

THE GROWTH OF CHESS IN CONNECTICUT

The passing of Tom Hartmayer left a huge void for chess in our state. Chess growth in eastern Connecticut, especially at UConn, felt the severest impact. This year, a group of advocates and leaders in our community came forth to re-energize the strong chess foundation that Tom so tirelessly built. The following is a brief biography on the persons who have been instrumental in continuing the legendary work that Tom so passionately pursued for decades for the advancement of Connecticut chess.



Rob Roy, who has promoted Connecticut chess since the 1970s in every capacity possible, from state president to tournament director and organizer to editor of *Connecticut Chess* magazine and so much more, created a beautiful chess center in the basement of his home in Coventry. Rob, a loyal NBCC advocate and supporter, has graciously welcomed friends to compete in his one-day weekend tournaments in the spacious venue. Rob has donated his time, energy, and money to establishing this facility for our community. Besides managing his club, Rob has been involved with directing tournaments at other clubs in the region and performs many other projects to promote chess.

Alexander Lumelsky, director of the Connecticut Chess Organization, worked with Tom as a coordinator of scholastic tournaments in the area for many years. Having worked with Alexander as a tournament director at the First Connecticut State Girls Scholastic Chess Championship in January, I can unequivocally state that he is such an inspirational person to all rising scholastic chess players. Alexander has established an indelible rapport with chess families and students across the state, and he handles all situations that can arise at these events, even the most challenging, with the utmost level of care and professionalism. Alexander was recently appointed to the position of CSCA tournament coordinator.



Mark Bourque, a long-time member of the UConn Chess Club and the NBCC, also was motivated to get involved in this amazing effort. A few months ago, Mark formed a chess club in his hometown of Stafford Springs. The club meets every Thursday evening at the town hall and is in the ideal location of the state to attract chess players from Connecticut and Massachusetts. Mark also, as mentioned earlier in this newsletter, attained his tournament directing certification, and he intends to start directing events at his club very soon. This club does not charge a membership fee and is open to all chess players.