

"THE HEART OF CONNECTICUT CHESS"

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by Robert Kozlowski

The solution is on page 25.

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INTRODUCTION

Season's Greetings, fellow chess friends:

It is hard to believe that another year at the New Britain Chess Club has come and gone. Two-thousand-and-eleven was the first full year the club held meetings at its new home at the New Britain Assyrian Club. Now that the task of relocation was finally a somewhat distant memory, our club's administration could devote their full energy and time on planning more new and exciting activities for the benefit of our members.

Since 2005, I have made it my goal to write the annual club newsletters to highlight about our club's memorable moments of the year. In addition, I have included special sections, such as photo galleries, chess trivia and poems, and my year-end commentary, to spice up these reports for my readers. This year, I added a section of selected games from our members. I would like to take this opportunity to thank FIDE Master Richard Bauer, who analyzed both of these dynamic chess battles, as well as the players for allowing me to publish their game.

So, as you spend time celebrating this most festive season of the year with family and friends, I hope you will read about the great things that occurred at the NBCC in 2011. As always, I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and welcome any feedback.



This chess cartoon was posted on
<http://suffernchessclub.com/fun-stuff-trivia>

THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

JANUARY

The first highlight of 2011 for our club occurred on January 2. On that day, the officers held a tournament in honor of one of our organization's veteran members, Robert "Bob" Milardo, at the Taste of India restaurant in West Hartford. Bob was involved in the club for many years as an officer. For many decades, Bob has also been a strong advocate for the club in his capacity of treasurer of our state's chess association. Bob is a strong class chess player and has achieved many tournament wins in the club, ranking in the top ten overall. Bob is a very warm and kind gentleman, and we sincerely thank him for his steadfast service to chess in our community for so many years. The "Bob Milardo Over/Under 15 Quick Chess Tournament" drew close to twenty players from the local chess community. It should be noted that Bob made a very generous contribution to the prize fund for his own event, which he wanted added to the prize pool for the second and third place and class prize winners. The winner of this event was member and FM Nelson Castaneda. As has become a tradition at these events, some of our crew enjoyed fine, authentic Indian cuisine and spirits after the tournament. The NBCC thanks the management of the Taste of India for their gracious hospitality.

Only a week after the NBCC's first memorable moment of 2011, on January 9, twelve of our members drove an hour to participate in the first match with the Chess Club of Fairfield County, the first match our club has held since June 13, 2005 (with the Springfield Chess Club of Massachusetts). This newly founded organization is directed under the leadership of Melvin Patrick and Daniel Lowinger, and these gentlemen hosted our club in their very spacious facility, which is "the leading resource for educational and recreational chess services in the region." What makes their club unique is that they can offer these services every day of the week! After an afternoon of spirited competition, the CCFC emerged victorious in the match, with the final score of 13 to 11. It should be noted that the NBCC, led by Team Captain FM Richard Bauer, won the first match playing as Black, and the CCFC won the second match playing as Black. It was truly an incredible day for Connecticut chess, and our club looks forward to more of these awesome collaborative events with the CCFC.

FEBRUARY

For the fifth consecutive year, teams from the NBCC competed in the annual United States Amateur Team East Chess Championship held in Parsippany, New Jersey, over Presidents Day weekend. This year, our club fielded two teams. The first team, the New Britain Prodigies, consisted of USCF National Master Ted McHugh, Derek Meredith, Doug Fiske, and FM Danny Rozovsky. This team won the Top Connecticut Team title, making this the third year this team has earned this distinguished honor. With this title, the NBCC is thrilled to report that one its teams have earned this title at this event each year since 2007. The second team was led by overall Team Captain and NBCC President, Mike Pascetta. His teammates were his son Danny, his cousin Anthony, and Brian Kosnoff. The name of this team, which was one of the three finalists vying for the best team name, was BP's Crude Lines Are Busted. Even though they came very close to winning that award, it is difficult to beat a team name like Chilean Defense: No Miner Pieces Trapped. Overall, our players had a blast at this world-class chess event, where you have the opportunity to compete with many players throughout the world (the New Britain Prodigies played a team that flew in all the way from China). And although I have yet to participate in this event (I am booking my reservation for 2012 now), I can easily see why this tournament, from my friends' reports, is the holy grail of chess.

MARCH

On the first day of spring 2011, the NBCC became the first chess club in recorded history to hold a Planet Earth Chess Championship. The ideas and plans for holding a creative event of galactic proportions were developed and arranged by our officers. My fellow chess friends throughout the world, I am elated to report that on that glorious day, March 20, at the Hawk's Landing Country Club, nestled in the Connecticut Valley, thirty-seven humans came determined with one mission in mind - to take on the ultimate chess quest and receive the prestigious honor, title, and bragging rights of being the 1st Planet Earth chess champion. Our superstars, who ranged in age from ten to over sixty, played their battles over the chess board in the very spacious HLCC pavilion, which afforded our players a spectacular, majestic view of the golf course. And, to top that, our enthusiast crew was treated to a very grand buffet lunch, with items like beef tenderloin, roasted chicken, pasta, salad, and refreshments, all of which were provided by the courteous HLCC staff.

Throughout the two-section, dual-rated tournament, a few of the participants, like FM Richard Bauer, and a few spectators, like Rob Roy, captured the excited expressions on the faces of the players with their digital cameras. Many of the games came down to the final seconds. And even though going into the final round a number of players were in contention for the title, at around 6:30 p.m., just as the sun was setting for the last time this very long and usually cold and snowy winter in Connecticut, a winner was determined. After the calculation of tie-breaks by Tournament Directors Doug Fiske and Mike, Mike presented the winners with their beautiful Planet Earth trophies. And so, without any more anticipation, it is with great pleasure, on behalf of the Earth chess network, to send congratulations to FM Nelson Castaneda for becoming the 1st Planet Earth chess champion on tie-breaks over member and USCF NM Dennis Prawira. Also earning a first-place title was member Jerry Aiyathurai, who received a trophy for winning the Under 1500 section on tie-breaks over Christopher Lomeli. That was also Jerry's first major NBCC tournament win. By 7:21 p.m., when spring officially arrived that day, all of the players had left. But I imagine these players will be reminiscing about the awesome experiences they had at this tournament for a very long time. To those who were unable to attend, I hope you can play in this event in 2012. I really enjoy these club functions where you have an opportunity to reconnect with fellow chess friends. Thanks to those who supported the NBCC by being a part of this incredible event and to our club leaders for the fantastic job they are doing for our club and chess in Connecticut - and now the world! Photos from the event are posted on the club website. You can also view photos taken by Rob that he posted on his chess website, www.backgammonchess.net.

APRIL

With a perfect score, one of our youngest and inspiring members, Jonathan Aiyathurai, won the Under 1500 section of the 2011 New Britain Chess Championship Reserves Tournament 2, his first major tournament win at the club. He earned this major achievement on April 5 and received his prize on April 12. FMs Nelson Castaneda and Danny Rozovsky tied for first place in the top section.

On April 12, a one-week tournament was held in tribute to one of our club's veteran members, John Baclawski (simply known as "The Claw" to many of his friends). The idea for this quick chess event was keeping with the theme developed by our officers to hold events to recognize the NBCC's longest-attending members. "The Claw" has been a regularly attending member since the mid-to-late 1960s. John also ranks in the top ten in overall major tournament wins in the club.

Even though John is not as active in chess like decades ago, he still enjoys keeping in touch with his friends. The turnout for Baclawski's event was good. And, after four rounds of fun and casual play, USCF NM Ted McHugh won the event.

Between April 19 and May 3, the club held the 1st Generations Team Chess Tournament. To my recollection, this was the first intra-club team tournament held by the NBCC. But I am very certain that this was the first NBCC event where players were grouped into sections based on age. The very creative concepts for this no entry fee tournament were drafted by Derek Meredith. According to Derek,

"Players were grouped in the three-week, round-robin event by age. The names for the teams were the Stone Agers, the Middle Agers, the New Agers, and the Under Ages. Once the players [were] divided by age into four teams of equal size, each team [was] paired, in rating order, against another team. For instance, the second-highest rated player on a team [played] each of the other second boards, for a total of three games."

After the teams were formed in this quad-like event, there was one team, the mighty Middle Agers, whose average rating far exceeded that of each of the other three teams (200 points). Despite very solid play by members of the opposing teams, the Middle Agers, led by FM Nelson Castaneda, FM Richard Bauer, Doug Fiske, and members Mark Bourque, Bob McDaniel, and Laurent Lafosse, won each match. The only person from the other teams to upset one of the Middle Agers was member Kevin Zimmerman. Overall, it was an enjoyable experience to play for your generation, and I hope the officers decide to make this an annual club tournament. Twenty-four players participated in the event.

JUNE

On June 12, in celebration of earning his lifetime achievement of becoming a USCF NM, Derek Meredith invited members of the chess community to his house for a splendid afternoon of chess and dinner. While Derek was analyzing his games from his recent outstanding performance at the 80th Massachusetts Open Chess Championship (where he excelled his rating to master level) on his giant chess set, his wife, Amy, along with assistance from Kevin Zimmerman, was cooking her famous ribs, strawberry shortcake, and a few side dishes for our hungry crew of about twenty-five. I wish I knew the secrets behind the delicious ribs. Even if I did, I would be sworn to secrecy! In any event, after our BBQ, a few of the players competed on the human-size set in a series of timed matches, using an hour glass as the official clock. The weather, despite being overcast, was comfortable, with temperatures in the 60s and 70s, which allowed for great playing.

My friends, on behalf of the Connecticut chess family, I would like to extend congratulations to Derek for becoming a NM. He has worked very hard, and his efforts have paid off. And I can say that I definitely contributed in some way to his success! I also thank Derek and his wife for holding another exciting social chess event at their home for our members.

For winning first place in the 2011 Arkadijs Strazdins Cup on June 21, FM Richard Bauer became the second member to win or tie for first place (even if non-cash prizes were awarded) in at least twenty major tournaments sponsored by the NBCC. Mr. Strazdins is the only other person who has earned this prestigious achievement (unprecedented total of seventy-one).

As most of you know, many of the members have held functions at their home for the chess community over the last seven years. I have been very appreciative to those who have invited me to be a part of their festive gatherings. Therefore, this year, I wanted to reciprocate the warmth and genuine hospitality that my friends have shown me over the years and host my own party. My initial plans were to hold a small, informal gathering at my home, although I really wanted to hold the event at a hall where I could easily invite more people. I mentioned my ideas to Kevin Zimmerman, and he and his fiancée, Marie Juergens, suggested that they could cater my event at their home. Plans for my party at “The House of Z and Marie” were now in motion. Despite having to reschedule my event twice due to conflicts, and possibly a third time due to rain, my first chess party finally became a reality on June 25. Words cannot describe how wonderful a job Kevin and Marie did with the overall planning and food preparation. Their award-winning summertime menu was lined up with creative culinary dishes like Jacked-Up Burger Beef Burger with Jalapeno Bacon and Pepper Jack Cheese, Winner-Winner Sheen Kabobs Chicken Kabobs marinated in a drunken BBQ sauce, The Congressman Weiner (Smoked Sausage on a Roll with Roasted Peppers and Onions), Fruits of the Earth KaBOBs, and Jerseylicious Pasta Salad. After that incredible feast, seventeen players played in the “1st Dr. K Special Quick Chess Tournament.” A different twist to this event, I decided to award the third-place winner with a wooden chess set and the class place winner with a chess book rather than have all of the non-cash prizes awarded to the first and second place winners. For the record, FM Nelson Castaneda and USCF NM Ted McHugh won first and second place, respectively. Receiving the chess set for earning third place was club expert Andres Castaneda, and receiving the chess book for earning Top U1600 was one of our club’s scholastic superstars, Eric Hilhorst.

The weather turned out beautiful in the afternoon despite some early indications that it would rain in the morning. My friends, I cannot thank Kevin and Marie enough for catering my event. They did an extremely professional job. And I cannot thank enough to those who came to my party. With the great turnout that we had (twenty-five), I plan to make this an annual club social event at Kevin and Marie's house.

On June 28, the club held its annual business meeting. The major things that happened at the meeting were:

- There was discussion in regard to decreasing the time controls for members playing in the lower-rated sections of our club's events since most of their games usually finish sooner than the games in the open section. After some interesting debate, the membership voted to have at least two events per year where the time controls in the lower-rated sections would be G/60. On a related topic, the administration suggested that they might hold more unrated tournaments to encourage those who prefer to compete and not always have their rating on the line.
- The officers made a very special presentation of two NBCC Lifetime Membership awards, one to Andris Strazdins and one to Bob Kozlowski. Andy was recognized for his service as our club's treasurer for nearly four decades and for performing so many other related administrative functions. Bob Kozlowski received his award for his recent contributions as club historian and for continuing to assist the officers and tournament directors whenever needed.
- The election of officers went as follows. Since Mike Pascetta mentioned he was not running for NBCC President, he nominated and the members voted USCF NM Derek Meredith to be our club's next president. Mike will continue to volunteer as a tournament director. The members extend their appreciation to Mike for his major contributions to our organization in the past year. To replace the vacant vice president position held by Derek, he nominated and the members voted Doug Fiske to be our club's next vice president. Brian Kosnoff will continue to serve as club secretary and webmaster. Lastly, Andy will continue to hold the record for the longest-serving club officer, starting his thirty-ninth term as treasurer on September 1.

JULY

The annual New Britain Summer Open Chess Championship, which has grown to become our club's largest social event of the year, was held this year at the Rockledge Country Club in West Hartford on July 10. For the sixth consecutive year, this was an open-air tournament. Like at the Hawk's Landing Country Club, where this event was held last year, players were afforded a beautiful view of the golf course. And the weather, like on August 8, 2010, was spectacular, with mostly sunny skies and seasonal temperatures in the mid-80s, ideal conditions for the makings of a pleasant day to play games on the deck adjacent to the restaurant. And, also like at the HLCC, the staff at the RCC provided our players with a grand buffet lunch. Even though the turnout for this event was slightly less than anticipated, compared to attendances in the two years, there was still an outpouring of support from the chess community. Fifty-two players, many traveling locally, like our very loyal chess friends from the University of Connecticut Chess Club, some driving regionally from Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York, and even a few making a day's trip from Maryland, participated, making this the fourth-highest turnout for an event in the NBCC's history. Mike Pascetta directed the tournament, and USCF NM Derek Meredith assisted with the planning and promotion of the event. In addition, Doug Fiske volunteered with the collection of onsite registrations. Thanks to these gentlemen for the exemplary job they did in organizing and managing the awesome event. Thanks also to the players for supporting the club at this event. Lastly, to those who have not been able to attend Connecticut's premier chess event of the summer, I really hope you can make it in 2012. Of historical note, USCF NM Alex Fikiet, age sixteen, became one of the youngest members to win the Summer Open since John Pires in 1984.

AUGUST

As proposed at the annual club business meeting, the club held its first unrated tournament. The event, a G/45, four-rounder with two-sections, was held on August 2 and 9. The tournament drew quite an interesting and diverse playing field. "The big surprise of the tournament..." as noted by Doug Fiske, "...was in the open section, where the lowest-rated player, Adia Onyango, from Queens, New York, had not only a very long drive but also the only perfect score." In the 1500 section, Peter Galazan took first place. Since nearly one-hundred percent of the tournaments are rated at our club, it was a great opportunity for those who prefer to play and not have to worry about their rating. Overall, the support for this event was very good. Specifically, Steven Mitlinsky, who also traveled from Queens to play, gave the NBCC kudos for holding the unrated tournament.

One week later, on August 16, the officers held the first NBCC Bullet Chess Championship. About fifteen players participated in this wild chess event. At many times during the tournament, the pieces were literally flying, which produced many action-packed games that evening. I know not everyone enjoys this extreme chess action, playing with a time control of G/1 and a two-second delay, but it was a something different to try, and it appeared that everyone enjoyed their games. The winner of this first event of its kind at the club was FM Nelson Castaneda.

Our club chef, Kevin Zimmerman, and his fiancée, Marie Juergens, held their annual Games Day at their home on August 27. As has occurred in the last few years at this event, the weather had plans to cancel all outside activities. This year, Hurricane Irene was preventing the holding of the 5th year event with its rain and wind. It was uncertain how many people would attend the function, but about fifteen of our most loyal chess supporters from Connecticut braved the storm and enjoyed a pleasurable afternoon of delicious food, the annual exciting Zimmerman Games Quick Chess Tournament, and social interaction. Unfortunately, due to the rain, the musical entertainment lined up had to cancel their plans. Nevertheless, that did not dampen the spirits of those in attendance. For most of the afternoon, the grill was fired up, and players were treated to some awesome summertime food. Hot dogs, hamburgers, baked macaroni and cheese, and shrimp kabobs were just some of the items on the grand menu. As always, we thank “Z” and Marie for their significant contributions to the Connecticut chess community. Kevin and Marie wanted to give their thanks to those who made it to their event, noting that

“Chess fans are a devoted group, and we enjoyed having the chess tournament and lively card games. Good food and good friends is a recipe for good times despite any bad weather. Thanks to all who made it. We look forward to seeing you again next year. A special thanks to the Fries family for their beyond the call of duty baby-sitting talents. Congrats to those winners of the door prizes and to our friend and TD, Bob Kozlowski.”

The Peter Galazan Quick Chess Tournament, in honor of Peter, who has been one of our club’s longest-standing members, was held on August 30. Peter joined the club in the 1960s, and he has been one of its most active members since then. Based on my research, Peter holds the record for being one of the most veteran members in our club’s history (he is eighty-eight years young!). Sixteen players competed in this Peter’s special 4-round event, of which about one-third were non-members. The winner of this event was FM Richard Bauer.

SEPTEMBER

On September 11, another fabulous day for the NBCC family, USCF NM Derek Meredith held an annual sporting games-theme event. In the early afternoon, about fifteen of our members played in a series of physically stimulating, competitive activities such as soccer, frisbee, and football at Beachland Park in West Hartford. Some of the plays on the field were made with such brilliantly timed accuracy while others, like mine, could probably, make that definitely, earn a nomination to be on America's Funniest Home Videos. Anyway, after most of our guys were getting their best games on and energy levels accelerated to extreme levels, they were just simply too tired to play any chess afterwards at Derek's house. A few less-than-exhausted people, however, like Eric Hilhorst and me, had enough energy to play a few games on Derek's giant chess set. The rest of the evening was devoted to enjoying some giant pizza and watching the New York Giants game. On behalf of our chess community, I do want to take this opportunity to again thank Derek for holding these different types of events. Having attended just about every one of his recreational activities, I can honestly state that some of our members are quite amazing athletes.

The officers decided to have the 2011 Oktoberfest Open Chess Championship, which started on September 13, be the first major tournament at our club to use a different time control in each section. As voted on at the last club business meeting, in the lower section, the time control for such an event would be G/60 with a five-second delay while players in the open section would play at our club's usual time control for major tournaments (the Summer Open being the exception, of course) - 40/85, SD/30 with a five-second time delay. Most of the players in the lower section seemed to enjoy the faster-paced games, definitely the makings for some interesting games and post-mortem analysis.

OCTOBER

To celebrate the festive German season of Oktoberfest and the recent Oktoberfest event organized by the club, close to twenty people attended the NBCC's annual dinner party at the Corner Pug in Elmwood on October 14. As has been tradition at this club's party since 2006, Andris Strazdins provided musical entertainment with his harmonica. As always, he did a fabulous job. It was nice to see a few people who have never been to this club event, attend. If you have not been to one of these social functions, I hope you can make it next October.

The next person in line to have a tournament held in his honor for being one of the club's veteran members was Dr. Tony Yablonski. Tony joined the club in the mid-1960s and has been a loyal supporter ever since. In addition, he was a very strong advocate for having a non-smoking environment when we played at the New Britain Quartette Club. Even when there was very contentious opposition to having such a policy enforced at the QC, Tony pointed out at the 2001 club business meeting about the detrimental effects of second-hand smoke. In the end, a referendum was held on the matter, and our club has been smoke-free ever since. To those who play at our new club today, we can thank Tony for his steadfast efforts to ban smoking at our meetings back then. The winner of the Dr. Tony Yablonski Quick Chess Tournament was FM Nelson Castaneda.

The final NBCC highlight that occurred this month was our match with the UConn Chess Club on October 25. Our last match with our friends from the UConn CC was held on April 14, 1998. The players from Team UConn, whose rating ranged from international master to class E, put the full-court press on the players from New Britain. Since I was unable to play, because my rating just missed the cut-off, I made certain to cheer on Team NBCC. Besides having many opportunities to take photos, I eagerly watched many of the fifteen razor-sharp G/90 games. Throughout the evening, right up until the final game, the total scores earned by each team were neck and neck. The final game of the evening between member Dennis Himes (a.k.a. "Bad Bishop") and Tom Hartmayer (a.k.a. "Herr Direktor") from UConn would decide if the NBCC would clinch the match or if UConn would tie it. With just precious minutes left on each player's clock, the heat was on, each player striving to emerge victorious in this battle of the minds. At around 11:00 p.m., in a very complex endgame, Dennis managed to force Tom into a three-move repetition-of-position, thus securing our lead and clinching the match. You could say that it was the Game of the Match, although there were many others, especially the games on the middle boards, which could have easily decided the fate of either team. The final score was NBCC 8 - UConn CC 7. I want to take this opportunity to thank Team Captains Tom and USCF NM Derek Meredith for the work that was involved in coordinating this incredible match. It was a wonderful evening for both of our long-standing chess organizations. The players from UConn are very hospitable and showed tremendous sportsmanship. There is no doubt that this was one of the most momentous events in NBCC history. The nail-biting game between Dennis and Tom is published on pages 21-23.

NOVEMBER

During the month of November and for a few weeks in December, the club held the Ed Ipacs Double Quads, an event where players were grouped into four-man sections and played each of their opponents twice, once as White and once as Black. Even though quads are not considered major club events, it should be mentioned that it has been at least seven years since these more casual-paced tournaments have been held at the NBCC. As I have said before, it is always nice to have varied events, and I know more quads will be held in the future at the club based on this event's good turnout. Incidentally, Ed Ipacs, in case you were wondering, was a very creative bughouse chess player who is credited with discovering such interesting bughouse opening lines like 1. e4 d5 2. ed e6 and 1. e4 Nf6 2. e5 d5!? 3. exf6 ef. Tragically, Ed died in his 20s. However, he has left an indelible mark on the crazy game of bughouse chess.

DECEMBER

In almost every year since 1976, the NBCC has held the annual Connecticut State Open Blitz Chess Championship. This year, this state-sanctioned tournament was held at the club on December 14. We had to move the event to Wednesday that week because the floors in the Assyrian Club Hall were being buffed on Tuesday. Despite not being able to hold the event on December 13, we were quite surprised with the turnout. A total of twenty-one players battled it out for this prestigious state chess title, with an incredible eight masters in the field, one of the strongest turnouts for this event in recent memory. And, after three hours of spirited but intense play, member and USCF NM Harris Appelman took clear first place. The club extends its appreciation to the Connecticut State Chess Association for unanimously voting for our club to host this event in 2011.

On one of our last meetings of the year, December 20, the NBCC held its annual Christmas party, a tradition started in 2005. This year, our members and chess friends from the community were treated to Mexican/Spanish cuisine, a first in club history. The club also thanks John Nitz, Andris Strazdins, and Bob Kozlowski for their contributions to the party. In conjunction with what has become the club's second largest social event of the year, the officers held a silent auction of chess books to fund club operations. The following members made donations to the silent auction: David Lewis, John Nitz, Kevin Zimmerman, Justin Murphy, and Lucas Watson.

It should be noted that at this event, USCF NM Derek Meredith organized a backgammon chouette, which is a variant form of multi-player backgammon. This activity added variety to the evening filled with joy and pleasure for all of those who attended.

Subsequent to the release of this newsletter, there were two club highlights that I want to mention.

First, on December 27, the club held its first Bughouse Chess Championship. Because there were only six participants, no one was officially declared the winner. However, it was nice to see a few of our members, like Martin Garcia and Max Krall, at the club to play in this variant form of chess event.

The final NBCC memorable moment in 2011 occurred on New Year's Eve. On the afternoon of December 31, just hours before we rang in 2012, the club hosted a blitz chess event as part of a series of entertainment-packed festivities organized by the directors of the 2012 - 1st Midnight on Main Street in Middletown celebration. The organizers put up a \$500 prize fund, with \$200 going to the winner (the largest cash prize awarded for an event hosted by the NBCC). After three hours of very intense play and many upsets, Julio Echevarria and USCF NM Derek Meredith won the event. Of special note, Paul Gobell, a former member who also assisted with the event, won the Top Middletown resident prize with Andrew Colwell. Twenty people played in that community chess event.



**The world of chess is eagerly waiting. So, I ask you,
WHAT IS YOUR MOVE?**

NBCC MEMBERS' MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

The following major achievements were earned by our members at non-club tournaments and in the USCF in 2011.

NBCC MEMBERS RANKING IN THE TOP 100 LISTS IN THE USCF AS OF THE DECEMBER (ANNUAL) RATING SUPPLEMENT

Please note that only ratings of USCF members who have been active within the last year were used in compiling the Top 100 listings.

NBCC MEMBER	USCF TOP PLAYER LIST	USCF RATING	USCF RANKING
Max Krall	Age 18	1851	87th
FM Danny Rozovsky	Under Age 21	2232	82nd
	Quick Under Age 21	2069	Tied at 79th
	Quick Under Age 16	2069	Tied at 25th
	Age 15	2232	8th
Danny Pascetta	Quick Under Age 13	1791	44th
	Age 12	1972	15th
Jonathan Aiyathurai	Age 12	1659	99th

NBCC MEMBERS ATTAINING THE LEVEL OF USCF MASTER OR EXPERT

As mentioned earlier, Derek Meredith earned his USCF NM certificate in July.

Danny Pascetta became a USCF expert in December (although, his rating of 2012 will not be official until January 2012!)

OTHER SIGNIFICANT NBCC MEMBER ACHIEVEMENTS

FM Nelson Castaneda earned first place in the 2011 Vermont Resort Open Chess Championship held in Fairlee from March 25 to March 27. Nelson also tied for first place in the 2011 Western Massachusetts Open Chess Championship held in Holyoke on May 21.

USCF NM Ted McHugh drew his game against one of the nation's strongest chess players, Grandmaster Tamaz Gelashvili, in the first round of the 2011 Connecticut State Open Chess Championship held in New Haven on May 14.

CHess TRIVIA

Throughout the centuries in the colorful world of chess, there have been many things said about the game. Some of these famous references to chess, like “Chess is life,” said by Bobby Fischer, or “Chess is everything: art, science, and sport,” said by Anatoly Karpov, have become ingrained in chess literature. There also have been many chess players whose verbal expressions of the game have been known to raise an eyebrow or two. As you will see below, not all of these quotes would receive a high ranking on Emily Post’s list.

The following is a quiz to test your skills on famous chess quotes. Who knows? Maybe after taking this trivia challenge, you will be inspired to create your own chess saying. The answers are on page 27.

1. What notable chess player was known for saying that “Chess is ruthless: you’ve got to be prepared to kill people?”

A: Gata Kamsky
B: Anthony Miles
C: Robert Byrne
D: Nigel Short

2. Which of the following quotes was chess player Siebert Tarrash not credited for saying?

A: “Chess, like love, like music, has the powers to make men happy.”
B: “Chess will always be the master of us all.”
C: “All chess players should have a hobby.”
D: “When you don’t know what to do, wait for your opponent to get an idea; it is sure to be bad.”

3. After losing a game, what famous chess player once jumped on the table and yelled, “Why must I lose to this idiot?”

A: David Janowski
B: Carlos Torre
C: Henrique Mecking
D: Aron Nimzovich

4. Which of these quotes was former World Chess Champion Bobby Fischer not known for saying?

A: “Don’t even mention losing to me. I can’t stand to think of it.”
B: “Different people feel differently about resigning.”
C: “Chess is war over the board. The object is to crush the opponents mind.”
D: “I look one move ahead ... the best!”

NBCC PICTURE GALLERY

All of these photos were taken by Bob Kozlowski.



WINNERS OF THE 1ST – 2011 PLANET EARTH CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

BACK ROW: Robert McDaniel, Jason Stange, Tom Pasim, and Yogesh Raghunathan

**FRONT ROW: FM Nelson Castaneda, USCF NM Dennis Prawira, Derek Meredith,
Laurent Lafosse, Mike Fries, and Jonathan Aiyathurai (kneeling in front)**

Missing from this picture was Jerry Aiyathurai.

PHOTOS OF OUR NBCC FAMILY IN SERIOUS CHESS ACTION



Veteran players Tom Hartmayer and Don Conners battle it out
2011 New Britain Summer Open



USCF NM Alex Fikiet and Doug Fiske contemplate their next move
2011 New Britain Summer Open



USCF NM Derek Meredith analyzes his games from the 80th MA Chess Championship at his Master Chess event held at his house.



Players of all ages display their talent over the chess board at the 1st “Dr. K Special Quick Chess Tournament.” I wonder what Jozef Madej (left photo) was listening to? And I can just imagine how Andres Montiel (right photo) felt when he was playing USCF NM Teddy McHugh and his son, Ted McHugh, Jr. Just look at his expression!

THERE IS ALWAYS A PARTY HAPPENING AT THE NBCC



NBCC legends, Bob Milardo and Andris Strazdins, take a moment to toast the Oktoberfest season at the 2011 NBCC Oktoberfest dinner party



NBCC Chef, Kevin "Z" Zimmerman, fires up the grill and cooks some delicious summertime food for the crew at the 2011 Zimmerman Games Day



FRIENDS FROM THE CT CHESS COMMUNITY HAVING FUN AT THE 2010 NBCC CHRISTMAS PARTY

WHEN THE NBCC FACES OFF AGAINST THE UCONN CC, THE PARTYING MUST END!



Christopher Lomeli vs. John Nitz



Back: Joe Hricko vs. Mark Bourque
Front: FM Nelson Castaneda vs. IM Denys Shmelov

SELECTED GAMES FROM OUR MEMBERS

[Event "2011 Oktoberfest Open Chess Championship"]

[Date "2011.09.20"]

[Round "2"]

[White "Gert Hilhorst"]

[Black "FM Nelson Castaneda"]

[Result "1-0"]

[Annotator "FM Richard Bauer and Fritz"]

[40 moves in 85 minutes with a 5-second delay]

1. Nf3 d5 2. c4 c6 3. g3 Nf6 4. Bg2 Nbd7

{Black generally looks to develop his Bc8 to f5 or g4 before making this move. A case could be made for leaving it "at home," thereby avoiding its harassment by h3, g4, and/or Nh4. In either case, the white-squared bishop is central to White's try for an advantage in this line.}

5. O-O e6

(5... e5 6. cxd5 cxd5 7. d4 e4 8. Ne5) (5... dxc4 6. Qc2 Nb6 7. Na3 Be6 8. Ng5 Qd7)

6. d3 Be7 7. Nc3 O-O 8. Rb1 a5 9. a3 Nb6

{This move stops White's threatened queenside expansion, but at the cost of slightly misplacing the Nb6 and inhibiting the planned e6-e5 central expansion.} (9... b6 10. b4 axb4 11. axb4 Bb7)

10. b3

{White has emerged from the opening with a slight advantage due to Black's awkward queenside minor pieces.}

10... h6 11. e3

(11. e4 looks good)

11... Re8 12. Qe2 Bf8 13. Bb2

(13. Ne5 Nbd7 14. f4 {would keep control of the e5 square.})

13... e5

{Black finally achieves this liberating move. White reacts quite energetically and takes quick advantage of newly opened lines and squares on the queenside. (c-file and b5-c7 squares).}

14. cxd5 cxd5 15. d4 e4 16. Ne5 Nfd7

(16... Bd6 {looks like it just runs into} 17. Nb5. {But, after} 17... Bb8 18. Rfc1 Nbd7, {the bishop safeguards c7 and undermines the Ne5, and Black would be fine.})

17. Nb5 Nb8 18. Rbc1 Na6

{With the exotic knight maneuver Nf6-d7-b8-a6, Black has safeguarded the c7 square, but a new weakness appears on a5.}

19. f3 f6 20. Ng6 Bf5 21. Nxf8 Kxf8

(21... exf3 22. Bxf3 Rxf8 23. Bc3 {would keep the pressure on.})

22. f4 a4 (SEE DIAGRAM)

(22... Qd7 {keeps the Bf5 active and prepares to challenge the c-file. Now, Gert finds some very fine moves to seize control of the game until the very end.})

23. g4! Be6 24. Bc3!

{A very strong and temporary pawn sac, highlighting the weak a5 square and gaining a very strong pin.}

24... Kg8

(24... axb3 25. f5 Bf7 26. Ba5 Nb8) (24... Nb8 25. Nc7 Qxc7 26. Bb4+)

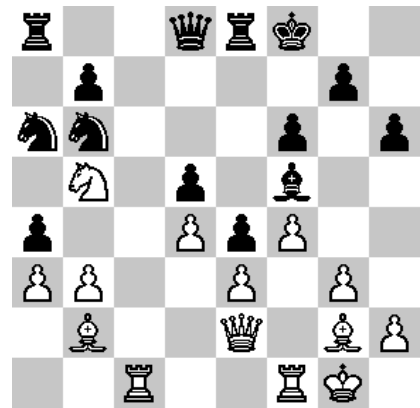
25. f5 Bf7 26. Ba5 Re7

(26... axb3 27. Rc3)

27. b4 Nb8 28. Bxb6 {12 min left or 1 min/move}

(28. Rc5 Nc6 29. Bxb6 Qxb6 30. Rfc1)

28... Qxb6 {27 min left or 2+ min./move}



Position after 22... a4

29. Rc8+ Re8 30. Rfc1 Nc6 31. Rxa8 Rxa8 32. Bf1

{Black has successfully beaten back the first penetration of his position, but now White calmly improves his already more aggressive pieces and finds another way in.}

32... Qd8 33. Rc5 Qd7 34. h3 Kh7 35. Qh2

{The White queen now penetrates Blacks position, eventually forcing its trade. White's endgame prospects are very strong with the better bishop and better pawn structure.}

35... b6 36. Rc1 {5 min left} **36... Rc8** {13 min left} **37. Qd6**

(37. Nd6?? Nxd4!., and Black wins due to the Nf3+ threat.)

37... Qb7 38. Rc3

(38. Qf4 would threaten a very Nimzovitch-like alternation of pieces into the d6 square.)

38... Na7 39. Rxc8 Nxc8 40. Qc7 Qxc7 41. Nxc7 (SEE DIAGRAM)

41... h5 42. Na8

{I have never seen a knight moved to this square with such devastating effect! Black's queenside now crumbles.}



Position after 41. Nxc7

42... hxc4 43.hxc4 g6

(Black could save one of his queenside pawns with 43... Be8 44. Ba6 Bc6 45. Bxc8 Bxa8. But, after 46. Bd7, the pawn down bad bishop ending is hopeless.)

44. Ba6 Nd6 45. Nxb6 gxf5 46. gxf5 Nxf5 47. Kf2 Kg6 48. Nxa4 Nd6 {29 min left} 49. Nc3 {13 min left} 49... Kf5 50. a4 Ke6 51. Nb5 Nc4

(51... Nxb5 52. Bxb5 {is clearly lost. White would then combine the advance of his queenside with the king's march g3-f4 toward the black pawns.})

52. Bc8+ Ke7 53. a5 Be8 54. Nc3 Bc6

(54... Kd6 55. a6 Nb6 56. Bb7 Bc6 57. Bxc6 Kxc6 58. b5+ Kc7 59. Kg3)

55. b5 Ba8 56. a6 Kd6

{No better are...} (56... Nb6 57. Bb7 Kd6 58. Nxd5) (56... Kd8 57. Be6 Nb6 58. Kg3)

57. Na4 Kc7 58. Be6 Kb8

{Both players - a few minutes left. This is the likely reason that White played on and that a drawing chance actually appears on the board.}

59. Nc5

(59. b6 Bc6)

59... Ka7 60. Nb7

(60. Nxe4 {would have been a surer, quicker way to victory.})

60... Nb6

{The best last chance would have been to enter a lost but tricky pawn ending with} (60... Bxb7 61. axb7 Nb6 62. Bc8 Kb8 63. Kg3 Nxc8 64. bxc8=Q+ Kxc8 65. Kf4 Kc7 66. Kf5 Kb6 {when} 67. Ke6 {wins, but} (67. Kxf6 Kxb5 68. Ke6 Kc4 69. Ke5 Kd3 70. Kxd5 Kxe3 {is only a draw.}))

61. Nd6 Na4 62. Nc8+

{This knight seems to be attracted to the edge of the board, having visited the a-file, the corner, and now the back rank! Now on c8, the knight focuses on b6 from another angle, where it harasses Black's bishop rather than being harassed. This game does not completely refute the idea that "knights on the rim are dim," but it does perhaps tweak it "knights (stuck) on the rim are dim."}

62...Kb8 63. Kg3 Nb2 64. b6

{The occupation of this last key square by either the knight or the pawn would prove equally devastating since in either case, the bishop is embarrassed, the queenside pawns advance, and Black's center pawns fall.}

64... Bc6 65. Ne7 1-0

[Event "UConn CC vs. NBCC – at NBCC"]
[Date "2011.10.25"]
[White "Dennis Himes"]
[Black "Tom Hartmayer"]
[Result "1/2 – 1/2"]
[Annotator "FM Richard Bauer and Fritz"]
[Game in 90 minutes with a 5-second delay]

1. d4 d5 2. c4 c6

{The Slav Defense.}

3. e3

{This modest move has actually been gaining in theoretical importance recently. White accepts the limitation on his Bc1 in order to keep the pressure on the center.}

3... Nf6 4. Nc3 Bf5 5. Nf3

(5. Qb3 Qb6)

5... e6 6. Bd3

{The old line. Modern GMs prefer to hunt Black's Bf5 with 6. Nh4.}

6... Bxd3 7. Qxd3 Nbd7 8. O-O Bd6 9. h3

(9. e4 dxe4 (9... dxc4 10. Qxc4 e5 11. Rd1) 10. Nxe4 Nxe4 11. Qxe4 Nf6 12. Qe2)

9... O-O 10. c5?

{Yielding to the temptation to gain space with tempo on the queenside allows Black to expand in the center and take the initiative. It would not have been too late to play 10.e4.}

10... Bc7 11. b4 e5 12. dxe5 Nxe5 13. Nxe5 Bxe5 14. Rb1

(14. Bb2 Ne4)

14... Re8 15. Bb2 Qe7 16. Rfd1 Rad8

{Black could have made better use of the Ra8 with 16...a5.}

17. Ne2 Bxb2

(17... Ne4 18. Nd4)

18. Rxb2 Ne4 19. Nc3 Qf6 20. Rc2

(20. Nxe4 Qxb2)

20... Re7 21. Nxe4 Rxe4 22. a3 Rde8 23. Qc3 Qg5 24. Rd4 f5 25. Rcd2 R8e6

{Both sides have achieved some strategic goals since Black emerged from the opening with a slight edge. White has exchanged off all of the minor pieces, but Black has secured his spatial advantage in the center. All of the major fireworks have been postponed to the queen and rook (pre) endgame.}

26. Rxe4 fxe4

(26... Rxe4 {allows more exchange offers})

27. Rd4

27. Qa1 Rg6 28. Qf1 {This avoids weakening the kingside pawns, which is sensible since the queen would be required here anyway.} (28. g3 Rh6 29. Kh2 Qh5 30. Qf1)

27... Qf6 28. Qd2 Qf5 29. Kh1 Rh6 30. Qd1 g5 31. Kg1 Rh4 32. Rd4 g4 33. hxc4 Qg5 34. Qb3

(34. g3 Rxc4 35. b5 h5 36. bxc6 bxc6 37. Qb3 Qe5)

34... Qh6

{With this subtle move, Black breaches White's kingside defenses. White makes the best of a very dangerous situation and evacuates his king to the center.}

35. Kf1 Rh1+

(35... Rxc4 36. b5 Qh1+ 37. Ke2 Qxc2 38. bxc6 Qf3+ 39. Kf1)

36. Ke2 Qe6 37. f3 exf3+ 38. gxf3 Qh6 39. Rf4

{This is a good place for the rook, but better would have been}
(39. Rxd5 cxd5 40. Qxd5+, {with a draw by repetition, according to Fritz!}))

39... Qh2+

(39... Qh3 40. Kd3 Qf1+ 41. Kd4 Qa1+)

40. Kd3 {SEE DIAGRAM}

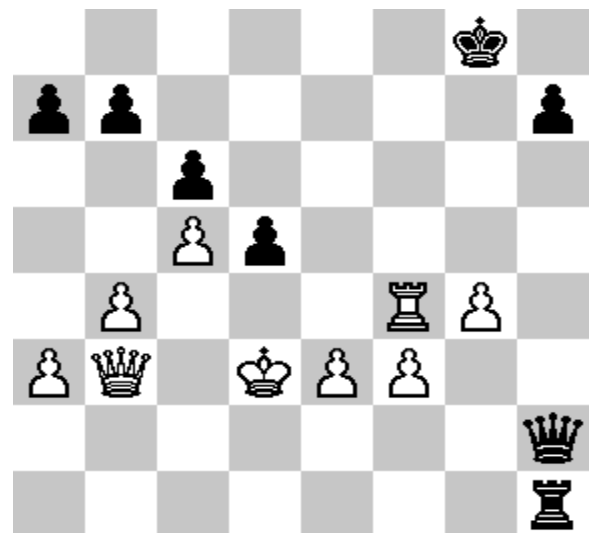
40... Qg2

{Black had two routes to victory here:}

(40... Re1 41. Qc2 Rxe3+) (40... Qg1)

41. Kd4!!

{The beginning of a daring king run through the center into the relative security of the Black's own pawns, after which White's king will actually be safer than Black's!}



Position after 40. Kd3

41... Qd2+

{Right about here, a crowd began to form around the board as other matches were completed, and it gradually became apparent that UConn needed a Black victory from its team captain to halve the score (despite having won the top three boards!)}
42. Ke5!!

{The king escapes just in time.} (42. Qd3 {allows black to capitalize on the long diagonal.} 42... Qb2+ 43. Qc3 Rd1+)

42... Re1 43. Kd6!

{White gives back the pawn in order to keep the d-file closed} (43. e4 Re3 44. Qb1 Rxa3)

43... Rxe3 44. Qb1 Re4

{A very tricky move for which all of the obvious responses lose, but White is once again up to the challenge.} (44... Rd3)

45. Rf6

(45. Rxe4 dxe4+) (45. fxe4 Qxf4+)

45... Rf4 46. Qa1

(46. Rf5)

46... Qe3 47. Kd7

{From here on out, both sides had a few minutes (and 5 sec/move) left in the sudden death (G/90) time control. White maintained about a 2:1 advantage throughout, and a good-sized crowd had formed around the board with the match hanging in the balance.}

47... Qd2

(47... Qxf3 48. g5 Rxf6 49. gxf6 Kf7)

48. Qe5 Rxf6 49. Qxf6 Qe3 50. f4

{This move forces the draw (by allowing check on g5), and with a few minutes left on both clocks, the New Britain spectators could breathe a sigh of relief. Much more dangerous would have been to play for the win with} (50. Kc7 d4 51. Kxb7 d3 52. Qxc6 d2 53. Qd5+ Kg7 54. c6 Qe2 55. Qd7+ Kg6 56. c7 Qxf3+ 57. Kb8 d1=Q 58. Qxd1 Qxd1 59. c8=Q)

50... d4 51. Qg5+ Kf8 52. Qf6+ Kg8 53. Qg5+ Kf7 54. Qf5+

{Scoresheet ended here, but the game went on for many more moves, something like this.}

54... Kg7 55. Qg5+ Kh8 56. Qf6+ Kg8 57. Qg5+ Kf8 58. Qf6+ Kg8 59. Qg5+ ½- ½

BOB KOZLOWSKI'S COMMENTARY

There is no doubt that 2011 was another extraordinary year for the NBCC. It ceases to amaze me how much progress our organization has made since 2005. Before I leave you with some final thoughts about what lies ahead for our club, I want to recap the most significant NBCC highlights of the year.

1. On the first day of spring 2011, the NBCC became the first chess club in recorded history to hold a Planet Earth Chess Championship.
2. For the first time in at least a decade, our club held two matches in one year with two different local clubs. The first match was held with the CCFC (at their location), and the other match was held with the UConn CC (at the NBCC).
3. USCF NM Derek Meredith and Doug Fiske became the next president and vice president of the club, respectively.
4. The director of the 2012 Midnight on Main Street on Middletown event chose the NBCC to host a blockbuster blitz chess tournament (with a \$500 prize fund!) as part of his town's celebration to ring in the New Year.
5. The club's annual Summer Open was held at the Rockledge Country Club, which was a new site for this event in 2011.

I finally have reached the point in this newsletter where, as in most previous year's reports, I attempt to predict what the future lies for our club. I wish I had a crystal ball that I could peer into, but, unfortunately, I do not. However, if history is a good predictor of the future, then I can rest assured that our organization, thanks to the support from our membership and the leadership exemplified by our officers and tournament directors, will thrive for many years to come. What has saddened me somewhat in the last year, though, is the loss of some members due to the recession. I have found out that some of our members even had to relocate because of work demands. Thankfully, our economy is slowly starting to rebound, and I expect we will see an increase in membership very soon. It might take three or more years before we reach one-hundred members again, but I am not fretting on this matter much because I am confident that the NBCC will always be Connecticut's largest chess organization.

Besides efforts by management and devotion from our members, two other significant things attributing to the success of the club in the last seven years have been the variety of club activities and the social functions organized by the club and by some of its members.

Our club has had a very long and rich history, with records dating back to the 1930s. Some of our club's annual events, like the NBCC Championship and the New Britain Summer Open, have been held for decades while others, like the Oktoberfest Open and the Arkadijs Strazdins Cup, were introduced recently. All of these tournaments have become a part of the NBCC's heritage, and generally, these activities are what have attracted our core membership base. As much as our club has long-standing traditions, it should be noted that, throughout the course of the last seven years, the NBCC has added other events, like quick chess, blitz chess, "odds chess," and now quads and unrated tournaments, to our club's yearly schedule. I strongly believe that this is why, on most Tuesday evenings, you will always find at least twenty players ready for some chess action.

I can unequivocally state that the best form of advertising that has benefited our organization and put the NBCC on the regional spotlight since 2005 have been the social functions. Between the Oktoberfest and Christmas parties, the annual Zimmerman Games Day, sporting and chess events organized by USCF NM Derek Meredith and others, and even some milestone birthday bashes held for some of our members, the NBCC has become one huge chess family.

In the last year, I have been reminiscing about the days when I was involved in club management. I do miss it occasionally, but honestly, I think that I have always enjoyed being the club historian much more. To be able to share the hundreds of club highlights since 2005 has been such a pleasure and joy. Years from now, members will have the opportunity to read about the NBCC's exciting times during this period. I know they will. Because, as far as I know, memories do last forever.

The NBCC management wishes you and your family a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

President:	Derek Meredith
Vice President:	Doug Fiske
Treasurer:	Major Andris Strazdins
Secretary/Webmaster:	Brian Kosnoff

TD staff:	Derek Meredith, Doug Fiske, Mike Pascetta, Jozef Madej, Dennis Himes, Kevin Zimmerman, Andres Montiel, and Bob Kozlowski
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The membership currently stands at fifty. If you are not a member, I hope you will join or rejoin the club. Wishing you peace, joy, and happiness in 2012.

Bob Kozłowski ("Dr. K")

SOLUTION AND ANSWERS TO CHESS PUZZLE AND TRIVIA

CHESS PUZZLE (FROM COVER PAGE)

1. fxg7 Kxg7
2. Bxh6+ Kxh6
3. Qd2+ Kh7
4. Rf6 Bf5
5. Qh6+ Kg8
6. Rxf5#

CHESS TRIVIA (FROM PAGE 15)

1. d
2. c (This quote was made famous by Savielly Tartakover.)
3. d
4. d (This quote was made famous by Siegbert Tarrasch.)



"And now chess champion Nastikoff is employing one of his famous tactical blows !"

This chess cartoon was posted on
<http://www.flixya.com/photo/351868/funny-chess-cartoon>.