Charles Joachim, and Glenn Muller.

The report on the 50th US Open held in Omaha Nebraska listed Albert Sandrin as the winner of the 70 player event at 10-2. The 4th Annual US Junior needed S-B tie break to declare a winner when Arthur Bisguier, Larry Evans and Jim Cross all scored 8-2. Bisguier was the defending champ. The report of all the Canada vs. USA cross-continent matches was a win for the USA at 118.5-86.5. Matches were held in Bangor, Maine; Berlin, NH; Vergennes, VT; Elizabethtown, NY; Buffalo, NY; Fort Huron, MI; Detroit Lakes, Minn.; Regina, Sask., Canada; Waterton Lake, Alberta, Canada and Seattle, WA.

Postal Chess Editor Neil Power of Snohomish reported Naas as the top rated postal player.

**September 1959 (WCL)**

Editor Buz Eddy spared no effort in the cover of the Sept. 1959 WASHINGTON CHESS LETTER. All it has is the name of the publication and "SEPTEMBER 1959" on it! The publication schedule in 1959 was to mail the issue about the 15th of each month. Material needed to be to the editor by the 5th of the month.

A full page ad appeared for the Central Washington Open to be held in Yakima on Nov 7-8. Entry was \$3.00 with time control of 50/2 with adjudication after four hours, with play to be six-round Swiss.

The 1959 Oregon Open crosstable printed in this issue listed 40 players in the seven-round Swiss event. Arthur Dake of Portland won all his seven games to finish first. Don Turner of Salem was second at 6-1 losing only to Dake. There were 22 players from Oregon and 18 from Washington.

Robert Karch gave the editor WEST COAST RATING to print. Due to a move to Germany by the rating director only events through the April issue of WCL were available. The top rated players were: Dake, Olaf Ulvestad and Elmars Zemgalis (all listed at Senior Masters) plus Peter Lapiken and James McCormick as Masters.

With a 6-0 score Ray Kronquist topped the Walla Walla Championship crosstable of 16 players. Vernon Holmes was listed at the top of the Pierce County Championship, a 13 player round robin.

A report on Puget Sound League play for 1959-60 listed nine times to take part with a time control of 40/60.

Max Mage was the top of the postal chess rating list.

### **September 1969 (NWC)**

24 pages in the Sept 1969 issue of NORTHWEST CHESS. Russell Miller was the editor and living in Yakima at the time. The minutes of the Washington Chess Federation officers meeting of 8/24 reported John Ward would step down as the Postal Chess Director as of September. Ron Norman, a senior at Seattle Univ., would take over the post. The editor reported he had been elected USCF Region VIII V-P at the annual directors meeting in Lincoln NE.

One of the tournament announcements was for the “Duffer’s Tornado,” limited to Class “A” players and below, to be held at the Seattle CC. Two more events for class players: Washington Woodpusher (for 1999 and under) plus Washington Woodbuster for those rated 1650 and under.

With a 5.5-.5 score Mike Franett of Seattle topped the 54 player crosstable for the Seattle Open. \$50.00 was his prize.

Tim Kauppila was the top of the Seattle CC rating ladder on this month’s report. Marvin Hayami is the only person on the list that I know to be a current active player.

The Canadian Championship of 1969 held in Montreal ended in a tie between Duncan Suttles and Vranesic. They were to play a match to break the tie. The reserve section of the event was won by Rick Ganong of Yachats, Oregon, at the time a student at McGill Univ. in Montreal.

The 1969 BC Championship crosstable listed three players at 5-2 – Peter Biyiasas, Alan Ludgate and Ray Kerr. Biyiasas won the match with Ludgate to take the title. A number of the games from this event appeared in this issue of NWC.

199 players took part in the US Open in 1969. Three tied for first place – Pal Benko, Milan Vukcevic and Arthur Bisguier at 9.5. Viktors Pupols scored 8.5.

The Washington Chess History article from the Sept 1950 issue of WASHINGTON CHESS LETTER by John Nourse was reprinted.

Rich Hanlen won a double round robin speed event held in Spokane of six players. Mel Leonard won a nine-player speed event.

The crosstable for the 1969 Oregon Open had 62 names. Scoring 6.6-5 to tie for 1st were Clark Harmon and Peter Biyiasas. They drew with each other.

The HIGH SCHOOL IN CHESS section of the magazine by Howie Chin gave some high school chess league history information.

John Ward ended his four-year time as Postal Chess League director. Richard Schultz topped the rating list.

David Collyer of Wenatchee organized and won the Apple Valley Open of 10 players.

## **September 1979 (NWC)**

Robert Karch as editor put out a 40-page issue for the September 1979 NORTHWEST CHESS. The cover had a photo of Yasser Seirawan labeled as an International Master and World Junior Champion. In the tournament he scored 10-3. Yasser also won the US Junior of 1979 by a score of 5-2.

Some circulation figures gave Nov 1978 as 383 Washington, 257 Oregon while in Aug 1979 the numbers were 449 Washington and 311 for Oregon.

A report from the USCF noted that dues would go up to \$20.00.

An article by Hogh Enochson about Washington Chess History was printed. In more history the photos from the Bellingham Herald of August 18, 1947 about the Washington vs. BC match of that year were printed.

The Vancouver Island Open crosstable had 34 names. At the top with 4.5-.5 were Peter Biyiasas and John Donaldson. They drew with each other. Gordon Taylor won the BC Closed 2.5-1.5.

The Portland Summer Open drew 55 players and ended with a 5-0 win by K. Widdison of Beaverton.

72 names were on the crosstable of the Oregon Youth Individual and the winner was Karl Schoffstoll of Troutdale at 5-0.

The WCF officers meeting minutes reported assets of \$1,162.78.

The US Open in Chicago in 1979 drew about 560 players and was won by Florin Gheorghiu.

The postal chess director changed to Sofus Eckrem of Everett. Richard Schultz was the top rated player. There were 129 names on the list about nine of which are still active in chess today to my knowledge.

From crosstables printed in the issue: Glenn Bixler of Yakima won the 16 player Yakima Grand Prix #4, Eric Tangborn of Tacoma won the 21 player Evergreen Empire Open 5-0, Ralph Hall won the Oregon City CC championship, Karl Schoffstoll of Troutdale won the 16 player Portland June Amateur, 4-0; Section Y was a tie at 3.5-5 between Larry Musa of Coos Bay and Manuel Joseph of McMinnville. Eric Tangborn of Tacoma won the open section of the Seattle Summer Congress at 4.5-5 over 16 others, while Derek Edwards of Seattle won the Alekhine Section by the same score over 36 others. The one-day Tacoma Summer Tornado was also won by Tangborn with 4-0 over 21 others. There were 18 players in the Seattle CC Summer Open for a win by Bill McGear of Seattle with 4.5-5, and the Tri-Cities Grand Prix #6 was won by Jack Grigsby of Pasco 3-0 over 16 others.

## **September 1989 (NWC)**

Nice heavy white paper for the Sept 1989 issue of NORTHWEST CHESS. Ralph Dubisch living in Bellevue at the time was editor. There were 24 pages in this issue.

Your writer was Business Manager for NWC and the owner of Pioneer West Bookshop in West Seattle in Sept 1989. Robert Karch of Everett was President of the Washington Chess Federation. Oregon Chess Federation President was Mike Morris of Portland.

This issue was the first to use the computer program written by David Peterson to make diagrams for use in NWC. A PostScript printer was also needed. PageMaker software was also being used.

The results of a Washington vs. Oregon match held at Crossroads Shopping Center were listed in this issue. Washington won 15.5-14.5.

Robert Karch won the 12 player Marysville Open. Jeff Byerly won the Marysville Power Brunch with 3-0 over 13 others.

WGM Elena Donaldson won the 1989 Seattle Seafair Open with 4.5-.5. John Graves got the .5 point from the winner and placed second at 4-1. Donaldson won \$175.00. Kevin Dunn won the reserve section. His score was 4.5-.5, good for \$125.00. This was an East West Tournament Association event directed by Russell Miller and Dennis Ambler.

48 players took part in the 4th LakeFair Open in Olympia. Scoring 4.5-.5 to take the top spot were John Donaldson and Ken Tomkins, good for \$200.00 each.

The Postal Chess Section was under the direction of Kristen Dietsch of Seattle. John Penquite was the top rated postal player.

Joel Barnes's report on the third weekend of the 1989 Washington Closed appeared in this issue. Viktors Pupols won the event, good for \$300.00 and a silver ring. He scored 7.5-1.5 while Ken Tomkins was second at 6.0.

Derek Edwards won the 24-player May Daze section one at the Seattle CC. Section 2 was won by John Kenny.

The Puget Sound Open drew 26 players to Tacoma. Ernst Rassmussen and Corey Russell tied for first place at 4-1. They drew with each other plus Ernst drew with Jacob Cherian while Corey drew with Andrew Griffin.