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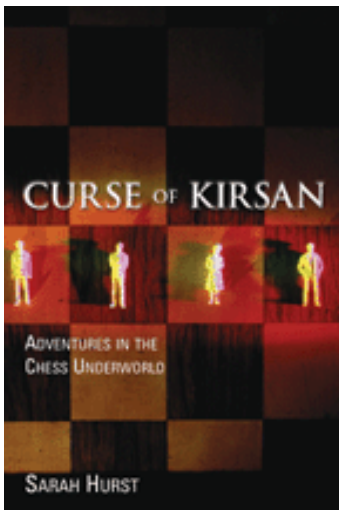
## Amazing Things Can Happen...

In last month's [column](#), I discussed my trip to Corpus Christi, TX. It was truly fantastic and it has given rise to an exciting development. A few days after I returned I received an urgent e-mail from one of the organizers. It turned out that the parents of one of the girls who had met me in Corpus Christi were very motivated to make a difference for kids of all ages in their community.

### COLUMNISTS

## *Susan Polgar on Chess*

Susan Polgar



*Curse of Kirsan*  
by Sarah Hurst

Some people donate money to build community playgrounds, some donate their services and time, but *these parents decided to donate a building to open the Susan Polgar South Texas Chess Center!* They wish to help introduce the children of South Texas to chess and keep them interested in it. Because they know that chess can help children do better in school as well as develop important skills that can benefit them throughout their whole lives; a chess center like this can positively affect the children of that area for generations to come. Amazing things can happen when parents are motivated.

This is what I try to promote daily. Chess can benefit different people in different ways and I am so touched to see parents supporting not only their children but the community as well. I am very grateful for their help and the help of countless other parents, local businesses, and local governments.



*The Girls of Corpus Christi*

When I spoke about the situation in Corpus Christi, it got other parents from

different parts of the country excited and there are now talks about doing similar things elsewhere. Some have access to free space that can be used for a chess club and some offer to help manage the club on different nights, but the bottom line is that it is a community effort and it brings everyone closer.

In addition to creating a chess curriculum and guidelines for the chess center, I will also recommend what chess books, software, and equipment to buy. I agreed to visit the Susan Polgar South Texas Chess Center a few times annually to teach the children, meet the members, conduct simulms, give lectures, and train other teachers and coaches so they can help the children. And I will give video conference lectures twice monthly. This way, the children will be able to see and hear me from thousands of miles away. The nicest touch is the net income from the not-for-profit chess center will be put back into local chess.

Politicians talk about the importance of education, and as a parent, I totally agree. That is why we need to do more to help our children succeed in school and in life. Chess can give a big boost to children. Thank you everyone for helping me bring the positive image of chess to all children.

### **The Upcoming USCF Election**

A few years ago the USCF was on the verge of bankruptcy, but many people worked very hard to save the federation and today it is financially stable. The relocation to Crossville, TN has begun and the construction of the new headquarters will soon start.

Now the USCF is facing many other serious challenges. What is its mission? Many professional players believe that the federation no longer represents them. In a way, I have to agree. There have been constant disagreements between the USCF and the scholastic council for many years and there have been steady talks about dividing adult and scholastic chess. In addition, it is a serious problem when the federation has less than 90,000 members out of nearly 45 million chess players in America.

Unfortunately, people still associate Bobby Fischer with American chess even though he has been out of competitive chess for decades. That means not enough has been done to promote our star players and that we have done a very poor job of marketing and promotion. The good news is that there is plenty of room for improvement if that is one of the missions of the federation.

The other problem is how to attract people to join the USCF and renew their memberships. The constant bickering, political maneuvering, and in-fighting have done nothing but further divide the already deeply wounded national federation. Look at what happened in India and their national federation. They split and matters have to be resolved in court. Do we want to wait for the same thing to happen with the USCF before we wake up and make the necessary changes?

The behavior and profane language of certain USCF officials is appalling. How

could this be acceptable to a federation where more than half of the members are young people and one of the goals is to promote chess to women? Since when is it okay to insult or cuss women and children? We're supposed to be role models for the next generation. Is this the kind of role model that we want? If this is acceptable to the leadership of a prestigious organization like the USCF, then I want no part of it. Such horrible things must be corrected immediately. We cannot put ugly politics and personal interest ahead of chess. People who cannot behave themselves must be removed immediately.

I firmly believe that it is possible for the USCF to promote chess to a mainstream audience. However, that won't happen until board members can respect each other and work together. Only then can they come up with the proper plans and bring in the right people to help the federation. Board members must work together and with the membership for the federation to succeed.

That is why the upcoming USCF Executive Board election is crucial. As a concerned member of the USCF, you must ask the candidates tough questions about their intentions if they are elected. Don't just vote for a candidate because someone told you to. Don't just vote because you recognize a name. Actions speak louder than empty promises. We cannot continue with the same old nonsense. We cannot have board members who disrespect professional players, organizers, parents, coaches, and other members. We need board members that can help unite and respect the members, properly promote chess, create additional ways to generate revenues, and be fiscally responsible.

### **Chess and the Media**

As I mentioned at the end of my last column, I was invited to be the Chess Consultant for the Off-Broadway play *Fit to Kill*. The support the play received from the chess community was overwhelming and as a result one of the producers, Jana Robbins, invited me to attend the Broadway show *Little Women* on my birthday.

I absolutely loved the show. The story is inspirational, especially for young girls, and the performance was splendid. Sutton Foster, Maureen McGovern and the rest of the cast were magnificent. I can certainly relate to the character Jo (Sutton Foster) as I too grew up in a poor family with nothing but strong values, a big heart, big dreams, strong passion and keen determination to change the world for the better.

After the show, I went backstage to meet the cast, including Tony Award winner Foster. I asked her if she plays chess. She said she did and that she would be proud to have her name added to the list of chess playing celebrities. As an added bonus, while we were chatting, multi-platinum recording artist Josh Groban surprised all of us with his arrival. Josh performed together with Sutton in *Chess* in concert in 2003. The news of the above event made it into PlayBill and Broadway.com.



*Jana Robbins, Josh Groban, Sutton Foster and Susan Polgar*

If companies were aware of the incredible size of the chess community, they would take notice and the future would be very bright indeed. That is why I am pushing very hard to promote the game everywhere. I will not give up until chess can match the popularity of other major sports. We certainly have the numbers to compete and chess is beneficial.

I have no doubt that there will be more cross-promotional efforts between chess and the entertainment industry. In fact, I am working on a number of new ideas which have never been tried before. We need more creative efforts to bring chess to the next level of popularity.

Countless corporations will soon realize the fantastic benefits in sponsoring proper chess events. They can get so much in return for their investment in chess, just as they do with other mainstream sports. It is business and corporations want to get good value for their money.

However, we must do our part as well. National federations, worldwide chess organizations, and FIDE must do more to promote the positive image and benefits of chess. Chess players, chess professionals, and chess enthusiasts will all play pivotal roles in the growth of chess. We must put aside our differences, cooperate, unite and work in harmony if we want chess to hit the big time. Only then we can expect the mainstream media to change their attitude toward chess.

### **Women's Chess in America**

After the success of the US Women's team in the 2004 Olympiad, women's chess in America finally got some notice. Unfortunately, it was short lived. Since then, we have had very little support from our own federation and the US Women's Olympiad Program was promptly cancelled after our historic achievement.

As of this moment, there has been no talk about the 2006 Olympiad. The vague rules and regulations about the selection of the team were never changed and I

was told that no one is even allowed to look for new sponsors. Some board members assured me that a serious discussion about this issue will be brought up at the May 21-22 USCF Executive Board meeting and I will report the results in my next column.

Meanwhile, two of the members of the 2004 Olympiad team were invited to a tournament in China and our players occupied two of the top three tournament spots. IM Anna Zatonskih won clear first with a score of 9/11, in second place was former women's world champion GM Zhu Chen, and our own IM Irina Krush captured third place. Congratulations ladies!

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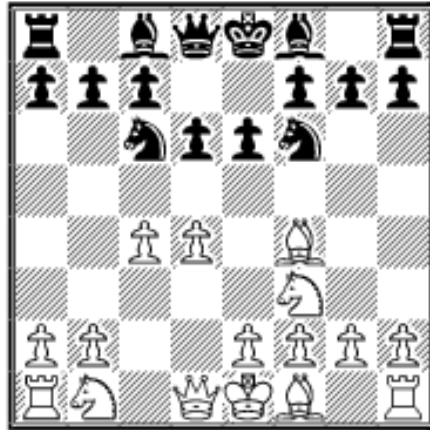
Below is the last round game of the Sigeman tournament.

**IM Palo, D (2525) - GM Nakamura, H (2657)**

13<sup>th</sup> Sigeman & Co. Copenhagen / Malmö (9) 2005

[A50]

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 Nc6 3.Nf3 e6 4.Bf4 d6**



Even when your opponent plays an offbeat and inferior opening, you still have to play correctly to win the game. That is why I highly recommend players work on their middlegame and endgame.

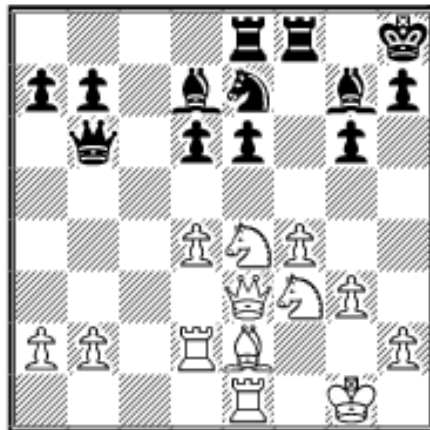
**5.Nc3 g6 6.e4 Bg7 7.Be2 0-0 8.0-0 Nd7 9.Bg5 f6 10.Be3 Ne7 11.Qb3 Kh8 12.c5 f5 13.Ng5 Nb8**



**14.f4?**

White needs to be a lot more aggressive here. Sometimes players get intimidated by the rating of their opponents and this causes them to play too passively. White loses the initiative after 14.f4. Better was 14.cxd6 Qxd6 (14...cxd6 15.Nxe6 Bxe6 16.Qxe6 f4 17.Bd2 Bxd4 (17...Nbc6 18.d5±) 18.Nb5+-) 15.Nb5 Qd8 16.Nxe6+-.

**14...fxe4 15.Ncxe4 Nbc6 16.Rad1 Nd5+- 17.cxd6 cxd6 18.g3 Nxe3 19.Qxe3 Qb6 20.Nf3 Ne7 21.Rd2 Bd7 22.Re1 Rae8**



**22...Nf5 23.Qd3 e5+-**

**23.Qb3 Qc7 24.Bf1**

**24.Neg5!**

**24...Nf5 25.Nc3 Bc6 26.d5 exd5 27.Rxe8 Rxe8 28.Nxd5 Qa5 29.Qc4 Ne3 30.Nxe3 Rxe3 31.Ng5 h6 32.Nf7+ Kh7+- 33.Rxd6 Qb6 0-1**

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, 103-10 Queens Boulevard, Forest Hills, NY 11375 (Tel: 718-897-4600) or email: [PolgarChessInc@aol.com](mailto:PolgarChessInc@aol.com)

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