

Hayward Library Children's Tournament

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A Winner

THE HAYWARD LIBRARY CHILDREN'S CHESS TOURNAMENT, July 30, 2005
By Alan M. Kirshner

The Hayward Library Chess Tournament is one of the oldest kids chess events in the Bay Area. How old? No one is sure. We do know that Richard Osario, Hayward Children's Librarian, celebrated his 20th year organizing the event this weekend. Ray Orwig, the person who spread scholastic chess like Johnny Appleseed in the Bay Area for many years back then as the Northern California Scholastic Director, ran the competition. Ray, still the chess coach at St. Mark's School in San Rafael, ran numerous free library tournaments as well as rated events at his school. Richard Osario met Ray when Richard was a Librarian in Newark (Ray's wife is a Children's Librarian in Fremont) and for four years had tournaments there before he brought Ray with him to Hayward.

What we do know is that Frisco del Rosario, author of *A First Book of Morphy*, remember competing as a kid at the Hayward Library and that would have been at least ten years before Richard Osario joined the staff. Mark Shelton, chess instructor, photographer and webmaster for Chess Dryad.com—the Northern California history website run by NM Kerry Lawless, remembers watching tournaments there back when. We just don't know when the when was. We do know that Richard Shorman has been taking photographs of the players for as long as he can remember and he can remember a long time.

Well, this Saturday, July 30, 2005, we had another jam packed room full of young excited chess players. Years ago, most of the players were novices. I know that was true when my boys started back in 1989. In recent years, with the explosion of competitive chess in Northern California, the event has drawn a fair number of experienced players. I asked at the end of the event, that is not rated and has always been free—the library is not permitted to charge, how many wanted a U.S. Chess Federation section next year. Most raised a hand in support of providing both rated and non-rated divisions. Oh by the way, I have been directing the event for ten years. Ray, suggested to Richard Osario that I do it when he decided to give up his position as Scholastic Chair in 1995.

I followed Ray's approach. The kindergarten through 5th grade play in the morning until 1 PM and the 6th grade through 12th grade play in the afternoon until about 4:30 PM. Medals, provided by the Hayward Library, are awarded for first through third place in the following divisions: k-1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9, 10-12. However, it is not the usual first through third awards. I provide ties for each place. If there are two winners who tie for first, the second place medals go to third on down. So if five people tie for second then third place starts at the seventh position. The players tested their mettle in four rounds of fifteen minutes. Clocks were placed at all boards. If both players did not know how to use a clock I adjudicated the games if there was no checkmate or draw before the half hour expired. Only a few games were contested without clocks.

In the k-1 section we had six players, five in kindergarten and one in first grade. Alice Bian won all her games and first place. Purva Kapshikar and Saisha Agrawal tied with 2.5 points for second and Mahima Chillakante took third with 2 points. For full results and links to the photographs of the event by Richard Shorman, Mark Shelton and Alan Kirshner, you can go to <http://www.CalNorthYouthChess.org/Results/HaywardLibrary2005.html>

The 2-3 section with 22 entries produced a tie for first between Daniel Ho and Martin Ng. They both drew Irene Su, but never played each other. Irene tied for second with Kunal Desai and Alex Zinoman with 3 points. Siddharth Selvkumar placed third with 2.5 points.

The 4-5 competition with 26 entries saw some excellent talent including an up and coming young player from San Francisco, Nikita Shenkman who tied for first with Jonathan Ueasato. Both went undefeated. Spencer Yee, David Ding and Gordon Su, all solidly rated players, tied with 3 points for second. Third place produced a five way tie—Anish Nag, Albert Zheng, Rachan Narala, Douglas Yuk and Jack Hu.

The afternoon session is always a bit light in numbers and this year was no exception. However, what was different was a fair number of players in the 10-12 competition. This was in part due to the great work of Ron Waters, I think that is his name—if not I apologize, from the Oakland Golden Knights. He continues the great work in Emeryville and Oakland in this area that the late Chuck Windsor accomplished in that area and San Leandro.

The 10-12 division saw the experienced Clayton Chan going undefeated for first. Philip Jeng finished second with three points losing only to Clayton. King Ma and Arnold Hua tied for third with 2.5 points in this 12 player section.

In the 8-9 section of 15 players, Narayan Subramanian edged out the winner of the 4-5 morning section, Nikita Shenkman who decided to play up two groups in the afternoon. Nikita tied for second with William Chen and Daniel Limon with 3 points of 4. Two competitive young ladies, which translates in my language to good chess players, finished third with 2 points: Kimberly Tom and Keaky Ka.

Fourteen strong players battled it out for first in 6-7 section. The Chillakanti twins, Mukund and Kartik, now entering sixth grade, both went undefeated for first. As I mentioned at the awards ceremony, I never tinkered with the computer to prevent the brothers from playing each other. It just turned out that way. Perhaps due to the rest of the competition. Kartik had his most difficult game against entering third grader Michael Meng from Weibel. I had advised Michael not to compete in the morning but to face tougher adversaries in the afternoon. He obviously did and had to settle for a tie for second with Arthur Jeng—3 points. Third place, 2.5 points, also produced a tie between Justin Chen (4th

grade) and Alan Khazan (5th grade) who decided to compete in the afternoon session after playing in the 4-5 that morning.

I would like to thank the Hayward Library, Richard Osario and his staff for organizing this tournament that produced 95 entries. A few people stepped up to volunteer their time to help me direct—Mark Shelton, Owen Lin who is off to MIT in the Fall, and a gentleman named Regie who helped me two years ago as well. Volunteers continue to make scholastic chess the success it is in Northern California.

Chess is Forever,



Twin Winners - Kirshner



Keeping Score - Kirshner



Praying? - Shorman



Happy Winner - Shorman