

“ S C C CHESS TALK ”

The Newsletter of the **SCARBOROUGH CHESS CLUB**

(**LARGEST** Chess Club in Canada; Only Club **OVER 100** Members)

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ITEMS OF INTEREST TO CLUB MEMBERS

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DID YOU KNOW ?

Ways to Improve Your Play – Play More Rated Games ??

It Depends !

Like in most things, it's “ on one hand, but on the other “. But surely it does. For young beginning players, we know that they improve rapidly the more they play in tournaments, and especially if they are playing opponents somewhat higher rated than themselves. This applies to new adult players as well. So, where is “ on the other “?

After playing for some number of years, most players improve steadily, and then stop rising. I refer to this as “ plateauing “. I think of this as continuously playing within a band of 100 rating points, more or less, sometimes near the top of the band, sometimes at the bottom. Their ordinary method of play does not seem any longer to lead to better results. It is obvious that they must introduce something new to start rising again.

Given the discussion above, one obvious thing for “ plateaued “ players to try is to play more often if possible. But what are the odds of success using this solution ?

A Modest Case Study

CFC issues with their updated list, Canadian players with the most rated games that year. From the 1999 list, I have randomly chosen 3 out of the top 22 (well, I'll fess up – the three are a lower ½ A-player (# 1), and two top ½ B-players [# 2 & # 3] from our club, but the names are withheld to protect the innocent). I noted their ratings on Jan. 1, 2000, after having played so many games the previous year. Had they improved ? (I'm assuming they had done nothing new to their game in that period). I compared their Jan. 1 ratings for the prior 3 years, with their Jan.1, 2000 ratings.

Results for the 4 consecutive years - **# 1** : 1851;1829;1864;1852; **# 2** : 1821; 1770; 1785; 1753; **# 3** : 1798; 1784; 1691; 1734 (at Feb. 6 : 1791).

Conclusion (tentative: the researcher agrees a sample of 3 “ may (?) “ be insufficient)

For “ plateaued “ players, simply doing more, but with the same, will not get the desired result. It appears that some new element of education or style of play is needed to rise further. In that case, there seems no doubt that increased play will support such rise.

Note : Members & non-members may contact Bob Armstrong, Ed. , directly, or through SCC e-mail to
1. be added to the e-mail list; 2 Submit content (fact, opinion , criticism - recommendations help !).