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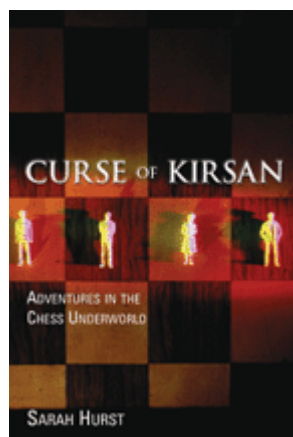
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COLUMNISTS

Susan Polgar on Chess

Susan Polgar



Curse of Kirsan
by Sarah Hurst

Future Chess Queens

The first annual All-Girls National Chess Championships for girls 18 years old and under took place from May 14-16, 2004 in Chicago, Illinois. The tournament was held at Adler Planetarium, located on the beautiful Chicago lakefront next to Shed Aquarium, Field Museum, and Soldier Field stadium, home of the Chicago Bears. This historic event was sponsored by the Kasparov Chess Foundation and was organized by Chess Wizards. This was done in conjunction with the Adler Planetarium and the United States Chess Federation, 187 participants from all over the United States participated in this momentous tournament, some as far as Hawaii.

The first event of the tournament was the Blitz Championship. It took place on Friday night, May 14, 2004. Stephanie Ballom, Courtney Jamison, Tamara Corey, and Anna Matlin finished 1-4 respectively. Following the Blitz Championship was my 41-board simul. This is the first time I have ever done a simul against all female players. Prior to the start of the simul, I presented each of the participant in the Simul a complimentary 2004-2005 US Women's Olympiad Calendar signed by me, courtesy of the Susan Polgar Foundation. My final simul score was 40 wins and 1 draw. The player who drew me was Stacey Stahl from Ohio.



Susan Polgar with Florencio Campomanes in background

Both the Blitz and Simul events took place at the landmark Palmer House Hilton Hotel in the heart of downtown Chicago. The players who stayed at the Palmer House were transported each day to and from the playing site (Adler Planetarium) by complimentary shuttles. For those who chose to enjoy the beautiful spring weather, the venue is a short 10-15 minute walk along Lake Michigan. FIDE Honorary President Campomanes flew in to Chicago for a visit on his way to Elista, Russia for the Women's World Knockout Championship.

After two grueling days of intense competition, the event ended by early Sunday afternoon. The tournament was a great success. Friendships and camaraderie that were formed in this tournament are unlike any other. There were special bonds built by many of these charming and dynamic young ladies. They fought hard but they had fun and they did it with the highest level of sportsmanship. Countless parents and players have said that this was such a special event and many of these young

ladies already made plans to reunite next year. That is the beautiful spirit that is often lost in competitive chess tournaments.



The biggest thanks go to Garry Kasparov for his involvement, support, and contribution to US Scholastic Chess. A special recognition also goes out to Michael Khodarkovsky, Carol Jarecki and countless TDs and volunteers who made the event a big success. Congratulations to all the winners! Below are the final results of the championship:

Individual:

- 18 & Under: 1st- 2nd Patrice Connelly & Stacey Rugel-Stahl; 3rd Tamara Corey; 4th Stephanie Flores; 5th Madelle Olea; 6th – 8th Lesley-Ann Loren, Laura Dixon, Katarzyna Nosek; 9th Blerta Lumani; 10th Nicole Perez
- 16 & Under: 1st – 2nd Stephanie Ballom, Anna Ginzburg; 3rd Emily Lau, 4th Tiffany Ko; 5th – 7th Diana Yen, Laura Edgard, Holly Narantsetieg; 8th Demetra Che Fotis; 9th – 10th Tania Lyerly, Catherine Flories; 11th Andrea William
- 14 & Under: 1st Medina Parrilla; 2nd – 6th Alexandra Krawczuk, Krista Selby, Mindy Zhang, Nia Kari Blackman, Khadeejah Gray; 7th Tanisha Millan; 8th – 11th Elina Chertok, Suleidy Quezada, April Jackson, Alexandra Korves; 12th Carolyn Ayers, 13th – 15th Saydi Ramos, Alondra Torres, Veronica Atkins
- 12 & Under: 1st – 3rd Alisa Melekhina, Courtney Jamison, Abby Marshall; 4th – 5th Jessie Lopez, Melinda Shokler; 6th – 15th Karsten McVay, Stephanie Heung, Aia Sarytcheva, Nicole Maffeo, Brianna Conley, Hanna Druckenmiller, Kathleen Coccio, Chelsea Powell, Saahithi Karuturi, Chelsey Shirahata
- 10 & Under: 1st Liliya Leybova; 2nd – 4th Eve Litvak; Alexandra Wiener, Adriana Kille; 5th – 7th Catherine Hochman, Dani Moubayed, Elizabeth Berg; 8th – 15th Hailey Winston, Jamie Maffeo, Chandler Garber, Helen Chu, Michelle Sagalchik, Erika Araujo, Adele Padgett, Sonya Vohra
- 8 & Under: 1st Anna Matlin, 2nd – 5th Alice Li, Eve Zhurbinskiy, Clara Wang, Sarah Valentine; 6th – 15th Marilla Havens, Mary Kate Dockery, Isamar Duran, Helen Simpson, Srisivaa Karri, Rebecca Honnold, Julie Flammang, Emma Alley, Madison Rosegarten, Cassie Gibbons

Teams:

- 18 & U: 1st Lane Tech College Prep H. S., IL
- 16 & U: 1st Lane Tech College Prep H. S., IL
- 14 & U: 1st MS 118, NY; 2nd IS 318, NY; 3rd Allapattah Middle, FL
- 12 & U: 1st Spence, NY; 2nd Arai Middle, IL; 3rd Prussing, IL
- 10 & U: 1st Half Day Elementary, IL; 2nd – 3rd PS 180, NY, Greenhill School, TX
- 8 & U: 1st West Homestead, FL; 2nd Latin, IL; 3rd McKenzie, IL



The Susan Polgar National Invitational for Girls

There are about two months left before the inaugural Susan Polgar National Invitational for Girls will take place during the 2004 US Open in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Many states have already sent in their nominees for this event. The level of enthusiasm is high and I am looking forward to an exciting tournament in August. However, there are a number of questions that I have been asked. I would like to share some of them with you.

Q: What are some of the major differences between the Denker tournament and the Polgar tournament?

A: The main difference is the Denker tournament is for High School players while the Polgar tournament is for K-12. One of the reasons for this is many girls drop out of chess by 4th or 5th grade. I would like to change this trend and one of the ways to do that is to give young girls more incentive to stay in chess.

Q: Why is there a need for a separate tournament for girls?

A: I believe that women play chess as well as men do if they put in the same amount of efforts for training. However, it is often difficult for girls to get a fair chance to play chess because of peer pressure and social pressure. To avoid this many girls quit the game. Tournaments like this would help give young girls more opportunities and choices.

Q: Where can one learn about the rules of the tournament?

A: They can be found in my website www.SusanPolgar.com or at the USCF website www.uschess.org.

The Women's Olympiad Program

The women in the Olympiad Program just spent three days in training with Garry Kasparov in New York City over the Memorial Day Weekend preparing for the 2004 Chess Olympiad. This training session was organized by and sponsored by the Kasparov Chess Foundation. It was an honor and pleasure for all the team members to be able to learn from the one of the greatest world champions ever.



I have worked with many coaches, trainers and fellow grandmasters in the past. However, I have seldom seen any player with such incredible knowledge, passion and intensity for the game like Garry. The players also had a unique chance to get to know a completely different side of this great world champion. He is a very warm individual and he has a wonderful sense of humor. He is also quite frank and honest with his opinion.



Kasparov, Krush, Shahade, Polgar, Zatonskih, and Khodarkovsky

The final selection of the 2004 US Women's Olympiad team is almost complete. Three of the four members of the team are Irina Krush, Anna Zatonskih and me. The fourth member of the team will be decided in the upcoming US Women's Championship from June 17-26 at St. John's University in Manhattan. The list of participants include: Irina Krush, Anna Zatonskih, Rusa Goletiani, Angelina Belakovskaya, Jennifer Shahade, Tatev Abrahamyan and Tsagaan Battsetseg. The 2003 US Women's Champion Anna Hahn after repeatedly and publicly expressing her desire to make the US Women's Olympiad team surprisingly decided to decline her invitation. This means that she has forfeited all her chances to make the team. Even without Anna Hahn, I believe this is one of the strongest ever US Women's Championship in an all women round robin format. Good luck to all the participants!

Paul Truong assisted Susan Polgar in the preparation of this column. Susan Polgar is

available for chess instruction. For more information, visit the Polgar Chess Center, 97-09 64th Road, Rego Park, NY 11374 (Tel: 718-897-4600) or email: PolgarChessInc@aol.com

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