

SACRAMENTO CHESS NEWS

Volume I, Issue 5

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April 30, 1950

This fifth issue was held over one week in order that all games in the Tournament could be completed and that we could give a final report on the standings. You will find this under the report by Neil Austin.

A letter from Mr. Geo. T. Hedges, Nash dealer in Dixon, says, "I am sending you \$1.25 for your Club dues for a quarter. I enjoy this little sheet very much, and realizing the amount of work and effort that goes into working up a Club and a news sheet, I am glad to lend what little assistance I can." Thanks, George, you are now enrolled as a member of the Capital City Chess Club, and come over any Wednesday evening.

All chessplayers are welcome at the Club meetings, whether members or not. There are plenty of players of every type - so you can find an opponent of your own strength to make it more interesting. The "Sacramento Chess News" goes out to all chessplayers in and around Sacramento that we know. If you know a player who is not receiving this, please send in his name and address.

The Club dues are \$5.00 per year, or \$1.25 per quarter. Active members of the Club are: F. B. Jackson, W. A. Schmidt, C. Iverson, Richard McDonald, C. G. Adams, Jim Marianos, H. Simonson, Frank Anderson, Bill Yersin, Syd Zucker, Gene Gray, Harold Soligan, S. E. Spaulding, S. G. Johnson, N. E. Talcott, George Flynn, Milt Meyer, Neil Austin, C. J. Carey, Dick Chapman, Roy Daily, Jim Marianos, Vern Gilman, Geo. Hedges, and J. B. Gee. Hope we haven't left any out, altho the Club President's name got in there twice somehow!

The Treasurer's Report is as follows:

Balance on Hand 4/9/50	\$43.82
Dues Collected	12.50
Rent Over 4/12/50	2.30
Total on hand & collected:	58.62
<u>Expenses:</u>	
Cost of 4th Chess News:	5.24
BALANCE ON HAND 4/30/50	\$53.38

BOOK REVIEW

RELAX WITH CHESS, by Fred Reinfeld, \$2.50, Pitman Publishing Corp., 2 West 45th St., New York 19. 75 lively games won by world-famous masters in 20 moves or less, first game played in 1858, last one in 1947. Annotated as only Reinfeld can. These games illustrate opening traps, finesses, and prepared variations that are not encountered often. Notes indicate losing moves and correct moves that should have been played. An excellent book.

THE CHESS DIAGRAM

Solution to Diagram #2 (in last Issue) ... 1. N-K7ch, K-R; 2. QxPch, KxQ; 3. R-R3 mate. A very nice mate with Knight and Rook.

The position in Diagram #3 was reached in a game played in a match between Sacramento and Folsom Prison on Aug. 31, 1941. The outcome of the match depended on this game ... Zollie Clements of Folsom vs. J. B. Gee of Sacramento on Board #1. At least 100 spectators were crowded around standing on tables and benches, eager to see the champion of the Big House defeat his Sacramento Opponent. Suddenly, J. B. Gee said, "I think I see something." And indeed he did. Can you? Here's a big fat hint...the key move is 1...R-R8 check! Work it out from there. It's a beauty. (Ed's Note: Congrats to Flynn for picking the diagram #2, from Lowenfisch-Smyslov. March issue of Chess Review has it as #1 on page 67, and the annotated game score is given on Page 83 of the same issue! Flynn can pick 'em!)

COMMENTS

by Flynn

Several very experienced players in the tournament are really better than their scores would indicate. Reason? Simply not enough playing recently and their game has gone rusty.

Among those who were in their first tournament, Dick McDonald and Steve Spaulding deserve special credit. Not only did they do very well but, even in the games they lost, they had their opponents plenty worried.

The ending Vic Burns vs. N. Simonson was a honey. Mr. Simonson had an extra pawn but suddenly everything wastraded off, except the two kings and a knight. Simonson had the knight but it was not enough to win. Burns, by the way, is famous for the way he can coax a win or a draw out of a lost position.

N. E. Talcott ended powerfully with three straight victories, after a bad start, and merits special note as one very reliable member of the Team in years of match play. (Definition of a bad start, when you draw Gee in the first round.)

Here's an important item...which was news to me and probably will be to you also. Milt Meyer, J. B. Gee, Neil Austin and a couple of the other well established players seldom challenge a newcomer or a weaker player. Unfriendly? No, that's not the idea at all. They each love chess and are willing to play anyone, anytime. But they feel that they should not seek out such games lest they be considered "picking on somebody" or trying to gain easier victories. In some clubs, they tell me, such things happen. But if any of you feel like you have a real strong game in your system and want to try it out on a stronger player, just ask them. That's all there is to it. They'll be glad to play you, providing of course they're not already engaged. So give them a whirl from time to time, just to see how good you are, and how good they are. But don't get discouraged if you lose. It's all in good fun anyhow. And note in the J. B. Gee interview in this issue, how even our champion was beaten time and again before he reached his present playing strength.

TOURNAMENT RESULTS

Neil Austin

Secretary J. B. Gee retained his City Championship with only the loss of one-half point. George Flynn finished second, certainly an excellent showing for his maiden effort. Milt Meyer was third, the lowest he has finished since 1941. He made the only score against the winner. Our "Veep", Sam Johnson, was a close fourth. Last round scores follow:

Gee	$\frac{1}{2}$	Meyer	$\frac{1}{2}$	Flynn	1	Spaulding	0
Johnson	1	Applegate	0	Marianos	$\frac{1}{2}$	Yuke	$\frac{1}{2}$
		(forfeit)				(draw agreed)	
Trousdale	1	Burns	0	Iverson	1	McDonald	0
Talcott	1	Soligan	0	Simonson	1	Rochelle	0 (forfeit)

Below are the final standings. Ties were broken by a modified Sonnenger-Berger system:

1. Gee	$5\frac{1}{2}$	-	$\frac{1}{2}$	10. Talcott	3	-	3	(-4)
2. Flynn	5	-	1	11. Yuke	3	-	3	(-4 $\frac{1}{2}$)
3. Meyer	$4\frac{1}{2}$	-	$1\frac{1}{2}$	12. McDonald	$2\frac{1}{2}$	-	$3\frac{1}{2}$	(-1)
4. Johnson	4	-	2	13. Simonson	$2\frac{1}{2}$	-	$3\frac{1}{2}$	(-5 $\frac{1}{2}$)
5. Marianos	$3\frac{1}{2}$	-	$2\frac{1}{2}$	14. Soligan	2	-	4	
6. Spaulding	3	-	3	(4 $\frac{1}{2}$)	15. Burns	$1\frac{1}{2}$	-	$4\frac{1}{2}$
7. Trousdale	3	-	3	(1 $\frac{1}{2}$)	16. Rochelle	0	-	6
8. Applegate	3	-	3	(-1 $\frac{1}{2}$)	Ramsey withdrew after score of 0-1.			
Iverson	3	-	3	(-1 $\frac{1}{2}$)				

(continued next page)

The Sacramento Chess Club is planning several special events for the coming year. Next Wednesday, May 3, we will have a Rapid Transit Tourney. If sufficient interest is shown, we will make these a monthly affair. Other events will be announced in this column. We are also considering a revision of the Challenge Board Rules, in order to increase the activity in this sector. Watch for future announcements.

J. B. GEE - 1950 CHAMPION

By Geo. Flynn

Scoring five wins and one draw, J. B. Gee repeated his triumphs of 1948 and 1949 to become the first man in Sacramento chess history to win the City Championship three years in a row.

It occurred to this writer that an interview with our Champion, and a diagram of one of his favorite combinations, would be of timely interest to all of us. The interview took place in the Gee living room--that same living room where the Gee family has entertained many of the great names of the chess world -- for example, Steiner, Fine, and Koltanowski. On the cornice over the venetian blinds are arranged seven fine trophies of JB's tournament victories. And present were JB's wife and their two sons -- Mike, aged 6, and JB Jr. aged 9 (yes, they play chess.)

JB gave us so much material that it would take ten pages to cover it adequately. We can only hit the highlights. First of all, the 1950 Tournament. JB had high praise for all his opponents. In fact, he is somewhat puzzled by the difficulty of every game. Which is perhaps explained by the eagerness of everyone to defeat the Champion.

JB tells us that he makes no effort to play the openings by rote memory, instead he relies on a feeling for the position and on theory. With White, he attempts to control the center. With Black, he attempts to prevent his opponent from controlling the center. Primarily, he is a position player and feels that "tactical surprises" arise out of long-term strategy such as control of the center, control of the open file, a centralized knight, a rook on the seventh, etc.

Our Champion played chess five years before he knew you could write down a game score. It was not until 1939, when his wife bought him a copy of Capablanca's Chess Fundamentals, that he owned a chess book. Now, he has one of the finest chess libraries in the city. Also in 1939 he began to attend the Capital City Chess Club regularly. As JB puts it, he was beaten consistently by the better players during the next two years. However, by playing correspondence chess and a steady, slow climb up the challenge ladder he developed his chess strength. In 1941 he placed second in the City Championship and, since that time, has been either first or second each year but one.

JB has given simultaneous exhibitions in Phoenix, Trona, San Francisco, and Dixon. Just for a typical score, on March 3, 1949, he played 20 games in San Bernardino, losing 2 and drawing one. From 1943 to 1946, J. B. Gee wrote a weekly chess column in the Sacramento Union which attracted interest and correspondence from all over the country.

In two years of play on boards one or two in the Central California Chess League, JB has been undefeated -- allowing only two draws. And this is the record of which he is most proud. Time and again, as JB showed me games I noticed that "team play" was a dominant note in his thinking. His competitive spirit as an individual and his consistency and reliability as a player I had known all along.

But it was a surprise to me that these qualities extend beyond himself and that his greatest ambition is to build up our Club and recapture the Championship of the Central California Chess League. In the diagrammed position, for example, JB was justly proud of his combination but he was even more proud that, as a result of that combination, Sacramento won the match against Folsom Prison.

All I can say is that as an individual J. B. Gee is an excellent Champion. And as a member of our Club and a competitor on our teams, JB is an awfully good man to have on our side.