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“ FRIENDLY Chess Since 1960 ”

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO BOTH MEMBERS & NON-MEMBERS

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Do You Know ? / Savez-Vous ?

Should the Girls' Canadian Youth Chess Championships Be Abolished ?? (Pt. 3)

Recap

The last two Issues have dealt with this question of whether the Girls' CYCC serves any valid purpose, and whether it helps or hinders girl players. Currently, the CFC holds a mixed gender CYCC (“ Youth “ refers to 5 age categories : Under 18, 16, 14, 12 & 10 years of age); girls are entitled to enter this section, and if they win, to represent Canada at the FIDE World Youth CC. Alternatively they can enter the girls-only Girls' CYCC, and if they win, represent Canada at the FIDE Girls' WYCC. Both FIDE tournaments are currently being held in Oropesa del Mar, Spain (see report below). To help us debate this matter, we proposed a fictitious CFC motion that next years' CFC Girls' CYCC be abolished, and that the Girls' WYCC representative be chosen from the CYCC, in which both boys and girls would play. The issue of funding does not arise, since we have assumed CFC will continue to pay the airfare for both the WYCC rep. and the Girls' WYCC rep..

We have so far been examining the arguments against the Girls' CYCC :

- Argument # 1 – “ Playing Strength Improvement “ – playing weaker players weakens your game; since the Girls' CYCC is weaker than the comparable CYCC, the girls'-only tournament should be abolished.
- Argument # 2 – “ Creating a Girls' Ghetto “ – having a separate girls'-only tournament gives the message that they cannot play on equal terms with boys.
- Argument # 3 – “ Shooting for Mediocrity “ – rewarding girls for girls'-only tournament performance ratings that would be considered only mediocre in a CYCC, gives them an “ easy “ title; there is praise for mediocrity merely because they are girls.

Let's look at two further arguments against the Girls' CYCC.

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Argument # 4 – “ Special Category ”

This argument holds that tournaments should not be held on any type of “ special status “ basis. There should simply be “ tournaments “, which are open to all. If there is an exception to this, it must have substantial justification (eg. junior tournaments might be an exception). But there is no basis for holding women-only / girls-only tournaments. Why should they be singled out, as opposed to any other category of chess player, for example Asian-Canadian players, Afro-Canadian players, etc. (and this usually degenerates into such categories as “ players under 5 feet tall “, “ players who don’t wear glasses “, etc.) ?

One of the arguments in favour of the Girls’ CYCC directly addresses this argument, asserting that there is nothing wrong with “ special marketing “ tournaments, that target categories of Canadians who are underrepresented in the Canadian chess community. This year in Harlem, U.S.A., there was a tournament where being black was an entry criterion. This was an attempt to raise the profile of chess in the black-American consciousness. Similarly, the CFC could endorse such similar tournaments, especially where organized in concert with ethnic organizations. “ Girls “ are a similar legitimate target group. And this is especially so, given that women are over 50 % of the population.

But we think this argument often comes down to a \$\$ question. What is objected to is scarce CFC \$ going to promote chess to a specific group, in this case girls. It is felt there are only sufficient funds to support chess generally, by, for example, holding gender-neutral tournaments, open to all, including girls. It is argued as well that the small number of girl players, and subsequently women players, makes the diverting of chess \$ to girls’ chess even more unfair.

When we look at the arguments for a Girls’ CYCC, an “ affirmative action “ argument arises that addresses this objection directly.

What do you think of this argument ?

Argument # 5 – “ The ‘ Good Business ’ Test ”

This final argument is based directly on the marketing aspect of the “ Girls’ Program “, and analyzes it on a cost-benefit basis. Let’s assume for the moment that there is good publicity value when marketing to girls, to have the girls-only tournaments to highlight.

Even if this is true, it is argued that the funding/time/effort spent on such events can be justified only if they produce a proportionate increased number of girl players ? This argument maintains that the girls-only tournaments can only be justified if we can show that there is an x % increase in girl CFC members per tournament. Different proponents have different values for the “ x “. But it is argued that we can see that there is a very small increase in girl CFC members, and thus the program cannot be justified, given the resources it uses up.

We will look at the issue of what resources the girls’ program use up, and whether there is a legitimate “ subsidy “ aspect at this time to the girls’ program, in the next articles in this series, in future Issues.

Arguments “ For ” a Girls’ CYCC

The five arguments raised in this series against a Girls’ CYCC have been well thought out, and are clearly presented. They all merit close scrutiny, and must be answered by those who would support the girls-only tournaments. We will go on next Issue to start to look at the arguments in favour of the program. We’ll let you be the judge of whether they rise to the occasion, and convince you that the Girls’ CYCC should be continued, at least in the foreseeable future.

FIDE 2001 World Youth Chess Championships

This 11 round swiss, being held in Oropesa del Mar, Spain, is run in 5 age groups : Under 10, 12, 14, 16 and 18 years old. Round 10 is today, and the final round 11 is on Fri., Nov. 2. Canada has a total of 14 players participating.

After 9 rounds, the most notable results are : Under 10 Girls – Hazel Smith – tied for 6th/15th out of 67 players, with 6 pts. !; Under 14 (FIDE continues to refer to this as a “ boys “ section, despite the fact that the regulations allow girls to compete in this section) – Mark Bluvshstein – tied for 10th, with 6 pts.; Under 18 – Pascal Charbonneau – tied for 24th, with 5 pts..

SCC has 2 junior members playing – Under 10 – Shiyam THAVANDIRAN;
David HIER.

Good luck to all of you in the final 2 rounds !

SCC Temporary Relocation

Unfortunately, the Wexford Seniors’ Centre is renovating its community space, including the room the club uses. So, for the immediate future, we will relocate to the cafeteria of Wexford Collegiate Institute, 1176 Pharmacy Ave. (a few blocks north of Lawrence Ave. E., on the west side), where the club used to be located.

However, this will force us to close on Sundays in the interim. The regular Sunday Swiss tournament is now moved to 7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. Round 1 of this new tournament starts Tuesday, Nov. 6.

The next Thursday tournament will begin at Wexford C. I. tonight, Nov. 1, at 7:00 p.m.. It is the SCC Club Championship and will be 9 rounds, run in two sections – the top section will be a round-robin of the 10 top-rated players participating; the second section will be a swiss, where the class champions will be decided.

NOTE :

A – Members/ non-members may contact Bob Armstrong, ed. , directly, or through SCC e-mail, to :

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C – The opinions expressed here are those of the editor, and not necessarily those of the Scarborough CC.