

A GUIDE TO SCHOLASTIC CHESS

Preface

Dear Administrator/Teacher,

This guide was created to help teachers and scholastic chess organizers who wish to begin, improve, or strengthen their school chess program. It covers how to organize a school chess club, run tournaments, keep interest high, and generate parent and public support.

I would like to thank the United States Chess Federation Club Development Committee, especially former Chairman Randy Siebert, for allowing us to use the framework of *The Guide to a Successful Chess Club* (1985) as a basis for this booklet.

In addition, I want to thank Beatriz Marinello, former Scholastic Director of the U.S. Chess Federation (USCF), and the USCF for their continuing help in the preparation of this publication. Scholastic chess, under the USCF's guidance, has greatly expanded and made it possible for the wide distribution of this guide. I look forward to working with them on many projects in the future.

The following scholastic organizers reviewed this work and made many suggestions, which have been included. Thanks go to Jay Blem (CA), Leo Cotter (CA), Stephan Dann (MA), Bob Fischer (IN), Doug Meux (NM), Andy Nowak (NM), Andrew Smith (CA), Robert Snyder (CA), Brian Bugbee (NY), and many others too numerous to mention.

Finally, a special thanks to my wife, Susan, who has been patient and understanding.

Dewain R. Barber
524 S. Avenida Faro
Anaheim, CA 92807
(714) 998-5508

This publication is provided free to all schools and scholastic organizers. It is not to be sold for profit. Contents copyright (c)1986, 1990, 1992, 1994, 1995, 1997 American Chess Equipment, 524 S. Avenida Faro, Anaheim, CA 92807; telephone (714) 998-5508; FAX (714) 998-1160. E-mail amchesseq@aol.com. TEACHERS AND COACHES MAY MAKE SAMPLE COPIES OF THIS PUBLICATION. However, republication or widespread copying of all other portions of this publication without the written consent of America Chess Equipment is forbidden.

Chapter I

What is a School Chess Club?

Chess Clubs and Chess Players

The scholastic chess club combines educational and social activities. Members come to play, to learn, to teach, and to get together with old friends and make new ones. The players - no

matter what their level of skill, experience, or age - speak a common language, and one that is often not understood in other areas of a person's life. The rivalries are friendly; the friendships are competitive. A club can offer a wide variety of activities. There can be speed chess or rated games, or both. Club activities can include simultaneous exhibitions, lectures, and even formal classes taught by chess Masters and Experts. Some players who regularly come to a club won't ever try weekend scholastic tournaments. These avid club players may get their fill of "serious" chess by competing in a club ladder or one-game-a-lunch-period club tourneys. Ideally, the club will cater to all types of players - recreational as well as the serious tournament players. EVERY member is important to the success of the club.

Should YOU Start a Scholastic Chess Club?

Should you become involved in starting a club in your school? Yes! It's not at all necessary for you to be an "expert" player, or even to know how the pieces move!

Every school in the country has kids who already know how to play chess, and more who would like to learn. "No one at our school plays chess" is not an acceptable excuse. Most of the time, kids are interested in learning, and only need someone to organize and supervise them.

This guidebook will help you overcome many of the problems you will face in starting a club. If you have not already done so, you may want to find out the location of the nearest chess club or scholastic/school club. The United States Chess Federation (abbreviated USCF) is the best source of information on officially affiliated club locations, scholastic organizers and coaches in your area. These contacts can help direct you further in your efforts to organize a club or locate other active scholastic chess programs within your area. Other information sources include local schools, school district offices, newspapers, libraries, chess and game stores, and your local recreational office. You might also consider contacting the County Department of Education, especially the Department for Gifted and Talented Students.

By all means, you should start a club if you have some support from students and the willingness to expend the moderate amount of energy and leadership it will take to make your club a success. Gain support from the school board, parents, your principal, and other teachers as soon as possible. Their aid will be useful later as the club becomes more active.

The fact that the National Association of Secondary School Principals regularly includes the National High School Chess Championship on its "National Advisory List of Contests and Activities" may be of value in gaining official support for your club.

Chapter II

Getting Ready To Start A Chess Club

Reporters know that their stories have to answer the basic questions - who? what? when? where? why? and how? These are the right questions for other projects too - including school chess clubs.

Who?

Probably you're not alone in your hopes - you have a number of students who are behind your desire to have a successful school club. It's time to decide what other students you want to attract, because many of your future plans will be based on this decision. Consider

involving youngsters at your school who are in special programs - learning disabled, developmentally disabled, and physically disabled, as well as gifted. Personal growth has no limit. Your school administration will be pleased to see these youngsters taking an active role in your school-sponsored activity. As noted in "Chess Clubs and Chess Players" (see page 1), the school chess club is both an educational and social activity. It provides those who know how to play and those interested in learning the game a place to meet, play, learn, teach, and develop friendships. However, a club should not be a place to "hang out," "kill time," or avoid academic work. The chess club at a school can and should be fun, but it is a learning experience above all else.

What?

Your students will help you bring in others and assist you in deciding what kinds of activities you should have, but it will be useful for you to have a plan for the first several meetings. Also, set goals with your students: decide what you and the players wish to accomplish by the end of the school year. Before announcing the get-acquainted organizational meeting in the student bulletin and posted fliers, plan a specific agenda. Don't forget to play some chess too! Most students attracted to chess have a need for structure and rules. Experiment with various activities to determine what is successful in your club.

When and How Often?

The answer(s) to this apparently simple question can have a major effect on the success of your school club. Some school clubs have the question answered by outside forces, such as classroom or library availability. If early busses are available, your club may be able to meet before school. Otherwise, after school may be better, though some students have after-school jobs or chores and may not be able to attend in the afternoon. Keep in mind the other activities of your potential members, as well as the school bus schedule, when planning your meeting time. You might be surprised to learn that lunch period is a good time for a meeting. The administration will appreciate seeing students using their lunch period in a supervised, productive manner. And because students can bring a sack lunch with them, they can have more time to play.

In any case, you probably want to allow at least 30 minutes at lunch for a club session, or up to one hour after school. Meet at least once a week (and daily if your schedule permits).

Where?

Find a room with chairs and tables. Your classroom may be big enough for your first organizational meeting and may become the club's permanent meeting place. If the room is not suitable, see if the library is available at the time your club meets. For example, the library may be busy with other students during lunch, so check things out. Keep storage needs in mind as you scout for a site at the school. You'll need a place to keep equipment, tournament stationery, club records, and so forth. A secure closet or the possibility of a locked cabinet is a definite advantage.

Why?

One of your reasons for starting a chess club is to have a place for students to play chess or to create an alternative to the existing clubs at school. In addition, you recognize the educational value (critical and abstract thinking, planning, logic, and analysis) that comes from chess. Your students will improve their ability to concentrate, and you can teach the values of good sportsmanship. Also, studies have shown that chess can help kids improve their school grades. (Write to USCF for the free reprint article, "Chess Makes Kids Smart," or

for information on studies that correlate chess and scholastic achievement.) Whatever other reason there may be for a club, the excitement in the eyes of your students when they win their first game or team match may be reason enough.

How?

Most of the rest of this book is devoted to how to do things in a chess club. The best way to describe the non-technical side of "how" is "friendly." Treat your club members as you would guests in your home. Greet them, introduce them around, make sure they feel that this is their club too. One concrete way to get off to a good start with a newcomer is to make sure you have some extra sets and boards handy. That way, no visitor will be disappointed. Almost any set will do, but consider standardizing as soon as possible. Other very important parts of "how" are club structure and funding. These areas are so important that they are treated in separate sections elsewhere in this publication. You're now ready to get started with your club. It will be work, but well worth it!

Chapter III

Getting Off To A Good Start

The First Few Meetings

Everyone is nervous at the beginning of something, and your new "members" are apt to be as apprehensive as you are! Be as friendly and relaxed as you can. Adopt just a page of club guidelines (prepared by you in advance) - something that will state the club's goals. It may be too early to elect officers, but not too early to instill the idea that there should be a division of authority. Next, be sure to get some basic information about everyone - name, grade, phone number, and chess experience. You may want participants to fill out a simple survey or membership form (see p. 25) before they begin to play. You can make copies of this sample or design your own. For the first time or two, it's probably enough to pair up people randomly. If you're playing, you might want to abandon your seat and game to make room for the next student who walks in the door.

You may have some experienced players who want to get serious right away. Don't keep them waiting too many weeks! As soon as possible, determine if you will need two or more groups (Division A, Division B, Division C, etc.). Your top division will be composed of those players with some tournament experience or those who have played in the club at school last year. You might have to keep everyone together if you lack enough experienced players to form a Division A.

One of the best early activities is a round-robin tournament, in which everyone plays each other. Players should toss for colors. You might give this event an interesting name like Pawn Pushers Special. Division or section sizes should be from 8 to 12 players. (If the size of the division is in excess of 12, the tournament takes too long to finish. You want the tournament to last about three weeks.) After all players in each section play each other to determine the best two or three players in each section, you can organize the next tournament (the Bishop's Bash), in which you'll pair in Division A the top three from each section of the previous tournament. As you find new students, simply add to the bottom division and allow them to work their way up. If by chance you encounter a new student at mid-year who already has some experience, you may wish to insert him or her in the appropriate section.

Equipment & Supplies

Most clubs will provide equipment for members. Club-owned equipment makes the club seem more "real" - and it can lend a desirable sense of uniformity and unity to the chess activities. If you haven't done so already, now is the time to contact USCF's Scholastic Coordinator for a "scholastic packet." It's free, and it contains helpful information on scholastic chess. Right from the start, there are a few inexpensive items that are virtually essential:

Chess Sets

Go for a standard size (3 1/2" to 4" King), solid plastic set in the traditional Staunton design. For this purpose the "Club Special" set fits the bill. Stay away from cheap, hollow plastic pieces if possible - they tend to break and are simply less pleasant to handle than solid plastic pieces. Kids can sometimes be rough on equipment, so it's important to have sets which are as "kid proof" as possible. You can further protect chess pieces by placing them in a wood box or vinyl bag. Perhaps your school's home economics class can prepare cloth bags with drawstrings to save the club money.

Boards

Use boards proportioned to your pieces - or get tournament-sized boards (2" to 2 1/2" squares). Cardboard boards may wear out too fast. Vinyl roll-up boards are excellent. Be sure to get the ones with the algebraic notation on the sides so you can teach notation faster to your students. If student desks are too small for the vinyl roll-up board, you will want to use the rigid masonite boards that can be placed on a desk. If there is an experienced chess teacher available or a large number of students who wish to learn, a demonstration board or overhead projector system is very handy. If you wish to purchase a demonstration chessboard for your classroom, check with the U.S. Chess Federation. Or, you can make one using felt and magnets or Velcro(tm).

Scoresheets

Many club players like to keep a record of casual games. You will, of course, have to teach your students how to keep score, but after one lesson they will probably be ready to use any scoresheet or scorebook that is available. You can make your own. USCF is also an inexpensive and reliable source. From this bare minimum, the sky's the limit on equipment and supplies. Your particular needs will determine exactly what you should get - and what kind of a revenue or school funding program you will need to develop.

Scorebooks

A scorebook is absolutely essential for any serious player of the game. You should encourage each of your students to purchase one in which to keep a complete record of their games. They will then be able to go back over past games to see errors and find improvements. The scorebook should contain at least one diagram on the back of each page for adjournments, with ample space for notes. It's also helpful to keep on hand some blank diagrams, in case the bell rings during the chess period. Then the students can quickly record the position of a game and be able to resume it the next day or the next time the club meets.

Notebook

Size and style don't matter much, but you need some place to write down organizational notes, any financial affairs, and so forth. It's an excellent idea to keep a written record of all club proceedings, because it's easy to forget things later.

Index cards

You can keep the club roster in your notebook, but a card file is even handier because it allows easy expansion and revision. Cards also give you a place to note expanded information about your students, like all-important telephone numbers and addresses. (Phone numbers and addresses must remain confidential.)

Clocks

These are not absolutely essential, but should be considered when your club is ready to enter tournament competition or league play, where time is controlled. If you decide to supply them for student use, mark them with the school name or initials and take good care of them. Sadly, these are the items most likely to "grow legs and walk." Caution students that clocks are delicate mechanical instruments which should NOT be pounded upon, especially during speed chess games. That fact should be emphasized or you will soon be replacing or repairing them.

Reference books and magazines

A few inexpensive beginner's books will provide new members with a way to get better between club meetings. Work with your school librarian and student council to get a series of chess books for the school. Give the librarian a list of both beginner and advanced chess book titles that cover openings, middlegames, endgames, and chess tactics. The list provided on page 25 is a recommended reading list. In addition, your club should have a copy of USCF's Official Rules of Chess. This book will reduce arguments about the rules. If your school club affiliates with USCF, it will automatically receive a monthly club copy of Chess Life, bimonthly copies of School Mates and the national Rating Lists, and one issue a year of the Chess Coach Newsletter. Affiliation offers many benefits for schools. Write or call USCF for more information. However, you need not affiliate in order to receive the Chess Coach Newsletter. This publication and many other materials are available from USCF - free upon request to interested scholastic chess coaches and organizers.

Tournament stationery (for later on)

Eventually, you'll be running tournaments, so you'll need supplies such as pairing cards, wall charts, pairing sheets, adjournment envelopes, scoresheets, etc. One easy way to start is with USCF's TD kit, which includes these items.

Publicity

Publicity is important to your club's success from the very start. You want your club at school to be popular, so you have to let the students know about it. Also, word of mouth is one of the best forms of publicity. Encourage students to bring a friend. Publicity is where you find it. Look everywhere!

Fliers

These are usually the keystone of a publicity campaign. Make as many as you can possibly need. Use an attractive chess picture (like a silhouette of a knight or other piece) that shouts "Chess!" to a viewer. Use neat lettering and don't be afraid of white space. Post fliers on bulletin boards, ask other teachers to put them up, and leave some at the library and the main office. To simplify your life, USCF offers 11" x 17" posters and 8 1/2" x 11" colored fliers that show off a promotional chess design. Both sizes leave you with space to advertise your club.

News releases

Write a simple statement on school stationery or club stationery describing what's going to happen at your school. Type it! Try for a local angle and stress the "open door" nature of your school club. Especially emphasize the fact that girls as well as boys are welcome and that students may join halfway through the school year or even later. Deliver the releases in person (if possible) to your local newspapers and school publication. It will make them harder to throw away. After delivering your news releases, call the recipients to see if they will use it - and when. Then, follow up with a thank-you note or call. It will help them remember you! Local and school newspapers always like to receive news releases about kids, so don't be shy about writing them.

School Annuals

School annuals (yearbooks) are a good source of publicity. Contact the yearbook advisor or editor and arrange at least one page showing the club. Try to have your team pictured competing against another school, playing a club tournament, posing for a group photo, or playing in a simultaneous against a master.

Special events

One of the most effective special events is a simultaneous exhibition - perhaps during the lunch period, after school, or at a shopping mall. It doesn't have to be huge - eight or a dozen boards will do just fine, with a new player taking over when someone else is through. You don't have to be a great player either, but you should move quickly. Remember that your opponents like to win, and they'll be more apt to come to your school club (excepting adults at the mall) if they don't think the point is for you to clobber them. If you are not a strong enough player, then have your strongest player do it, or rotate this activity among the players. It's also a good idea for the person doing the simultaneous to dress up on that day. It lends an air of "class" to the activity. Don't forget to tell the newspaper about your event - both before and after. And put your school simul in a very visible place - like a quad - at lunch. Then, stand back and watch the crowd form. Hand out some inexpensive prizes (posters, chess bumper stickers, pocket magnetic sets, copies of Chess Life or School Mates) for those who win or draw. Students who are the last to stay in the game attract crowds, so they should be eligible to win something too! Write to USCF for free materials for your special promotions.

Club Officers

Officers might not be necessary for the first couple of meetings, but a club of even 10-12 students probably needs some sort of leadership structure or assignment of duties. The club officers exist for two reasons: they represent the club at student council or other activities and serve the interests and goals of the members. Some school clubs depend on one or two students to do everything, and that's not a good situation. As club advisor, you should be spreading the work around. Then, every student will feel that he or she is a part of the club. In secondary programs, student club members as well as club officers should be involved in the decision-making process of club activities. The following are the minimum functions for club officers, though two or more are sometimes performed by one person:

President

Oversees smooth functioning of the club, resolves disputes with the aid of the advisor, and is ready to take over for any other officer who is absent or negligent. This person could also be in charge of keeping contact with the student council and school activities director.

Vice-President

Helps the president and assumes the job of president if the president is absent from school. This person could also work with the publicity or phone committee, or deal with the standings sheet.

Secretary/Treasurer

Processes the club's bills through the required school channels and keeps financial records where appropriate. Keeps club roster unless this duty is assigned to a separate secretary and warns when the club is low on funds. Works with the student council in planning projected school club budgets. Depending on the age of the students, it might be necessary to omit this position and do it yourself.

Activities/Tournament Director

Plans events in consultation with the advisor and sees to it that they run smoothly. This student can be in charge of the club ladder and the club rating system (see glossary).

Publicity Director

Informs members of coming events and issues news releases concerning club news. Some kids have always wanted to be journalists. This is their chance. They are your contact with the school newspaper. The school newspaper may also be willing to accept a chess column by a student. Don't forget to put a chess problem in each issue. The publicity director can also write a club newsletter which could include tournament results.

Team Captain

Works with the advisor to help prepare the team for upcoming matches.

Greeters

One or two students who welcome new students to the club, introduce them to other club members, answer questions, and get them into a game as soon as possible. No one is more crucial to a club than its greeters. They should be friendly and not just after a new chess scalp! Select one for September and October and another for November and December. After December, you might want to handle it yourself unless you still have a large influx of new students. As advisor, you must obtain the proper information (name, address, grade) from newcomers so you can stay in touch with them and encourage them to return. If you wish, you can get their phone number when they first register. Otherwise, pick up that information from their school emergency card after they have established themselves as a regular member of the club. Caution: All student information is confidential!

Parent Booster Club (later on)

You will want to consider forming a parent booster club, which can be your best friend and ally in advancing the school chess club. The parent booster club can lend support whenever you sponsor an event at your school, if you need help with transportation to other schools for matches (when permitted by the district), and when fundraising. Boosters can take registration, bring and serve refreshments, record results, assist in passing out awards, and help in countless other ways. The parent booster club can also influence the school board, your principal, other principals, and the activities director as to the importance of the club and district chess programs. Establish this group as soon as you can. Parents will be glad to support a positive activity for their son or daughter.

Chapter IV

Keeping The Club Going

Building a Base: the First Few Months

You've gathered your first members and held your ice-breaker event. Now what? Keep it rolling!

Formalities

Some clubs start early with electing officers, drafting and approving bylaws and constitutions, and other such organizational matters. Your students probably just want to play chess. Many students are apt to be bored with these formalities. But do try to find volunteer helpers as soon as you can. Get them to be greeters, or whatever you need.

District/School Support

The district and principal are likely to support you when they see you adding a new activity to their extracurricular or after-school program. Consult with your principal and teachers' representative to discuss supplementary pay for the time you spend in the curricula and on extracurricular chess team activities. The chess team coach can be appropriately placed in a supplementary pay for the time you spend in the curricula and on extracurricular chess team activities. The chess team coach can be appropriately placed in a supplementary pay schedule as are coaches and the yearbook advisor. They work hard and get paid for their time and so should chess coaches!

News Releases

School Bulletin

Prepare brief releases directed at your school's daily bulletin from time to time. Announce the successful organizational meeting, accentuating the positive ("Sixteen chess players attended the first meeting.") Announce your champion(s). Announce your elections. Announce your team challenges and results, including award winners. Announce your affiliation with your state organization and USCF. Keep repeating the room number, time, and the advisor's name to remind everyone that it's never too late to join!

Local Newspapers

You may want to get an article in your city newspaper. If you have a small-to-moderate sized club, "news release" might seem like too fancy a term for what you want to do. But it's the term your newspaper used, so it's the one you should use too. Prepare this information on school or chess club stationery so that the newspaper will know the source. This makes the release more credible and enhances its effectiveness. A release tells the school or local newspaper, radio or TV station that you have news and that they have permission to excerpt or rewrite your presentation of that news - although your goal is to get your news presented exactly the way you want. The tactics are to write it so well that a rewrite would be a waste of time. For fundamental strategy, there is nothing better than the old ABC's of good writing: Accuracy, Brevity, Clarity.

Accuracy

It goes without saying that you should get your facts straight. You should also provide a name

and telephone number for the paper to use if any further information is needed. You should check out your paper's particular style of reporting local news. For example, do they like to include ages and grades for almost all students who are prominently named? How many sentences do they typically use in a paragraph? These questions may stretch "accuracy," but they do emphasize your conformity to what this paper considers good writing. Of course, your spelling should be accurate.

Brevity

Get to the point and stay there. Newspapers do not have the time, the space, nor the inclination to cope with lots of background and theory. They want news. Sometimes they print "features," longer pieces that do explore the stories behind the facts, but these are most often researched and written by their own staff. (These writers will make some mistakes in chess stories, but be grateful for the ink you do get rather than frustrated by errors.) Remember that newspapers typically cut "from the bottom," so put your most critical facts and points near the beginning of your piece.

Clarity

Remember the difference between English and chess terminology, and avoid words and concepts that require explanation to those who are not familiar with chess and tournaments. Write relatively short and simple sentences, being especially careful that your pronouns are not confusing.

A Sample News Release

Rook Elected Chess Club President

Joe Rook, an 11th grade student from Madison H.S., has been elected president of his school chess club. Rook joined the chess club two years ago. "I'm not a great chess player," said Rook, "but my goal is to show other students how much fun chess can be. Of course, winning is more fun than losing."

The election was at the weekly club meeting last Wednesday after school in Madison's library. Other officers include Sam King, 10th grade, vice president, and John Bishop, 9th grade, secretary-treasurer. The outgoing president was Paul Pawn, 12th grade.

The Madison High School Chess Club is open to all students and welcomes both beginners and experienced players.

Commentary

The lead (the first sentence) is pretty bland, but it's difficult to write a great "hook" for such a story. Some newspapers are fanatical about "attribution," meaning they want to cite a source for every fact they print. Check your paper's style. A brief quotation can spark up a flat report and make the piece seem more like a professional news story. You can often sneak in some promotional material through a quotation.

The club meeting time and location on campus might not make it past the editor's blue pencil. But it doesn't hurt to try. If you put this information at the very end, its odds for survival are even less.

"Names sell papers" is an old saying worth remembering. Take every opportunity to use the names of more students, stopping short of turning your releases into a telephone directory. Welcoming newcomers is always a good idea; sometimes a paper will have room for such a

plug.

Club Newsletter

This simple device can be a key to your club's success. Remember, "names sell papers." In a club newsletter, names make happy members. In its simplest form, your newsletter or bulletin is merely a listing of coming events - a chess schedule for your students. You may want to include items such as team match and weekend tournament activities.

Make sure that all students - and potential members - get a copy. Of course, they should take it home and show their parents. Remember that putting a stack on the table in the room might not be enough, because some students will be absent that day. Consider leaving them with the teacher who has them just before morning break or lunch. Then, they might bring the newsletter with them to the club. Other students will see how special your club members are and might even ask to see the information. Don't forget to leave some in the library and front office.

Beyond the schedule, you can also report on the recent events - from tournaments and ladder standings to someone's new rating. Find ways to include as many names as possible in a positive light. "Joe didn't win any games, but he really scared Jim with some combinations before he lost on time." "Last month's visitors included Tom Knight and Jim Chessman. Both of them are very interested in speed chess." "Pete Wilson has played the most club ladder games this year - keep it up, Pete! Bob Johnson is second in activity." There are a lot of good ways to use names.

The next step might be to include some games from the students. Only brief annotations should be permitted. Other games of an instructive nature should be printed. Also, don't forget to include anecdotes about chess history or the local scene, news from around the country and the world, chess problems, photos and cartoons, or anything else your imagination and energy suggest.

Instruction

Every chess club needs to consider the challenge of helping its members improve. This is particularly crucial if your club has hopes of keeping beginners and "novices" in your club. Without encouragement, players below 1000 strength often become frustrated and lose interest - and that's something no club wants to see happen.

Note: The above reference to player strength ("1000 strength") refers to a national rating that players receive after they have played in their first national tournament. This number can vary from beginning players (500-1200) to more advanced players (1300 and above).

It should be stressed to all students that only by competing against stronger players will they improve their game. The loser at chess nearly always learns more than the winner. The loser gains knowledge and even some satisfaction. Encourage younger students that patience will be rewarded. The older students will graduate and, if the younger student continues to practice, they can become one of the school's top players. Patience is the virtue.

Absolute beginners can be taught by almost any player who is willing and interested. (Emphasize that your club plays "touch move." It is an important rule to follow from the beginning.) Choose a good beginner's book and simply present the material to the students. You don't have to be original - make use of what has already been proven to work. USCF sells an excellent package of teaching materials, which it developed for young beginners. It's called Pawn & Queen.

Be sure that the students are made aware that good chess books do exist. They can be read and understood by anyone who wants to learn. A list is included in the Appendix of this publication. You may also seek out a Master, Expert, or experienced teacher of chess to ask for book recommendations.

You may also want to use the computers at your school to add another learning opportunity. A number of chess software programs may be available in local stores.

Players in the 1300-1700 strength range can also be excellent teachers - not only of beginners, but also of those who have played for years without ever learning the basic strategies and concepts of the opening and endgame. The latter are often the most frustrated of all club players because they lose so frequently. But they can greatly improve their playing strength after taking just a few friendly, basic lessons. They will often go on to become some of the most avid supporters of your club.

Instruction need not be limited to inexperienced players. If you are blessed with one or more 1700+ players, you should be able to provide valuable assistance and guidance to those sub-1500 players who are teaching your beginners. Not surprisingly, these veteran players are often far better teachers for other tournament players than they are for beginners, because they can express their ideas in chess "jargon" better than they can in non-chess terms. But don't be afraid to ask a Master or Expert to assist in your basic instructional efforts. They might surprise you with their willingness to help.

Don't overlook one of the simplest of all instructional tools, the post-mortem analysis. When you first meet a new student who claims to be a beginner, pair the visitor with a player who will be willing to go over the game after it is done. Imagine how much more welcome he will feel if he is given some tips by the player who has just played him. Finally, you should suggest to every player who plays a rated game to go over every one of those games. Your students got into chess to have fun and win a few games, so give them one of the best tools for improvement: analysis. In addition, try to avoid small cliques in your club. Sometimes the more experienced players tend to exclude new and novice players. Break these groups up and keep mixing the players.

Lesson Plan Ideas

Below you will find a checklist for pupils that should be reviewed with all newcomers and those who lack knowledge in certain areas of the game:

I. How to checkmate: (Have them try to do this on you - without advice first - they may already know it, or part of it ... then talk if necessary. Explain what stalemate is, giving examples.)

- a. With Queen & King vs. King
- b. With two Rooks & King vs. King
- c. With one Rook & King vs. King
- d. Contest: Checkmate in the fewest moves (any of above).

II. Play two or three at a time - discuss weak moves (don't say bad moves) and good moves - praise them as often as possible.

III. Teach scorekeeping:

- a. Name some squares, then point to others for them to name.
- b. Place a Knight on the board - have them name all possible squares for it to move to.

- c. Have an experienced student show a beginner how to record a game.

IV. Set up special situations such as:

- a. Pawn-King vs. King - how to defend; how to advance the pawn.
- b. Back-rank mates.
- c. The Scholar's Mate and the Fool's Mate.

V. Teach them how to castle and why.

VI. Teach general opening theory:

- a. Importance of controlling the center.
- b. Avoid moving the same piece over and over again.
- c. Don't bring out the Queen too early.
- d. Castle early in the game.
- e. Don't make too many pawn moves early in the game.
- f. Develop Knights and Bishops quickly.
- g. Don't make pointless "checking" moves just to put your opponent in "check."

Try these in any order - review previous week's lesson, but generally try to concentrate on one of these per week.

Summer Chess Camps

One way for students to keep in shape over the summer is to attend a chess camp. Most camps provide high quality instruction, tournaments, and other chess related activities. Some camps also permit teachers and coaches to attend. The following is a list of some well-known summer chess camps. This list is provided for informational purposes only, and does not indicate sponsorship or an endorsement by American Chess Equipment or the U.S. Chess Federation. Addresses change from time to time; please contact the camp to confirm location and request more information. Camp listings are accurate as of October 1998.

Castle Chess Camp
Bradford, PA or Rose-Hulman Univ.
Terre Haute, IN
Contact: Robert Ferguson
American Chess School
57 School Street
Bradford, PA 16701
(814) 362-7329

Chess for Juniors Camp
Contact: Robert Snyder
P.O. Box 29
Midway City, CA 92655
714) 531-5238

Florida's Chess Camp
Webber College
Lake Wales, FL
Contact: Glenn Goodman
2868 Meadow Wood Drive

Clearwater, FL 34621
(813) 784-8252

Geller Kids Chess Camp
Contact: Arkady Geller
242 Main St.
West Orange, NJ
(201) 483-7927

Mountain Lake Chess Camp
Julian, CA
Contact: Larry Evans
P.O. Box 1603
Carlsbad, CA 92018
(619) 929-9620

U.S. Chess Center Day Camps
Washington, D.C.
Contact: David Mehler
(202) 857-4922

Club Ladder

The club ladder is a true mainstay of many chess clubs. It takes many different forms, but all are similar in the following respects: they continue through the school year; involve some type of ranking of the students; and allow players to move "up the ladder" by defeating players whom they challenge. To avoid mismatches, allow challenges only within a certain number of available spots (3, 5, or 8) of the player being challenged.

Some ladders are USCF-rated, while other ladders have only some or perhaps none of the games rated. Some clubs calculate their own "club ratings" for ranking their players. Whether a club uses its own rating system or USCF's, a rating system will allow players to prove themselves, find their skill level, and identify worthy opponents. Medals, trophies, or ribbons could be awarded at the end of the school year based on the rating improvement of each player.

Club Ratings

A suggested club rating system can be organized in the following manner:

1. If you are just starting at the beginning of the year, and no one has a club rating, everyone starts at 900 points.
2. In your first school tournament, a player receives 15 points for every win and loses 15 points for every loss.
3. In future tournaments, higher-rated players receive 10 points for every win in their section and lose 15 points for every loss. Lower-rated players receive 15 points for every win against a higher-rated player in their section, but only lose 5 points for a loss.
4. In the case of draws or stalemates, the higher-rated player loses 10 points and the lower-rated player gains 10 points.
5. When a tournament ends, bonus points can be awarded to the top three players in each section. The first place finisher could receive 25 points, second place 15, and third place 10. Bonus points are usually awarded in the first few months of the chess club year, to help players find their level more quickly.

EXAMPLE: Jim is rated 1250 and loses a game to Bill, who is rated 1100. To calculate the

new rating, subtract 15 points from Jim's club rating (because he was the higher-rated player and he lost). Bill receives 15 points (he was the lower-rated player and he won). Therefore, Jim's new club rating is 1235 and Bill's new club rating is 1115.

This is a very simple system that takes little time to calculate new ratings for the students. Consider giving bonus points for games won at a local tournament. This rewards them for their participation. However, restrict points to no more than 10 points per won game. Never subtract points for losses.

A variation of this is to let all players start at 900 as before, but for each game won add 25 points plus or minus 10% of the difference in ratings, with a maximum of 50 points.

The Harkness System is another method of calculating club ratings. It is more accurate than the other rating systems mentioned, but the calculations take more time.

The method is as follows:

HARKNESS SYSTEM*

Opponent Rating Difference	If High Wins Add to Winner and Deduct from Loser	If Low Wins Add to Winner and Deduct from Loser	If a Draw Add to Low Deduct High
----------------------------------	--	---	--

000 to 024	16	16	0
025 to 049	15	17	1
050 to 074	14	18	2
075 to 099	13	19	3
100 to 124	12	20	4
125 to 149	11	21	5
150 to 174	10	22	6
175 to 199	9	23	7
200 to 224	8	24	8
225 to 249	7	25	9
250 to 274	6	26	10
275 to 299	5	27	11
300 or more	6	28	12

*Official Chess Handbook, p. 156

If you find a system similar to any of these and it works for you, then by all means use it. There are potential problems in any club ladder. What happens when players refuse challenges or don't attend? You'll have to make that decision when the time comes. So, although there might be some challenges, a new and growing club would do well to plan having a club ladder. It provides a "safe," easy-to-run activity that is always available, especially on those days when illness or a special school activity causes low attendance. It can work for advanced players, newcomers, club regulars, and occasional players.

Mandatory Opening, Gambit, Minor Piece Tournaments, and Chess Problems

Non-rated "theme" tournaments require only one day to complete, and they provide a good change of pace. In each game, the players are required to play a certain gambit or other opening sequence with each competitor - once with White and once with Black. In minor piece tournaments, Knights or Bishops are used, with a few pawns added. A fast time control of 10-15 minutes per side can be used to ensure that all games are completed in one club meeting. This type of contest is designed for fun. Often, the opening is announced in advance so that players can prepare for the tournament, but sometimes the opening is "drawn from a

hat" at the start of the event.

The reason to choose a gambit is to force players into a type of game different from what they normally play. Gambits tend to produce very exciting positions where imagination and natural skill can be exercised. You might precede the competition with a short lecture on the opening to make sure the event becomes not only fun, but educational, too. Caution: Be certain to choose openings that are not totally unsound; nobody enjoys playing with a position that is a forced loss.

As for the minor piece tournaments, you can have fun with pawns only plus King, pawns and Knight(s) plus King, or no-Queen tournaments, etc. This gives students more practice with the endgame and minor pieces. Remind them that the game is more than a "Queen move." These types of tournaments should be considered for mid-year - after the students have some knowledge of the game.

Another possibility is a problem-solving contest, with mate-in-two problems from chess books. Ten problems would be an appropriate number. The object is to solve the problems correctly in the shortest amount of time. For your instructional purposes, the patterns found in actual games and chess problems are generally better for developing pattern recognition. Avoid abnormal variations on chess, as they tend to interfere with the development of normal pattern recognition. An example of an abnormal variation would be bughouse chess (see glossary).

Be certain that the ladder or other activities are available for those who do not want to play in theme tournaments. Unfortunately, not all chess players enjoy trying a totally new and unprepared opening, even if it is just for fun.

Try Team Play!

One way to pull a club closer together is team play. Arrange matches with other schools in your town or in a nearby town. You can have the chess team ride with one of the other sports teams (i.e., football, baseball or tennis) when competing against a nearby school. Try to establish league teams in your area. There are probably other chess clubs that want to play. If you do not know other nearby schools that are active in chess, check with your state association or the USCF.

Matches can be played with varying numbers of players, from as few as three boards to as many as can fit into the playing site. In team play the principle "the more the merrier" truly does apply! Try to arrange a 10-to 15-board match with another school or schools, so that every club member can play. Remember that the players from the two schools are to be ranked in descending order, strongest player first. Matches can give your club a real boost. Playing with a common goal and traveling together to a match can really build club morale. Whenever possible, use school bus transportation. Note: Each player needs a permission slip.

Remember, you can find match opponents anywhere. You may be able to use match play to get more publicity for your club, especially if you win against a school from a rival city or town. Be sure to let your school and local newspapers know. Newspapers love stories and pictures of youngsters who can hold their own in competition.

One club member can be designated as team captain and take responsibility for some of the details concerning matches. The advisor should:

1. contact the other school;

2. arrange a mutually agreeable place, time, and time limits;
3. make sure that all the necessary equipment is taken;
4. contact the students and their parents and assign the order in which the players will play.

If you are traveling to the other school, the advisor must make transportation arrangements, plus make sure that no one is left behind by mistake!

Sometimes a concern about team strength prevents some schools from being active in team play. Schools that are not blessed with a quantity of strong players tend to shy away from team competition. This is unnecessary. Team play can be designed as an enjoyable form of chess. Work with the coaches of neighboring schools to set some team competition events that maintain a balance between teams.

For instance, each team could agree in advance to have no more than two players rated over 1400, no more than four over 1200, and at least two unrated. This type of format allows teams to be more evenly matched. It also promotes more interschool competition for the team positions. Novice players are still important to the success of the team - in fact, they are just as important as the top two boards!

Before forming your team, decide how you choose its members. Being on the team should be an honor that can be earned by anyone. Encourage club members to try to "make the team." Perhaps the "most improved player" on the club ladder or some of the best players can be automatically awarded a spot. This will increase interest not only in the team but also in the general club activities. A students-versus-faculty match or one in which the students choose up sides would work well.

If there are a good number of school clubs in the area, consider setting up a league with a regular schedule. Some leagues feature rated competition; others are open to non-USCF members. The latter makes it possible to get other schools involved which have very few or no rated players. Make sure that you get a responsible person as league director and that all the club advisors understand their duties.

As you progress, think about club jackets or T-shirts with the school logo on them. High-school students should be eligible for a chess letter to be worn on a collegiate-style sweater or vest. If other teams use school equipment and have club jackets, then so should your team.

Chapter V

Your Club as a Tournament Sponsor

Chess tournaments come in all sizes and shapes. Your experience will lead you to what is best for your students, and almost all chess players enjoy some kind of formal competition. You will find detailed instructions for pairing players, assigning colors, and so forth in USCF's Official Rules of Chess, which can be obtained from the United States Chess Federation, 3054 NYS Rte. 9W, New Windsor, NY 12553. In this chapter, we are concerned with what happens before and after the games themselves.

What About Format?

You can play round-robins among any number of players. "Quads" are traditional favorites,

matching four players of about the same strength in a three-round event. Note: USCF does not publish ratings based on fewer than four games. Therefore, you would have to run two "quads" in order to get new players rated.

If you can handle the Swiss system (see glossary), you might start with a one-section Swiss, involving everyone in the same competition. If you have fewer than a dozen players, a three-rounder is probably enough. For 10 to 20 students, you probably want four or five rounds. For more than 20 players, five rounds might be best. Keep in mind that if all players are to start a round at the same time, a number of students will finish early. There should be an activity to occupy them that is quiet enough so as to not to disturb the tournament games in progress.

You can also have two or more Swiss sections of whatever length. Three rounds guarantees no more than one perfect score among eight players, four rounds for 16 players.

You'll have to decide what to do about ties. You can have co-champions with equal awards, co-champions with a trophy awarded on tie-breakers, or a winner-take-all match. It's a good idea to award something to anyone tying for first place.

While it's possible to have a tournament with only one prize, you will be more popular if you give everyone some chance at an award. You might, for example, offer a first prize and a smaller one for the best score by someone rated under 1200. A prize for the best score by a newcomer or unrated player or an upset prize to the student who scores the biggest rating upset of the tournament is a good promotion. Remember that your students joined your club to have fun and win, so the more prize categories, the better.

One popular feature is to give your tournaments creative titles based on holidays, movies, local geography or history, or whatever else tickles you or your students. Example: The Snowflake Special.

Remember that there will be students that do not want to play in any tournaments, so respect their wishes. Stay loose, experiment, listen to your students, and have fun.

The Club Tournament

Many clubs find that regular tournaments form the backbone of their activities. The typical structure is one round a week for a specified time and then a brand new tournament. These are easy events to run and are fun for everybody, but you might have to experiment before you find the best format for your students. Two major words of advice: inexpensive and relaxed.

Inexpensive

Entry fees should be affordable, and while prizes are not typically a big deal in school club tournaments, one or more small trophies, medals, ribbons, certificates, or book prizes may be appropriate. A prize could even be as minimal as a free entry into a future local tournament. Caution: To maintain your scholastic standing in the eyes of many Interscholastic State Federations, you should not offer cash prizes of any type. Thus, you can get sanctioned just like the debate club, the football team, and the math club. This could come in handy later.

Relaxed

Don't run a military boot camp. The atmosphere in a school club tournament should be friendly. Relax and let the kids enjoy it within the rules of the game. You will find that some students can't show up for a scheduled round (game). Often they can get together with their opponents some evening or over the weekend. If it's okay with the players involved, it should

be okay with you. Also, be flexible about letting students join the tournament after the event has started at the school.

The Tournament Director

You need someone to be in charge, whether or not your event is to be rated by USCF. In practice, the tournament director (TD) usually does everything connected with a tournament, but it's better to have at least a small team that divides the actual directing chores from the organizing ones. Be sure that the TD has a copy of USCF's Official Rules of Chess.

If your event is to be USCF-rated (definitely a good idea!), and is strictly a home-school event, your TD has to be a USCF Certified Club Tournament Director, and sign a form stating that he or she has read USCF's Official Rules of Chess, has access to a copy of these rules, understands them, and promises to uphold them fairly.

Please contact the USCF Scholastic Director for applications and information concerning rated home-school tournaments.

The Weekend Scholastic Tournament

There are many rated and unrated weekend and scholastic events on the calendar. Look them up in Chess Life or School Mates, or contact your local scholastic organizer. Sponsoring such an event is not difficult, as nearly everything that is true of club tournaments applies to weekend events that are open to other students as well as your own. These events, whether one day or two days in length, take more advance planning, but most of your concerns will be similar to those you encounter in planning a school club tournament.

One of the essential differences is finances. For club events, you can probably remain flexible and determine your prizes. For an open scholastic event, you should either guarantee the trophies, medals, and ribbons (ideal) or offer a realistic estimate of these based on the number of entries.

Your tournament site is another major issue. Can you use your classroom, library or cafeteria? Clear this with your principal by getting a building use form, completing it, and sending it to the superintendent or other official of the school district who will handle the approval. Getting this approval is essential. If an accident should occur, you will be protected from liability and the school district insurance will cover all persons involved. If by chance you choose a tournament location outside of school, try to have the community center, college, or hotel donate the space and custodial services. These other sites have insurance coverage, so that should not be a problem.

Publicity is another important factor. You should plan very far in advance - as much as six months to a year. The first step is to check with your USCF regional clearinghouse to make sure that there is no significant scholastic activity already scheduled for that weekend. (You can find your clearinghouse through Chess Life, the Rating Lists, or the USCF office.) If a major tournament, open to students and adults, is scheduled for the same date, it might cut into your attendance. Check with some of the other coaches and students to see if that's the case. A big scholastic event just before or after your tournament could affect attendance, too.

Boost attendance at your event by posting and distributing fliers at other area tournaments and by mailing fliers to area players and coaches you wish to attract. USCF supplies address labels of current rated student chess players by ZIP code and rating at a nominal cost. Write or call USCF's "Mailing List Sales" for more information.

Placing Ads in School Mates magazine

One of the best ways to attract players to your event is to announce or advertise it in your local state chess bulletin and in the tournament section of School Mates.

The TLA form is in the appendix. You may use it to submit School Mates TLAs for your scholastic-only events (or sections). Just follow these easy guidelines:

1. When you submit a TLA for a scholastic-only event (or section), note clearly on your TLA that you are requesting inclusion in School Mates.
2. Meet the following deadlines:

TLAs Due	1st Week of	Tmt. Dates
11/10	January	01/15-03/14
01/10	March	03/15-05/14
03/10	May	05/15-07/14
05/10	July	07/15-09/14
07/10	September	09/15-11/14
09/10	November	11/15-01/14

Note that this service is provided as a courtesy to you and is on a first-come, first-served, space-available basis ONLY. Note also that FREE School Mates TLAs list only basic information: date; event name; site; contact's name, address, and phone number. Contact USCF for information on the per-word rate for additional text.

If you wish to list a scholastic-only event outside the normal time frame listed above, you may buy an ad. Contact the USCF office for current rates. Note that these charges are NOT applicable to your rating fee reduction. They are considered "Paid Ads" and will be so marked.

You will also find in the Appendix a "Tournament Accounting Sheet" that will help you to plan ahead. Talk this over with the other coaches in your area. They can guide your estimates so they will be very accurate.

Registration

A smooth registration process is essential to running a successful weekend rated/unrated tournament. As in all other things, planning and teamwork help enormously. Convince your club that the tournament is theirs, not yours. Everyone in the club should help out at least a little, and there are indeed lots of little chores that can be parceled out.

Advance registrations are great. You can handle them in peace and quiet and at your own pace. To encourage advance entries, offer a discount for early entries and provide a cut-off registration form on your tournament flier. The usual rule of thumb is a dollar per game for rated events. A small scholastic open of five rounds would be \$5. You might consider charging \$10 for five rounds if it were a major rated scholastic open, but any more than \$2 per round could create problems.

A registration form and pairing card are located in the Appendix. You may want to duplicate these forms or make your own.

Of course, if you are running a tournament with several sections, you need a space for the section the entrant wants and maybe one for their current rating.

But it is your responsibility to check all USCF ID numbers, expiration dates, and ratings. Duplicate names for one player (Frederick W. Smith III, Fred Smith, Freddy Smith, F. W. Smith, etc.) create havoc with membership records and ratings. Avoid headaches by asking

USCF members to bring their membership cards. Copy the information directly from the card. Mailing labels from their Chess Life or School Mates are also helpful in establishing accurate data.

There are two basic parts to the registration process the day of the tournament, and they should be split between at least two people if your line is more than a few players long.

I. Site Registration

- A. Entry fees
- B. Dues (league, state association, USCF, as applicable). It's often faster to have the student fill out the forms (print please) and return them to you with the appropriate fees, at which time you should give a receipt. When possible, have the coach or advisor who brought the team prepare a list in advance.

II. Pairing Card Information

(see Appendix for sample form)

- A. Name
- B. Address (This is important for expanding your scholastic mailing list, for providing information to the newspaper and state bulletin, for mailing prizes and crosstables, and for responding to post-tournament inquiries.)
- C. USCF ID Number
- D. USCF Expiration Date
- E. Rating
- F. Grade
- G. School (If it is not a team event, you may wish to pair away from students who are from the same school during the very early rounds.)

The USCF Rating List (Annual or Supplement) is an all-in-one tool for all information except address, grade, and school. Here is a sample line from the Rating List and how to read it:

BISHOP, DALE Q. 12345678 1198 NY 1166

Dale Bishop's ID number is 12345678. His USCF membership runs out November, 1998. He's from New York. His current rating is 1166. However, if Dale's rating appeared with a slash (/), for example 1166/13, his rating is provisional, based on only 13 games.

You should have him show you his USCF membership card. Get his number and expiration date from the card or from the Rating List (Supplement or Annual Edition). But do make sure he is Dale Bishop if you have any doubts.

If you're running a tournament with more than one section or team competition of any type, a color-coded system is helpful. Use different color pairing cards for each section or mark the corner of the pairing cards with a different color to identify each school. Your students will probably appreciate wallcharts (see appendix for sample form) with different colors in the margin so as to identify their team or section. This will save you time as you place the results on the wallcharts.

You'll want to post wallcharts so that the students can follow the action. Don't hold up your first round to do so, but do see that someone - whether it's you or someone else - gets to them as soon as possible. Good TDs get these charts prepared and on the wall before the end of round one, so they can post the results on the wallchart as they come in. Inform the students that both players who are paired should go together to the pairing sheet and post the

results of the game as soon as they finish. Neatness counts: A clearly legible photocopy of these charts is an adequate rating report for USCF. Computer pairing systems like Swiss system are available and can be used on disk to submit rating reports. REMINDER: No student or advisor is to write on a wallchart. Any errors or changes are to be made by a Tournament Director!

Below is a checklist of materials that you might want to have within easy reach during a tournament.

TD's Checklist

- USCF's Official Rules of Chess, latest edition
- Chess Tournament Software
- Computer, printer, and diskettes
- Pairing cards
- Pairing sheets or racks for posting Swiss or Quad results charts
- USCF/state membership applications
- Table numbers for boards
- Scoresheets and (if possible, make scorebooks available at a reasonable cost)
- Rating lists (all Supplements since the last Annual List, and all recent Annual Lists)
- Pens/pencils/markers (including loaners)
- Masking tape, thumb tacks, rubberbands, and correction fluid to white-out changes
- Coins to provide change for kids who have to call home
- Calculator and extra paper for notices
- Copies of ads for this tournament (for round times, prizes, etc.)
- First-aid kit, and telephone access in case of emergency
- FLIERS FOR YOUR NEXT EVENT!!

Pairing Programs Available

Below is a list of pairing programs that have been used to administer large tournaments, including many USCF National events.

PAIR PLUS - Jo Eglen
5124 Knights Bridge Court
Terre Haute, IN 47803
(812) 877-9854

SWISS-SYS - Thad Suits
2105 Fourth Avenue North
Great Falls, MT 59401
(406) 453-6160

CHESSTD - Steven Wharry
4842 Clearview Circle
Barthlesville, OK 74006
(918) 335-1072

WINTD - USCF
3054 NYS Route 9W
New Windsor, NY 12553
(914) 562-8350

Tournament Administrator Software

The USCF office has developed a tournament report software called the Tournament Administrator (TA). The TA allows the user to enter, revise, validate, display, and print tournament results before submitting them to the USCF. It can create a club database containing rating information of people who participate in your tournaments. The TA has the capability to upload rating list information from a disk. You also have the option to print USCF return-address labels or labels of any address you enter. The Tournament Administrator is available free to all USCF certified tournament directors.

Almost certainly, your club will have at least some financial concerns. They can or will be large or small depending on the size of your club and the nature of its activities and programs.

Chapter VI

Club Finances

Funding

Raising money for your chess club can be very easy if you have the participation and support of students, parents, and school administration.

The school district is a primary source of funding for school activities. Some districts have funded programs for special academic classes. Districts may fund programs for exceptional and talented students. In addition, districts usually make provisions for bus transportation to student events. Provisions for funding teacher supplementary pay are discussed on page 7.

Each school's student council funds many activities. However, the student council sometimes requires funding to be budgeted a year in advance. Work closely with the activities director to recognize your chess program and team. Student councils are interested in securing equipment that will be of long-term benefit to the school. Items such as chess clocks and chess books for the library qualify. The student council will usually fund team entry fees to promote the school and encourage school participation.

Most school clubs have ways of raising money for their activities. Find out what they are by checking with several advisors and your school activities director. One or more of their ideas may suit your need to raise a certain amount of money. Your parent booster club will be a valuable resource. There are also community groups (e.g., Parents Association, Lions Club, Optimists, Kiwanis) that support schools and worthy scholastic projects.

There are many old reliable methods - bake sales, car washes, raffles, and chocolate sales (where permitted). Student council and even school district funds designated for "after-school activities" would be worth investigating.

Spend the time looking for the money and you will have to spend less time raising it.

Banking

You don't really have to run downtown and open an account as soon as you decide to have a student chess club. First, check with your principal or activities director and see how other clubs at your school handle finances. Their system will probably work for your club, too. Many districts require funds to be placed in a student club activity account.

If, however, you find that your club would be better off with its own account, then check with

local banks to see which one will give you a no-charge bank account. Many banks do this for schools. If necessary, your principal could call and verify for the bank your need. Remember: The bank will receive your money and not pay interest to you and you will re-ceive all services free. It's a good trade-off for them and it's also good public relations.

You'll have to decide who signs the checks. It's best to have two signatures on file with the bank, probably those of the advisor and the vice-principal. Then, when the statement comes in each month you simply have the vice-principal initial it. When needed, you have him/her sign checks.

Taxes

Because yours is a school club organization, it is a 501(c)(3) organization. You pay no income tax on your activities. Through your district, it may be possible for your club to be exempt from sales tax on your purchases, get special postage rates, and offer donors write-offs on gifts. Check with your district office business department to confirm any le-gal questions with regard to the above. There may be variations from state to state.

Chapter VII

Larger Chess Organizations Benefits of State Association

Many school clubs have found it helpful to have a good relationship with their state association. In some cases, these clubs can become affiliates of state associations. In return for paying little or no annual fee, your club receives a copy of the state magazine and often a listing in the magazine citing the club's existence. You will also be able to announce any weekend tournaments that you run. Your students will benefit from having a copy of the state magazine available. They will also enjoy seeing their names featured in the scholastic events you report.

Active ties with your state association can benefit your club in other ways. Sometimes, a state association arranges tours by masters or the state champion - if so, your club can have a chance to be included. If a special event is coming up in your state, such as a grandmaster simul, all your students will learn of it promptly. Also, state tournament calendars are often printed far in advance of the Tournament Life listings in Chess Life and School Mates. These calendars will help your students plan their tournament activity more efficiently.

The state association will also assist you if you have any special problems. Your state officers are usually a good source of advice on many chess-related topics. When your club embarks on its first open tournament, you should be able to count on the state association for assistance in publicity, a director, and so forth. Remember that helpfulness is a two-way street, so do support your state association when it requests your assistance.

As your club and league grow, you may want to bid for a state-sponsored scholastic tournament. These events offer your students the opportunity to compete against the best players the state has to offer, while avoiding the inconveniences of traveling to another city.

USCF Club Affiliation

At the earliest opportunity, you should consider making your club a scholastic affiliate of the U.S. Chess Federation. The paperwork is minimal, and the benefits are numerous.

Here are some of the exciting, special advantages:

- A monthly copy of Chess Life and a bi-monthly copy of School Mates mailed to your school.
- A bi-monthly copy of the national Rating List, which chess players love to examine to see how everyone is doing. This publication includes "Bits and Pieces," a section of about four pages of significant organizing news and advice. The Rating List also has a USCF scholastic Top 50 list. Posting copies of this list can spur attendance in your club, league, and at tournaments.
- Registration with the scholastic referral service (list of scholastic organizers). School coaches in your area looking for other school clubs will be told about you.
- Entitlement to sponsor and conduct the sanctioned, rated tournaments in which your students will earn ratings.
- Information and involvement in chess by mail with pen pals on a rated basis (postal chess). This could include games with students from other countries.
- Discounts on books and equipment. What you purchase can be used by your whole club, given as prizes, or even resold to your members at your cost. (Ask your school librarian to see if your library has any chess books. School libraries sometimes have money to spend, and chess books are a worthwhile investment because your club members will check out the books.)
- Free-for-the-asking materials such as membership brochures, chess notation, explanations of the rating system and tournament procedures, rules booklets, chess buttons, and even back issues of Chess Life or School Mates for your special scholastic events. (Also, the U.S. Chess Trust, the non-profit educational arm of the U. S. Chess Federation, provides free chess sets and boards to schools.)
- An experienced staff at USCF headquarters, ready to answer your questions.

Affiliating is too good a deal to pass up!

Scholastic Chess Programs in the USCF

The U.S. Chess Federation offers a full range of scholastic chess programs - from rated play in scholastic-only tournaments to paid memberships which include full USCF benefits such as chess magazine subscriptions, discounts on chess merchandise, participation in adult tournaments, etc.

- Youth: Youth members receive all regular membership benefits, including Chess Life.
- Scholastic: Scholastic members receive all regular membership benefits, except that instead of Chess Life, they receive School Mates, a bi-monthly magazine only for young players under age 14.
- Junior Tournament Player (JTP): Students under grade 12 or under who have never been USCF members may become JTPs. JTPs can participate in only two types of USCF-rated tournaments.

These are:

- Scholastic-only, school-based tournaments (in other words, a school event open only to students attending that school); and
- Primary-school tournaments (or exclusively primary-school sections in larger tournaments), with the exception of the National Elementary School Championship.

JTPs receive a USCF ID number (the red number on the green JTP form), and a rating, but they are not eligible for any other membership privileges. The only requirement is for the tournament director to submit the green JTP forms for each player (addresses and birth dates

must be included), along with his rating report.

For applications and information, contact: USCF, 3054 NYS Route 9W, New Windsor, NY 12553; telephone (914) 562-8350; e-mail scholastic@uschess.org or natlinfo@uschess.org.

USCF-Rated Tournaments

Rated tournament competition is the driving force behind the success of the U.S. Chess Federation. Over 40,000 scholastic players participate in nationally rated chess activity every year, and the numbers are increasing rapidly.

Participating in USCF-rated events is fun and will give your players an opportunity to gauge their improvement. Also, if they are members and have high enough ratings, their names might appear on our Top 50 lists for the different age groups. These lists are published regularly in our bi-monthly Rating Lists, and can be used to publicize the success of your club.

USCF has made the cost of holding a USCF-rated scholastic-only tournament very inexpensive. The only costs are an annual USCF club affiliation fee and a per-game rating fee (contact USCF for current rates). For these tournaments, USCF membership is required of players (except JTP category). Nor is it required of tournament directors for these events as long as they are USCF certified chess coaches (see below).

So, as you can see, it is easy and inexpensive to get your players involved in our nationally rated chess experience. For more details on organizing rated tournaments, please request a copy of the free brochure, *Rated Chess Events*, from USCF.

USCF's Certified Chess Coach Program

USCF recognizes chess coaches as special people who are fair, positive, compassionate and caring. These coaches make a strong effort to instill in their students these same attributes. The USCF Certified Chess Coach Program was established to recognize these special volunteers. Through this program, anyone - teacher, club supervisor, or parent, etc. - can become a certified chess coach. All you have to do is fill out an application, along with a small one-time fee. Contact USCF for applications and information.

As a certified chess coach, you will receive the following benefits through this program:

- A framable, official certificate noting your qualifications to coach chess, and a card identifying you as a qualified chess coach.
- The right to direct rated scholastic-only tournaments in your school (certified chess coaches do not have to be USCF members for this purpose, although membership is recommended).
- A free copy of USCF's annual Chess Coach Newsletter.

Coaching at Tournaments

One of the most exciting experiences a coach will offer his or her students is the opportunity to participate in USCF-rated tournament competition. There are weekend club events as well as state and national tournaments. Participating in the National championships gives players, coaches, and parents the opportunity to experience scholastic chess at the championship level, as well as the chance to meet people from other parts of the country.

A Code of Conduct

Spectators and coaches are governed by the ground rules of the tournament organizer. These rules supercede the suggested guidelines that follow. In this discussion, 'COACH' also

refers to 'PARENTS' acting as supervisors and observers at a scholastic chess tournament and other 'SPECTATORS' (other than tournament officials).

Here are some of the "do's" and "don't's" of coaches and parents on the floor:

1. Once a game is in progress, a coach can never interrupt it for any reason. Only tournaments directors and their assistants may intervene.
2. If a coach notices a player playing the wrong opponent, he or she should immediately notify the tournament director (TD).
3. If a coach observes an illegal move, he or she is to say or do absolutely nothing, as it is the responsibility of the players to bring violations to the attention of the TD.
4. If a coach sees a player's hand raised, he or she should immediately summon a TD. He should NEVER try to directly assist any player.
5. If a coach observes that a player has over-stepped his or her time limit, the coach should not say or do anything, as only the players can make time-violation claims.
6. Once a tournament game has started, a coach should talk to his or her players only in the presence of the TD.
7. In general, the coach should avoid eye contact with both his or her players and their opponents, keeping a sufficient distance from the board to avoid distracting the players.
8. Players may leave their boards for short periods. They should inform the TD if they will be gone for an extended time. While absent from his game, a player must not consult any chess books, diagrams or analysis. He or she should not discuss their game (while in progress) with anyone else.
9. Players, coaches, spectators, and TDs may be prohibited from bringing food or drink into the tournament rooms. All scholastic tournaments are non-smoking.
10. After the conclusion of a tournament, if a coach notices that a prize was incorrectly awarded, he or she should bring this to the attention of the TD ONLY.
11. WALLCHARTS show the pre-tournament ranking of the players, their ratings, their round-by-round results and other pertinent information. Only tournament officials can record information on these charts. Coaches or players should NEVER write on them.
12. Coaches should make sure their player's results are reported. In most individual tournaments, results are posted on pairing sheets. These sheets show each player's pairing and board number for a particular round, and have a space by each player's name for posting results. At the nationals, players are required to report their results to designated officials. In TEAM tournaments, results should be recorded on the "Team Card" at the playing table.
13. PAIRING CARDS contain tournament results used for pairing purposes. Only TDs have access to these cards.
14. OTHER coaching duties include:
 - a. providing instruction for their players before and after rounds
 - b. helping their players find their pairings and boards
 - c. offering moral support to their players
 - d. making sure their players stay out of trouble
 - e. making sure their players exhibit good sportsmanship
 - f. helping maintain proper order throughout the tournament site

National Programs

The Chess-in-the-Schools Inc. (formerly American Chess Foundation, Inc.) is a national

program primarily for inner city school children. Also, sponsors and administers a number of programs including the Aspis Award, and the Samford Fellowship.

The Aspis Award is granted each year to the nation's top player under age 13. Generally, Aspis recipients are candidate masters or masters.

The Samford Fellowship is the richest and most important prize of its kind in the U.S. The annual fellowship offers brilliant young American masters the support and resources necessary to reach their full potential. Samford recipients must be willing to devote their efforts to studying and playing chess in an attempt to become leading grandmasters. The Fellowship rewards talent, achievement, and commitment to chess and is open to high school graduates under age 25; past winners have all been grandmasters or international masters.

For more information on these programs, contact: Chess in the Schools, 353 West 46th Street, New York, NY 10036.

The U.S. Chess Trust offers several programs including **Chess for Youth**.

Chess for Youth is a program that donates free chess sets to schools around the county. It is also known as "Koltly Chess for Youth," named for its famous founder, George Koltanowski.

Free USCF Scholastic Membership Program for Underprivileged Children - 500 kids from low-income families will receive free memberships in the United States Chess Federation through a special U.S. Chess Trust program.

Students who are on their school's free lunch program are entitled to this benefit. The membership will be channeled through coaches and parents who coordinate and organize chess programs in the schools. Each school program is eligible to receive a maximum of 10 scholastic memberships.

The Free Membership Program, in addition to providing assistance to underprivileged kids, is one more incentive for coaches to generate and organize chess activities at the schools. Coaches are encouraged to send a list of qualified kids, with a cover letter that includes a brief description of the program.

The USCF and the U.S. Chess Trust thank Trust donors for their generosity and their support of who could otherwise not afford to participate in tournament chess.

The **Annual National Scholar-Chessplayer Awards** recognize and encourage high school students who promote a positive image of chess in the United States.

High school juniors and seniors who are USCF members are eligible to apply. Applications must be completed and submitted to USCF along with five copies of an academic transcript, a photograph and a letter of recommendation from an adult coach or chess organizer. The deadline is **March 1st** of each academic year.

Award winners are selected on the basis of outstanding merit in academics, chess play, and sportsmanship. The winners are announced annually at the National High School Championship. They receive scholarship prizes, totaling over \$1,500 from the U.S. Chess Trust.

For more information on the Chess Trust programs or to receive a Scholar-Chessplayer Award application, contact: Scholastic Director, USCF, 3054 NYS Route 9W, New Windsor, NY 12553; telephone (914) 562-8350.

The U.S. Chess Federation annually sponsors the **National Scholastic Chess Championships** and the **All-America Chess Team**.

There are several **National Scholastic Chess Championships** you should know about. The three traditional events each spring are the National Elementary, Junior High, and High School Championships. In addition, USCF holds an annual **National Scholastic K-12 Grade Championship** (each player competes at his or her grade level). A special competition, the **Arnold Denker Tournament of High School Champions**, takes place every year during the U.S. Open. In this tourney, state high school champions compete for college scholarship prizes.

Only the most promising of America's young chess players are selected for the **All-America Chess Team**. Team members must show outstanding achievement in their age group and be considered likely to distinguish themselves in the future.

All-American Chess Team Revisions: Changes to the criteria - The USCF has revised the All-American Chess Team's requirements. This policy will go into effect beginning with the selection process of the 1999 All-American Chess Team. The new policy modifies the rating requirements. The new selection criteria will be as follows:

MINIMUM		MINIMUM	
AGE	RATING	AGE	RATING
8 & Under	1550	9	1650
10	1750	11	1875
12	2000	13	2100
14	2150	15	2200
16	2250	17	2300
18	2400		

All candidates must have competed in at least FOUR adults' open (non-scholastic) tournaments since July 15 of the previous year.

The USCF reserves the right to discount recent rating gains earned in small, unannounced or "private" events.

Each qualifying youngster will receive a certificate and a congratulatory letter. Team members will also receive a jacket prominently displaying the All-America Chess Team insignia.

For more information on USCF programs, contact: Scholastic Director, USCF, 3054 NYS Rte. 9W, New Windsor, NY 12553; telephone (914) 562-8350, ext. 128; e-mail: scholastic@uschess.org or natinfo@uschess.org.

Yes, U.S. Chess has a Website!

The U.S. Chess Federation has a website which offers a variety of information regarding chess. The website is located at: <http://www.uschess.org/>. On the "home page" you will see a variety of listings of categories within the site. They range from "who to contact at the USCF" to actual chess club links as well as rating and news areas for getting your chess rating and chess news!

Another section of great importance is our Scholastic Chess area of the website. This is where we communicate to the younger member. Within the site we also offer special areas for Scholastic Chess information so check out, Chess Links; Scholastic Chess Club Directory; Let's Play Chess and the beginner section.

As we expand our website we appreciate hearing from our website viewers. There is an e-mail "feedback" available to make suggestions. For general information regarding chess with

USCF you can also request information using the following e-mail addresses:
scholastic@uschess.org or natinfo@uschess.org.

As chess becomes more and more popular among those of all ages we hope you'll check out the website frequently. The "What's New" area of the website also offers current news information about what's going on in the exciting world of chess!

Suggested Books for Scholastic Chess

Titles are in Algebraic notation unless otherwise mentioned.

NOTE: These books are recommended by chess teachers. Teacher guidance is suggested, as some books (e.g. Comprehensive Chess Course) are especially suited to a classroom setting. Contact USCF for a more comprehensive list.

Novice Players (under 750)

Author

ABC of Chess	Bruce Pandolfini
Beginning Chess	Bruce Pandolfini
Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess	GM Bobby Fischer
Chess for Children	Lawrence, Nottingham and IM Wade
Chess for Children	Martin Richardson
Comprehensive Chess Course, Vol. I	GM Lev Alburt
The Kids Book of Chess	Harvey Kidder
Starting Chess	Castor

Junior Varsity Players (under 1000)

How to Play Good Opening Moves	GM Edmar Mednis
Improve your Chess	A.J. Gillam
Simple Chess Tactics	A.J. Gillam
Chess for Dummies	James Eade
Chess Puzzles for Children	Eugene Levin
The Chess Tactics Workbook	Al Woolum
700 Opening Traps	Bill Wall
Traps and Zaps	Bruce Pandolfini
Attacking Chess	IM Waitzkin
Morphy's Games of Chess	Philip W. Sergeant
Chess for Juniors	Robert Snyder
Chess Tactics for Students	John Bain
What's the Best Move?	GM Evans
Pandolfini's Endgame Course	Bruce Pandolfini

Experienced Players (between 1000 & 1300)

More Chesscize	Bruce Pandolfini
Quick Chess Knockouts	GM Julian Hodgson
The Middlegame Book One: Static Features	GM Max Euwe and H. Kramer
Modern Chess Strategy	GM Ludek Pachman
Best Lessons of a Chess Coach	Sunil Weeramantry
1001 Winning Chess Sacrifices and Combinations	Fred Reinfeld
Winning Chess Tactics	GM Seirwan and IM Silman
500 Master Games	GM Tartakover and J. DuMont

Advanced Players (Over 1300)

Endgame Challenge!	John Hall
Grandmaster Secrets	GM Andrew Soltis
My System	GM Aron Nimzovich
Chess Middlegame Combinations	IM Romanovsky
Chess Middlegame Planning	IM Romanovsky
Attack with Mikhail Tal	GM Tal and Iakov Damsky
Chess Endgame Lessons	GM Benko

Chess Books Recommended for Parents, Teachers & Coaches

Searching for Bobby Fischer	Fred Waitzkin
USCF's Official Rules of Chess	USCF
Chess Tactics for Students (Teachers Edition)	John Bain
101 Questions on How to Play Chess	Fred Wilson
Queen of the King's Game	GM Susan Polgar
Elements of Positional Evaluation	Dan Heisman
Perception and Memory in Chess: Studies in the Heuristics of the Professional Eye	Adrian D. de Groot and Fernand Gobet
Problems, Combination and Chess	Laszlo Polgar

An Introduction to USCF-Rated Tournaments

Many USCF members find that participation in USCF-rated chess tournaments is one of their favorite benefits. Sanctioned tournaments are sponsored by USCF or its many affiliated organizations. Players compete against other Federation members under the direction of certified tournament directors. There are tournaments everywhere. There's probably one taking place soon within your own area.

Round-Robin Tournaments

In a round robin, you play one game with every other player in the tournament. One common type of round robin is a quad, in which four players of approximately equal ability are grouped into a section. These three-round tournaments are usually played in a single day.

Swiss-System Tournaments

The Swiss is the most common tournament format in the United States. An unlimited number of competitors play a specified number of games - no one is eliminated. Normally, as you continue to win games, you face progressively stronger opposition, leaving those not so successful to play against each other. Toward the end of the event, you will probably find yourself matched against players around your own level. Many tournaments have special prizes for new players and novices.

In Swiss-system events, players are paired with each other according to the following general principles:

1. A player is not paired with any other player more than once.
2. Players with the same score are paired whenever possible.
3. Colors are assigned by the director as fairly as possible. Alternating the colors is the ideal. For the first round, the players are ranked according to their last-published USCF rating. The top player in the upper half of the field is then paired against the top player in the lower half of the field, and so on. The top-ranked player's color in the first round

is normally allocated by lot, and then colors alternate down the halves.

In the second round, the director uses the same principles to pair each of the three score groups (those who won, those who drew, and those who lost). These pairing procedures will continue through the rest of the tournament. In some large tournaments, various "accelerated pairings" are used in early rounds.

The wallchart is important in a Swiss tournament. This listing of players and their results allows everyone to see exactly what is happening in the event. After a wallchart is posted, players normally help the directors by proofreading the entries that interest them.

The sample wallchart at the bottom of this page shows us that John F. Anderson is the top-rated player in the event (because he is ranked No. 1). Anderson's USCF identification number is 34032543; his last published rating was 1852. In Round One, he had White against player 35 and won (for a total of 1 point); in Round Two, he had Black against player 21 and won (for a cumulative total of 2); in Round Three, he had Black against player 3 and lost (still a cumulative total of 2); and in Round Four, he had White against player 12 and drew (for a cumulative total of 2 1/2).

Chess Clocks

Another standard part of a sanctioned tournament is the chess clock. Usually, players must bring their own. These special timers are really two separate clock movements and dials in a single case. When a player makes a move, he presses a button that stops his side of the clock and starts his opponent's side.

In tournament play, any player who has not completed the prescribed number of moves in the allotted time loses, unless his or her opponent has insufficient mating material. Some typical time controls are 40 (or 50) moves in two hours, or 40 (or 45) moves in an hour and a half.

Sudden-death time controls have become popular. Sudden-death games must be completed, within the prescribed time, no matter how many moves it takes. If a player runs out of time, his opponent wins only if he has sufficient remaining material to make checkmate possible.

Recording Games

Time controls make it necessary for the players to keep a record of the game in order to know how many moves have been made. (Score keeping is not required for events with time controls of Game/10 to Game/29; see "Rating" on reverse side.) This record will also be a useful study tool. There are two notational systems in common use in the United States - descriptive and algebraic. Our "Keeping Score" flier describes these and other systems. Just write to U.S. Chess and request a free copy.

Conduct of Players

Tournament players are not allowed to look at personal or published chess material during a game or to receive either solicited or unsolicited advice from a third party concerning a game in progress. Players are also forbidden to distract or annoy their opponents. Conversation, rapid transit games, and other noisy activities should not take place in the playing room. These rules and others are in the USCF Official Rules of Chess (catalog number C929CP), available from U.S. Chess. Call or write for details.

If you are forced to withdraw from an event or miss a round of play, make sure you tell the director in advance. Players who fail to do so are subject to a penalty.

Rating

USCF ratings are of special interest to many players. These numbers reflect a player's standing relative to other USCF players. There are two separate rating systems for over-the-board (OTB) chess (regular and "quick" ratings) and one rating system for correspondence chess. Quick ratings are used for events with time controls of Game/10 to Game/29, and regular ratings are calculated for tournaments with time controls of Game/30 or slower.

A person's OTB and correspondence ratings are printed on members' Chess Life or School Mates mailing labels. For more information on either rating system, contact our New Windsor office.

Novice OTB ratings are often 800 or less, and Master ratings start at 2200. Most tournament players are rated between these levels.

Correspondence Chess Tournaments

Many USCF members enjoy chess by mail in our various correspondence tournaments as their major form of chess competition. Many others play both correspondence and OTB.

In a typical correspondence section, you play six games. Some formats are double-round robin, others are swiss. For most of the USCF Correspondence Chess events, moves are exchanged using postcards and play is governed by the official chess rules as specially modified for correspondence chess. USCF allows plenty of time for players to complete their games.

USCF offers rated correspondence chess events which offers players to exchange moves using e-mail. Provided you are a current member of USCF and have access to e-mail, you can play! We offer a Lightning Match; Swift Quad and Express Tournaments as reasonable entry fees with some prize credit available for some events.

All games played through [USCF Correspondence Chess](http://www.uschess.org/cc/) are rated. Please feel free to contact USCF for more information: U.S. Chess Federation, Attn: Correspondence Chess, 3054 NYS Rt. 9W, New Windsor, NY 12553. Or Correspondence Chess located at our website: www.uschess.org/cc/.

NOTE: Often we have referred to forms being available in the appendix of this booklet. For the online version, forms are not available. Please contact USCF for a hard copy of The Guide To Scholastic Chess, for the forms.

This page was last updated June 22, 2000