

UCCC MIDSUMMER OPEN: 1997

Greg Nowak won the 1997 Midsummer Open with 4 ½ points, giving up the draw to second-place finisher, Nathan Fewel, who had a score of 4. Greg's win was worth \$75 in Chess Digest gift certificates and Nathan's share was \$50 in certificates. Our friends from Idaho and Washington showed up in good numbers. They did well. Not only did Nathan (from Spokane) come in second, but he also scored well enough to get his expert rating. Keith Brownlee won \$35 in certificates for the best under 1500 (\$30 in certificates), and David Griffin upset Ron Erickson in round 1 to take home a plaque to commemorate the feat. Apart from Nowak, the only other Montanan to score well enough to win gift certificates (\$40) was Jim Mundy from Livingston. His last round draw with Zygmund Mayer gave him 3 ½ points and the best under 1900.

John C. Thompson

A reprinted article by David Duke

John C. Thompson began to play chess seriously when, in 1930, he read Nimzovich's My System. That year, John won the Dallas City Championship.

In 1935 John formed the Texas Chess Association (TCA) and conducted TCA's main tournament, the S.W. Open. In 1935 the tournament was called the Texas Championship, and later, when players from all over the region were competing, the tournament was called the S.W. Open. John played in the first 16 tournaments. Of those 16, he won 1st place 7 times, 2nd place 7 times, 3rd place once, and 4th place once.

John would have continued to play in Texas, however his employer, Mobil Oil Co., transferred him to Canada and later to Billings.

Chess Accomplishments:

From 1935-38, John ran a chess column in the *Dallas Journal*, the afternoon Dallas Paper. The column came out every Monday and an extra copy was sent to all the Texas Chess Clubs.

In 1939, John ran a chess column in the rival *Dallas Times Herald*. A successful column, John ran a competition where he would show end-game problems and readers would send in the solutions. Every 5 weeks the reader with the most correct solutions would win a subscription to *Chess News* written by Al Horowitz. John got Horowitz to provide him with subscriptions at ½ price. This column generated so much interest that the *Dallas Journal* offered John money to come back and write a chess column.

In 1939, John conducted a Blindfold Chess Exhibition. He played against 14 players. John won 10, drew 3, and lost 1. John believes this feat remains a Texas record.

In 1940, John brought the U.S. Open to Dallas. Players were divided into 3 groups of 9. In John's group was Reuben Fine, who, at the time was one of the top players in the world (John says Reuben was 2nd or 3rd in the world). In their individual game, John drew with Reuben. John and Reuben tied for 1st in their group and progressed to the championship group where Reuben came in first and John placed 5th.

In 1942, World War II started with an accompanying paper shortage which ended John's column.

In 1942, the U.S. Championship came to Dallas. In this individual game with Al Horowitz, John got a draw and ended up in 4th place at the end of the tournament.

Among his chess accomplishments, John is proud to be the person most responsible for the use of the Swiss System world wide. Before 1942, the S.W. Open had used the "Holland System", where players formed groups and played a round robin with the players in the group. Winners would proceed on to a championship round robin. Under this system, players would play 15 games in 3 days.

In 1942, George Koltanowski came to the S.W. Open, and along with John, conducted the tournament using the Swiss System. In the first Book on the Rules of Chess (1st official rule book printed by the USCF.

Before the start of the tournament, John learned that Whitaker was just getting out of Alcatraz and wanted to come and play in the tournament.

Whitaker was just finishing his sentence for his part in the kidnapping of Charles Lindbergh's son. While there was some division among USCF directors (including the president of the USCF) whether Whitaker should be allowed to play, John and others decided Whitaker had paid his debt and should be allowed to play. When Whitaker showed up, John talked to him and allowed him to play. In 1952, while in N.Y., John went to the Marshal Club and played Ed Lasker who at the time was one of the top 3 players in the USA. They played 6 games, John won 3 and lost 3.

In 1982, after retiring, John returned to Billings. He has taught chess to grade school students from 1983 to 1995. His most recent class involved twenty five students! John has taught hundreds of Montana youngsters over the years.

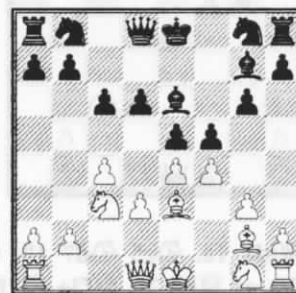
After returning to the U.S., the USCF awarded John the title of Master Emeritus. Ken Smith, John's all-time top student, in an article in the *Texas Knights*, said that in his prime, John was among the top 5 players in the USA.

SEE THE REPRINTED BONUS 'WHY PLAY CHESS' ARTICLE AT THE END OF THIS MONTHS NEWSLETTER

Games Section

1. A20
GRIFFIN - ERICKSON
, , 1997

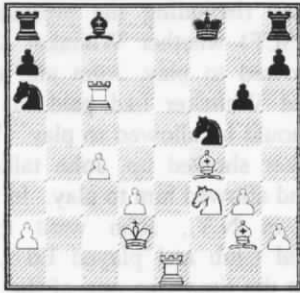
1. c4 e5 2. g3 g6 3. e4 ♖g7 4. ♖g2 d6
5. ♘c3 f5 6. d3 c6 7. f4 ♖e6 8. ♖e3



8... fe 9. ♘:e4 ♘e7 10. ♘f3 ♘f5 11. ♖d2 ef 12. ♖:f4 ♖:b2 13. ♖b1 ♖a5+ 14. ♖d2 ♖:d2+ 15. ♖:d2

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♙g7 16. ♖:b7 ♙c8 17. ♘:d6+ ♘:d6
18. ♖:g7 ♘f5 19. ♖e1+ ♙f8 20. ♖c7
♘a6 21. ♖:c6



21... ♙b7 22. ♖ce6 ♖d8 23. g4 ♘c5
24. gf ♖:d3+ 25. ♙e2 ♘:e6 26.
♙h6+ ♙g8 27. ♙:d3 ♘c5+ 28. ♙d4
And Black Resigns... 1:0

2. B01
Mundy, Jim - Younker, G
UCCC Mid Summer Open, , 1997

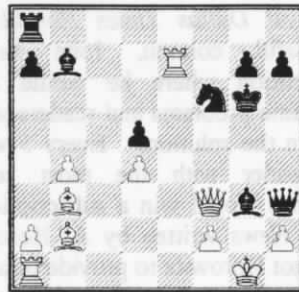
1. e4 d5 2. ed ♘f6 3. ♘f3 e6 4. ♙b5+
c6 5. dc bc 6. ♙a4 ♙a6 7. ♘c3



7... ♙c5 8. ♘e2 0-0 9. 0-0 ♖a5 10. c3
♙b6 11. b4 ♖d5 12. d4 ♖d8 13. ♙b3
♖d7 14. ♖e1 ♖e7 15. ♘f4 ♙b7 16.
♘:e6 ♘d5 17. ♘:d8



17... ♖:d8 18. ♘e5 ♘d7 19. ♘:f7
♙:f7 20. c4 ♖h4 21. ♖f3+ ♘7f6 22.
cd cd 23. ♙b2 ♙c7 24. ♖e5 ♙g6 25.
g3 ♖h3 26. ♖e7 ♙:g3



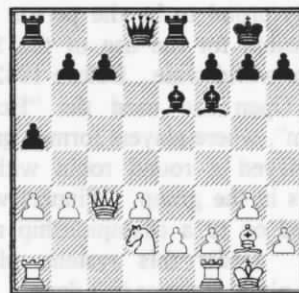
27. ♙c2+ ♘e4 28. ♖f7+ ♙g5 29.
♖:g7+ ♙f5 30. ♖f7+ ♙g5 31. ♙c1+
♙g4 32. ♙d1+ And Black Resigns...
1:0

3. A29
Fewel, Nathan - Katzel, Rudy
UCCC Mid Summer Open, , 1997

1. c4 ♘f6 2. ♘c3 e5 3. g3 d5 4. cd
♘:d5 5. ♙g2 ♘b6 6. ♘f3 ♘c6 7. 0-0
♙e7 8. a3



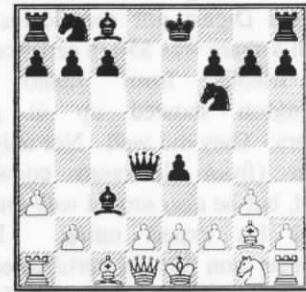
8... a5 9. b3 0-0 10. d3 ♖e8 11. ♙e3
♙e6 12. ♘d2 ♘d5 13. ♖c1 ♘d4 14.
♙:d4 ed 15. ♘b5 ♘c3 16. ♘:c3 dc
17. ♖:c3 ♙f6



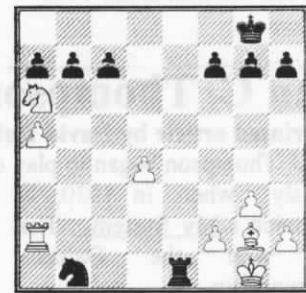
18. ♖c5 ♙:a1 19. ♖:a1 c6 20. ♘e4
♙:b3 21. a4 ♖e7 22. ♘d6 ♖ed8 23.
♘e4 h6 24. ♖:e7 And Black
Resigns... 1:0

4. A20
Nowak, Greg - Mundy, Jim
UCCC Mid Summer Open, , 1997

1. g3 e5 2. c4 d5 3. cd ♖:d5 4. ♘f3
♙b4 5. ♙g2 e4 6. ♘g1 ♘f6 7. ♘c3
♖d4 8. a3 ♙:c3



9. bc ♖c4 10. a4 0-0 11. a5 ♙d7 12.
♖c2 ♙c6 13. ♖a2 ♖:a2 14. ♖:a2 e3
15. ♘f3 ed+ 16. ♙:d2 ♖e8 17. ♙e3
♘bd7 18. 0-0 ♘d5 19. ♙d4 ♙b5 20.
♖b1 ♙a6 21. e4 ♖:e4 22. ♘e5 ♖:d4
23. cd ♘c3 24. ♘:d7 ♘:b1 25. ♘c5
♖e8 26. ♘:a6 ♖e1+

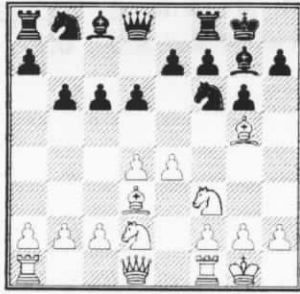


27. ♙f1 ba 28. ♙g2 ♘c3 29. ♖c2
♘b5 30. ♙:b5 ab 31. ♖:c7 ♘f8 32.
♖:a7 ♖d1 33. ♖b7 ♖:d4 34. a6 ♖a4
35. a7 And Black Resigns... 1:0

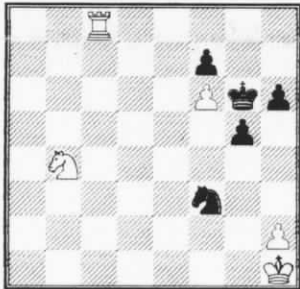
5. A48
Jensen, Michael -
McBroom, William
1st Summer Open, , 1997

1. d4 ♘f6 2. ♘f3 g6 3. ♙g5 ♙g7 4.
♘bd2 b6 5. e4 d6 6. ♙b5+ c6 7. ♙d3
0-0 8. 0-0

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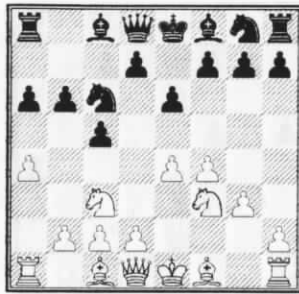
8... ♖a6 9. ♜e2 b5 10. a4 ♜b6 11. e5 de 12. de ♘d5 13. ab cb 14. ♜fe1 h6 15. ♙h4 ♘f4 16. ♜e4 ♘:d3 17. cd ♙b7 18. ♜e2 ♘c6 19. ♘b3 a5 20. d4 ♘b4 21. ♙:e7 ♙:f3 22. gf ♜fe8 23. ♙c5 ♜d8 24. ♘:a5 ♜g5+ 25. ♚h1 ♘d5 26. ♜g1 ♜f5 27. ♜e4 ♜e6 28. f4 ♘f6 29. ♜c6 ♜d5+ 30. f3 ♜:c6 31. ♘:c6 ♘d5 32. f5 g5 33. ♜a7 ♘e3 34. f6 ♙f8 35. b4 ♘c2 36. ♜c1 ♜:a7 37. ♘:a7 ♙:c5 38. dc ♘:b4 39. c6 ♘d3 40. ♜c3 ♘:e5 41. c7 b4 42. c8 ♜:c8 43. ♜:c8+ ♚h7 44. ♘c6 ♘:f3 45. ♘:b4 ♚g6



46. ♘d5 ♚f5 47. ♜e8 h5 48. ♜e7 ♚g6 49. ♚g2 ♘h4+ 50. ♚f2 ♘f5 51. ♜e8 ♚h7 52. ♚f3 ♘d6 53. ♜d8 ♘f5 54. ♘e7 ♘h4+ 55. ♚e4 ♘g2 56. ♜f8 And Black Resigns... 1:0

6. **B23**
McCourt, Dan - Gross, Dale
1st Summer Open, , 1997

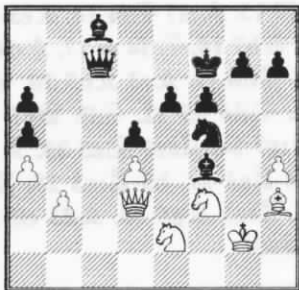
1. e4 c5 2. ♘c3 ♘c6 3. f4 e6 4. ♙b5 ♘d4 5. ♘f3 a6 6. ♙f1 ♘c6 7. a4 b6 8. g3



8... ♙b7 9. ♙g2 c4 10. d4 cd 11. cd ♜c8 12. 0-0 ♙c5+ 13. d4 ♙b4 14. ♙d2 ♘a5 15. ♘b5 ♙e7 16. ♘a3 ♙:e4 17. ♜e2 ♙b7



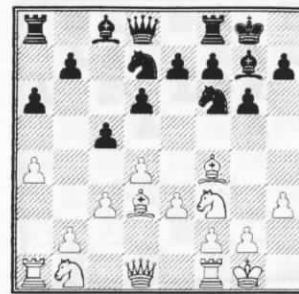
18. ♙:a5 ba 19. ♘c4 ♘f6 20. ♜ac1 0-0 21. ♘fe5 d5 22. ♘d2 ♜b6 23. ♘df3 ♜c7 24. h3 ♜fc8 25. ♘d3 ♜:c1 26. ♘:c1 ♙c6 27. b3 ♘e4 28. ♜d3 ♘:g3 29. ♜e1 ♘f5 30. ♘e2 ♙b4 31. ♜c1 ♙b7 32. ♜:c8+ ♙:c8 33. ♘e5 f6 34. ♘f3 ♚f7 35. ♚h2 ♙d6 36. h4 ♜c7 37. ♙h3 ♙:f4+ 38. ♚g2



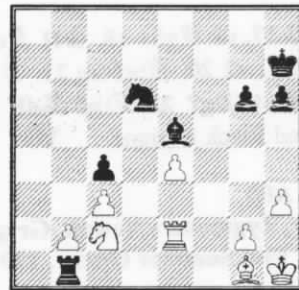
38... ♘e3+ 39. ♚f2 h5 40. ♘:f4 ♜:f4 41. ♜:e3 ♜:e3+ 42. ♚:e3 ♙d7 43. ♙f1 ♙c8 44. ♘e1 And White loses on Time... 0:1

7. **A46**
Rayburn, John - Katzel, Rudy
, 1997

1. d4 ♘f6 2. ♘f3 d6 3. ♙f4 g6 4. e3 ♙g7 5. c3 0-0 6. ♙d3 ♘bd7 7. h3 c5 8. 0-0 a6 9. a4



9... b6 10. ♙h2 ♙b7 11. ♘a3 ♘e8 12. ♜e1 e5 13. de de 14. e4 ♜e7 15. ♜b3 ♜b8 16. ♙c4 ♘c7 17. ♙d5 ♜fe8 18. ♜ad1 h6 19. ♙:f7+ ♚h7 20. ♙:e8 ♘:e8 21. ♘c4 ♙c6 22. ♜c2 ♜e6 23. ♘e3 b5 24. ab ab 25. ♜e2 c4 26. ♘d5 ♘c5 27. ♘d4 ♜d6 28. ♘:c6 ♜:c6 29. f4 ♘d3 30. ♜:d3 cd 31. ♜:d3 ♜c5+ 32. ♚h1 ♜a8 33. ♜e1 ♜a2 34. ♙g1 ♜c4 35. ♜:c4 bc 36. ♜e2 ♘d6 37. fe ♙:e5 38. ♘b4 ♜a1 39. ♘c2 ♜b1

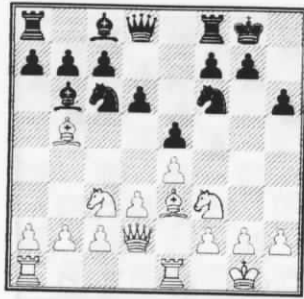


40. ♘d4 g5 41. ♘f3 ♙f4 42. e5 ♘f5 43. ♜e1 ♜:b2 44. ♙h2 ♘g3+ 45. ♚g1 ♘e2+ 46. ♚f1 ♘g3+ 47. ♙:g3 ♙:g3 48. ♜d1 ♜c2 49. e6 Black's Flag Fell... 1:0

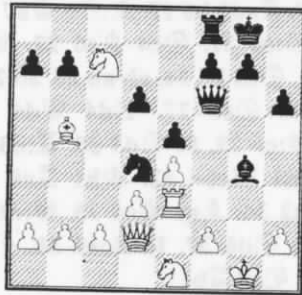
8. **C64**
Gisselbeck, Don - Moore, Sherwood
1st Summer Open, , 1997

1. e4 e5 2. ♘f3 ♘c6 3. ♙b5 ♙c5 4. d3 d6 5. 0-0 ♘f6 6. ♜e1 0-0 7. ♘c3 h6 8. ♙e3 ♙b6 9. ♜d2

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9... ♖g4 10. ♗d5 ♗:e3 11. ♗:b6
 ♗:g2 12. ♗:a8 ♗:e1 13. ♖:e1 ♖g4
 14. ♖e3 ♖f6 15. ♗e1 ♗d4 16. ♗:c7



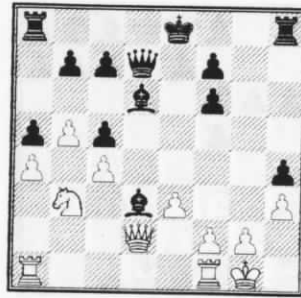
16... ♖f3 17. c3 ♖g5+ 18. ♖f1 ♖e2+
 19. ♖:e2 ♗:e2 20. ♖:g5 hg 21. ♖:e2
 g6 22. ♖c4 ♖g7 23. ♗b5 ♖d8 24.
 ♗:a7 And Black Resigns... 1:0

9. A00
 Mayer, Zygmund - Nowak, Greg
 UCCC Mid Summer Open, , 1997

1. b4 a5 2. b5 e5 3. e3 d6 4. c4 e4 5.
 ♗c3 ♗f6 6. ♖c2 ♖e7 7. ♗ge2 ♖f5
 8. ♖b2 ♗bd7 9. h3 h5



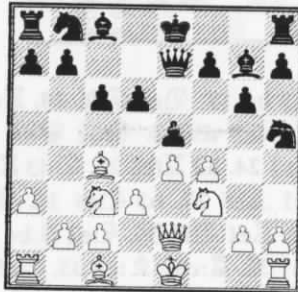
10. ♗d4 ♖g6 11. ♖e2 ♗c5 12. 0-0
 h4 13. ♗a4 ♖d7 14. ♗:c5 dc 15.
 ♗b3 ♖d6 16. a4 ♖f5 17. ♖:f6 gf 18.
 d4 ed 19. ♖:d3 ♖:d3 20. ♖d2



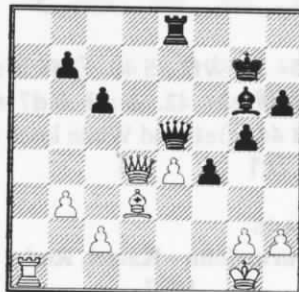
20... ♖:f1 21. ♖:f1 ♖g8 22. ♖h1 b6
 23. ♖d5 ♖d8 24. ♖d1 ♖e6 25. ♖c6+
 ♖f8 26. ♖d5 ♖g4 And White
 Resigns... 0:1

10. C23
 Jensen, Michael - Nowak, Greg
 Western Montana Open, , 1997

1. e4 e5 2. ♖c4 d6 3. ♗c3 c6 4. a3
 ♖e7 5. d3 g6 6. ♖e2 ♖g7 7. f4 ♗f6
 8. ♗f3 ♗h5



9. fe de 10. 0-0 ♖g4 11. ♖f2 h6 12.
 ♖e3 ♗d7 13. ♖:a7 ♗f4 14. ♖e3 0-0
 15. ♗e2 ♖h7 16. ♗:f4 ef 17. ♖d4 f6
 18. ♗h4 ♖d6 19. ♖c3 ♖h5 20. ♗f3
 ♖fe8 21. ♗d4 g5 22. ♗f5 ♖c7 23.
 ♗:g7 ♖:g7 24. ♖a1 ♗e5 25. ♖:e5
 fe 26. d4 ♖a4 27. b3 ♖:a3 28. ♖a1
 ♖:a1 29. ♖:a1 ♖g6 30. ♖d3 ed 31.
 ♖:d4+ ♖e5

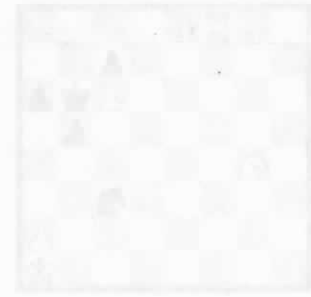


32. ♖:e5+ ♖:e5 33. ♖e1 ♖f6 34.
 ♖f2 g4 35. h3 h5 36. hg hg 37. ♖e2
 ♖g5 38. g3 ♖e6 39. ♖e1 ♖e7 40. ♖e2

♖h7 41. gf+ ♖:f4 42. ♖g2 g3 43.
 ♖g1 ♖h5 44. ♖e1 ♖f3 0:1



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Montana Chess Association Newsletter

Tournament Tables

MID SUMMER OPEN

	Name	RD1	RD2	RD3	RD4	RD5	TOTAL
1	Nowak, Greg	W12	W7	W2	W5	D21	4.5
2	Mayer, Zygmund	W11	W6	L1	W10	D5	3.5
3	Katzel, Rudy	W13	W10	BYE	L21	D8	3
4	Erickson, Ron	L15	D9	W16	WDR	WDR	1.5
5	Mundy, Jim	W16	W15	W6	L1	D2	3.5
6	Yunker, Gary	W7	L2	L5	D9	W15	2.5
7	Moore, Sherwood	W8	L1	L11	L13	D17	1.5
8	Bownlee, Keith	W19	L21	W12	W11	D3	3.5
9	McCourt, Daniel	BYE	D4	D13	D6	W12	3
10	Bailey, Brian	W20	L3	W15	L2	D13	2.5
11	Rayburn, John	L2	W17	W7	L8	D14	2.5
12	Smith, Kevin	L1	W18	L8	W16	L9	2
13	Yunker, Jeremy	L3	W20	D9	W6	D10	3
14	McCourt, Chris	L21	BYE	BYE	W19	D11	2
15	Griffin, David	W4	L5	L10	D17	L6	1.5
16	Blehm, Zac	L5	W19	L4	L12	W18	2
17	Hersrud, Russell	L6	L11	W20	D15	D7	2
18	Willms, Gerhard	L7	L12	L19	L20	L16	0
19	Schiley, Andrew	L8	L16	W18	L14	W20	2
20	Hansen, Daniel	L10	L13	L17	W18	L19	1
21	Fewel, Nathan	W14	W8	BYE	W3	D1	4

1ST SUMMER OPEN

	Name	RD1	RD2	RD3	TOTAL
1	Jensen, Michael	W6	W9	W10	3
2	Katzel, Rudy	L7	W11	W8	2
3	Leader, Bob	W8	HOUSE	HOUSE	1
4	Moore, Sherwood	L9	W5	W7	2
5	McCourt, Daniel	L10	L4	L6	0
6	McBroom, William	L1	L8	W5	1
7	Rayburn, John	W2	L10	L4	1
8	Walisky, John	L3	W6	L2	1
9	Gisselbeck, Don	W4	L1	L11	1
10	Gross, Dale	W5	W7	L1	2
11	Erickson, Rom	BYE	L2	W9	1.5

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HUNTER BAY G15 CHAMPIONSHIP

NAME	RD1	RD2	RD3	RD4	RD5	RD6	RD7	RD8	RD9	RD10
Nowak, Greg	x	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Anderson, Hans	0	x	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
Moore, Sherwood	0	0	x	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
Hall, Richard	0	0	0	x	1	1	1	1	1	1
Gross, Dale	0	1	1	0	x	0	1	1	0	1
Joyce, Mike	0	0	0	0	1	x	1	0	1	1
Leader, Bob	0	0	0	0	0	0	x	1	1	1
Johnson, Justin	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	x	0	1
Dozier, Chris	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	x	0
Briggs, Mike	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	x

WESTERN MONTANA OPEN

NAME	RD1	RD2	RD3	RD4	RD5	TOTAL
Nowak, Greg	W	W	L	W	W	4
Burkett, Matt	W	L	W	W	W	4
Miller, Rubin	W	W	D	L	W	3.5
Svelmoe, Paul	W	W	W	D	L	3.5
Jensen, Mike	W	W	D	L	W	3.5
Katzl, Rudy	W	L	W	W	L	3
Mundy, Jim	W	L	W	W	L	3
Wabisky, John	L	W	L	W	W	3
Schmitz, Karl	L	W	D	W	L	2.5
Leader, Bob	L	W	L	W	L	2
Mundy, Jerry	L	W	D	L	D	2
Anderson, Dave	L	L	L	W	W	2
Miller, Dave	L	L	W	L	W	2
Weber, Byron	D	D	W			2
Anderson, Hans	W	L	D	L		1.5
Joyce, Mike	L	L	L	W	L	1
Erickson, Ron	W					1
Gupton, George	L	L	W	L	L	1
Otman, Mike	L	W	L			1
Petersen, Lyle	D					.5

Montana Chess Association Newsletter

UPCOMING EVENTS

Montana State Closed.....September 20th and 21st 1997

5Rnd 30/90 SD 60. University of Great Falls Class Room Bldg Rounds: 9, 2, 7, 9, 2 Thad Suits directing. For Info: Thad Suits, 2015 4th Ave North, Great Falls, MT 59401. (406) 453-6160

Use the large parking lot, 23rd St. just South of 10th Avenue South.

The John Barto Memorial Open.....September 20th and 21st 1997

Held in conjunction with the MT State Closed

5Rnd 30/90 SD 30. University of Great Falls Class Room Bldg. Reg. 8-8:45am Rounds: 9,2,7,9,2 EF: \$15 by 9/18, \$20 at site. Trophies 1st, 2nd, 3rd. Thad Suits directing. For Info: Thad Suits, 2015 4th Ave North, Great Falls, MT 59401. (406) 453-6160

*Limited housing has been offered by Thad Suits and Jim Skovron, on a first requested basis.
Use the large parking lot, 23rd St. just South of 10th Avenue South.*

Goldsmiths 5min Ice-cream Social.....September 20th

Double Round Robin 5min speed chess. Goldsmiths 809 E Front St. Missoula, Montana Reg: 6:45pm-7pm Rounds begin at 7pm EF: \$5 Cash Prizes 1st - 4th. 5th-7th win free ice cream.

Coffee Head 15min Speed Championship.....September 30th

Single Round Robin G15 Hunter Bay Coffee Roasters 225 W Front Street, Missoula, Montana EF: \$7 Reg: 6:45-7pm Rounds begin at 7pm. Prizes Cash 1st-4th and other prizes 5th-7th.

Chinook.....October 11th - 12th

Thad Suits directing. For Info: Thad Suits, 2015 4th Ave North, Great Falls, MT 59401. (406) 453-6160

Use the large parking lot, 23rd St. just South of 10th Avenue South.

The Milky Way Open.....October 11th - 12th

Tournament of the Stars

5 Round Swiss 1st Round G/60 all others G/2. Goldsmiths 809 E Front St. Missoula, Montana. In upstairs meeting room Reg: 10:30-10:45 All players must be in the playing room by 10:45 or forfeit first round. Rounds 11a, 2p, 7p, 11a, 4p EF: \$10 by 10/10, \$14 on site. 17 and under \$7 by 10/10, \$11 on site. Prizes Cash based on 20 Entries 1st = \$30, 2nd = \$25, 3rd = \$20, 4th = \$10. \$5 merit prize for all who attain 3 points (and do not win any other prizes). \$10 for best U1600 - UNR. Enter daily at Hunter Bay Coffee Roasters 225 W Front between 4 - 6pm in person or via Greg Nowak, Hellgate Station, PO Box 8572, Missoula, Montana 59807. ½ pt bye is available with early entry for all but last round. Non-USCF tournament. No dues required. The insufficient losing chances rule will not be in effect.



WHY PLAY CHESS?

John Charles Thompson looks back

"Why do you want everybody to play chess?" Ashley Hale asked me.

That struck me as a strange question. Ever since I had learnt the moves of the game, in the Boys Division of the Dallas YMCA, I had taken it for granted that everybody **should** play chess.

I taught several other boys how to play, they taught others, and we formed a club and prevailed on the Dallas city champion to be our coach. Every Saturday afternoon, for several hours, a dozen or so of us could be found at the Y, absorbing strategy and tactics from the champion, Allan Anderson.

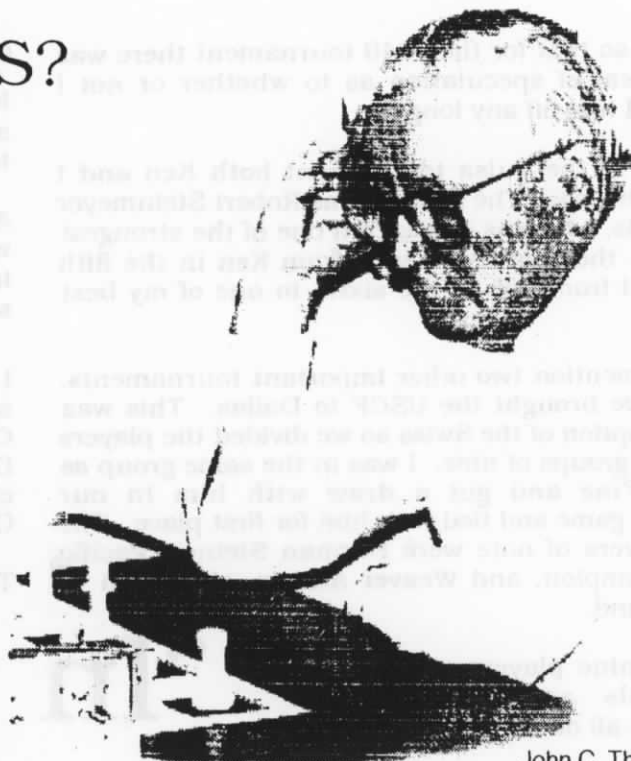
This was in 1926. The Y had a men's chess club but we boys were allowed to play. I made slow progress until I acquired a copy of Nimzowitsch's masterpiece, "My System." This is the finest chess book I have ever read. I won the Dallas city championship in 1930 and was second in the Texas state championship in 1932.

However, my progress as a player has always been secondary to my love of promoting the game. I founded the present Texas Chess Association and its main event, the Southwest Open, in 1935 and both are still going strong.

I am the person most responsible for getting the Swiss System adopted worldwide, after giving due credit to George Koltanowski who told us about it.

In the early years of the Southwest Open, which is always played on Labor Day weekend, we divided the players into groups. Each group played a round-robin within itself, the winners graduating into the championship flight, the second players into Class A, third into Class B, and so on. This meant that we had to play around 15 games in three days. We brought George to Dallas for a series of exhibitions and told him of our problem. He told us about the Swiss and we used it in the Southwest Open in 1942. Seven games in three days! It was like heaven.

TCA has used the Swiss ever since. Then, in 1947 we brought the United States Chess Federation Open Tournament to Corpus Chrita, Texas and had 87



John C. Thompson

"I consider adoption of the Swiss and the Elo rating system to be the most important developments for the good of chess in the twentieth century."

players, by far the biggest chess tournament on record. I was a USCF Vice-President at the time and in charge of the tournament. Koltanowski was tournament director and readily agreed to using the Swiss. Later I read an article by the Australian master C.J. S. Purdy in which he said, "When I read that they had played a tournament in Texas with 87 players in 14 days, I wondered if it were a misprint or if the Texans were supermen after all."

That was the first national tournament to use the Swiss and its use spread all over the world. I consider adoption of the Swiss and the Elo rating system to be the most important developments for the good of chess in the twentieth century.

I played in the first 16 Southwest Opens and won seven times, second seven, third once, and fourth once. I was either President or Secretary-Treasurer during that time.

A memorable SW Open was 1949, played in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Moving the tournament out of Texas was a fine idea since we acquired a number of Mid-western players, several of whom continued to play in subsequent events.

I have taught thousands to play chess but my all-time pupil is Ken Smith. Ken showed an early talent and kept doing better and better in the Texas tournaments,

so much so that for the 1949 tournament there was a great deal of speculation as to whether or not I could hold him off any longer.

However, in the Tulsa tournament both Ken and I were under-dogs. The favorite was Robert Steinmeyer of St. Louis, who was considered one of the strongest players in the country. I won from Ken in the fifth round and from Bob in the sixth, in one of my best efforts.

I should mention two other important tournaments. In 1940 we brought the USCF to Dallas. This was before adoption of the Swiss so we divided the players into three groups of nine. I was in the same group as Reuben Fine and got a draw with him in our individual game and tied with him for first place. The other players of note were Herman Steiner, Pacific Coast champion, and Weaver Adams, champion of New England.

We had nine players in the finals and Fine mowed us all down.

In 1942 we brought the tournament to Dallas again and this time the leading players were Al Horowitz, Herman Steiner, and Abie Yanofsky, the 17-year-old Canadian champion.

We had only eighteen players so we made it a found-robin. Horowitz beat Yanofsky and Abie won from Steiner. In my game with Horowitz I offered him a draw on about move 28. Al, always the soul of honesty, thought a minute then agreed to the draw. He said, "You have the better position, but I need the extra half-point. This means I'll have to beat Herman to win first place." However, Steiner was also a fine player and won from Al, tying for first place with Yanofsky. Horowitz was third and I fourth.

In 1952 my company transferred me to Calgary, Canada and later to Venezuela, Turkey and Singapore (a beautiful city, practically crime-free because they beat the living daylights out of the few

criminals stupid enough to commit crimes).

My chess in all those places was mainly of the skittles variety, although I played on the Singapore team against some invaders, from Malaysia, I think.

After Singapore, where I retired from Mobil Oil, I worked for a couple of years for Occidental Petroleum in Tripoli, Libya. I gave a couple of simuls but no serious chess.

I returned to my home city of Dallas (actually, the suburb, Richardson) in 1973 and joined the Dallas Chess Club, which I had organized in 1934 as the Dallas YMCA Chess Club. I won the city championship one year and began playing in the SW Open again.

Then I received an offer from the International Executive Service Corps to work for them in Venezuela, which I did for two years then did consulting work for one of the nationalized oil companies. No serious chess during that time.

We moved to Billings in 1982 and I have been busy ever since teaching chess at the YMCA and at various elementary schools. This has been a lot of fun because kids really take to chess.

I have played in various tournaments sponsored by the Montana Chess Association and won the state championship once, tying for first on another occasion. I still make it to Texas every year to play in the Southwest Open, usually with fairly respectable results.

I have been unsuccessful in getting an adult chess club going in Billings but will continue trying. The new President of the Montana Chess Association, David Duke, lives here and may be able to stimulate interest.

“In my
game with
Horowitz I
offered
him a
draw on
about
move
28.”

John C. Thompson
USCF Master Emeritus