

# 2004 KERN COUNTY SCHOLASTIC CHESS CHAMPIONSHIPS

PRESS RELEASE  
KERN COUNTY SCHOLASTIC CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP  
at COLONEL NICHOLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
Saturday, March 13, 2004

The Kern County Scholastic Chess Championship was held Saturday, March 13, 2004 at Colonel Nichols Elementary School, 3401 Renegade Avenue, in Bakersfield, CA.

Over 316 participants from 68 teams attended the Chess Event. Over 100 participants were from outside the Kern County Area (Los Angeles, Orange County, Santa Clarita, San Luis Obispo, Atascadero, Porterville, Fresno, Visalia and San Diego, etc.)

The Bakersfield Blitz Football Team mascot "Crusher" attended the pre-opening ceremonies and managed to entertain all of our Chess participants and "Crushed" several future young Chess Masters in games of Chess. Third Grader Elijah Baier from Thorner was the only player to crush "The Crusher" in Chess. "The Crusher" says, Elijah pushed off and should be penalized 10 yards. Crusher its "Chess" not "Football". Besides, you had football pads on; weigh 210 lbs.; are 6 Ft. 3 in. tall and outweigh Elijah by over 100 lbs. Go Elijah!

The entertainment at the Closing Ceremonies was wonderful. The entertainment was provided by the Chipman Show Choir and a young Classical pianist from Los Angeles, Ms Arpi Samuelian, a Chess player in the K-8 Section who finished in a tie for 3rd place with 4 points. Over 700 players, coaches, parents, grandparents, and siblings were entertained for over ½ hour following the final round of chess by these Outstanding young children.

Special thanks to all of the volunteers from Colonel Nichols Elementary School for making everyone feel so welcome and for providing assistance, support and food to over 700 guests (including 316 participants at our Chess Event).

Also, special thanks are due to all of the many volunteers for making 2004 such a successful Kern County Chess Championship. Over 150 trophies, plus over 100 medals and over 100 ribbons were awarded. Congratulations to all of the participants. Mr. David Huff, Executive Director of Youth Chess Charitable Foundation expressed his appreciation to the coaches, teachers, parents, and relatives for their help in promoting chess in Kern County as a means of improving academic performance in our schools and as a sport.

Good Samaritan Hospital provided the awards for the Kern County Chess Championship. Good Samaritan has consistently supported the development of Scholastic Chess in Kern County and is to be commended for its efforts. Good Samaritan Hospital's recognition of the benefits of Scholastic Chess and its support in promoting Chess have been major factors in the phenomenal growth of Scholastic Chess in our community.

Mr. Allan Fifield served as Chief Tournament Director and did a wonderful job of running the Tournament on a timely basis.

Throughout the entire day, National Chess Master, Mr. Jaime Tanaleon from Los Angeles, provided game analysis and instruction on chess tactics and strategy to chess participants, coaches and parents.

Once again, John's Incredible Pizza was just "Incredible". General Manager, Scott Kirk, arranged for this fabulous community focused organization located at 3709 Rosedale Highway, to donate over 300 Free Buffet Dinners (worth \$3, 600.00!!) Participants in all Youth Chess Charitable Foundation Tournaments can use these Good Anytime Coupons during the entire YCCF Chess Season.

All of the participants, parents, coaches, and organizers expressed their sincere appreciation to John's Incredible pizza and to Good Samaritan Hospital for helping to promote chess as an Olympic sport.

There were nearly 1,600 chess games played by over 316 participants from 68 Teams competing in the tournament. The tournament commenced at 10:00 am and was not over until after 4:00 p.m. (over 6 hours of chess with virtually no break). This represents more time committed to mental athleticism in this Olympic sport than a full marathon and an Olympic hockey game combined!! The mental exhaustion from competing in a chess tournament has been compared to the physical exhaustion experienced by runners after competing in a full marathon.

The tournament was extremely competitive. Ten (10) players from the United States Chess Federation (USCF) List of the Top 100 Scholastic Chess Players in the U.S. (by age group) were in attendance including three 2004 National All Girls Chess Champions (Kali Navea-Huff – 2nd grade; Baylee Wickham – 3rd grade; and Marie Navea-Huff – 4th grade) and the 2004 California State Elementary Champion (Armen Samuelian, a 6th Grader who won the K-12 section.)

The winners and 2004 Kern County Chess Champions in each section were as follows (each Winning Team in each of 5 sections won \$200.00 for a total cash prize of \$1,000.00):

K-1 First grader, Ben Warmendam, from the Central Valley Lions, won the K-1 Section with a 4.5 score. Juliet Thorner Performing Arts Magnet School won the team title and \$200.00 for Thorner's Chess Program. Coach Ellen Quon should be commended for her tireless efforts in organizing, promoting and teaching chess. Because of her efforts, Thorner is now widely recognized as having one of the six best Scholastic Chess Programs in all of Southern California. (11 Teams with 41 Participants were in the K-1 Section).

K-3 Elijah Baier and Alexander Pearson, both from the Juliet Thorner Performing Arts Magnet School, tied for the first place in the K-3 section with perfect 5.0 scores. Juliet Thorner Performing Arts Magnet School won the team title and \$200.00 for their Chess program. Way to go Coach Quon! (12 Teams and 77 participants were in the K-3 Section).

K-6 2nd Grader Kali Navea-Huff from Cesar Chavez Science Magnet School and Nam Trinh, a 4th Grader from Richmond School tied for 1st place in the K-6 section with perfect 5.0 scores. Fairfax School tied with Thorner for the team title with 20 points each. Fairfax won the \$200.00 for their Chess program based on tie breaks. Coach Chris Oakleaf says that the Fairfax team is the best in Kern County and he is challenging Thorner, Fruitvale, and Cesar Chavez for "bragging rights". (19 Teams and 110 participants were in K-6 Section).

K-8 John Bryant from Fruitvale Jr. High School won the K-8 section with a perfect 5.0 score. John accepts all challenges and always seems to win. John has been undefeated the entire 2003/2004 Chess season in Bakersfield. Chipman Jr. High won the team title and \$200.00 for their Chess program. (15 Teams and 55 participants were in the K-8 section).

K-12 6th Grader Armen Samuelian from AAA won the K-12 section with a perfect 5.0 score. John always wins and has been undefeated the entire 2003/2004 Chess season in Bakersfield. Ridgeview High School won the team title and \$200.00 for their Chess Program. (11 Teams and 33 participants were in the K-12 Section).

Mrs. Eloisa Cisneros from the Cesar E. Chavez Chess Booster Club presented a \$200.00 check to each winning team. Thank you Cesar Chavez Booster Club for contributing over \$1,000.00

to the 2004 Kern County Chess Championships for Chess Programs in Kern County.

Mr. David Huff and Ms. Grace Navea, Tournament Organizer's, thanked Ms. Gigi Barnes, Chess Coach at Colonel Nichols School and Mr. Warren Ramay, Principal; all of the wonderful staff at Colonel Nichols; and all of the more than 75 volunteers for their invaluable support to the Kern County Chess Championships. The Colonel Nichols Booster Club was fantastic and deserves special recognition for their commitment, involvement, and organization of all the tournament volunteers.

The Chess Tournament Organizers, Mr. David Huff and Ms. Grace Navea stated that Bakersfield is rapidly becoming known nationally for its commitment to and awareness of the benefits of chess. David A. Huff, President/CEO of Good Samaritan Hospital, and Grace S. Navea, President of GSN, Inc, volunteer their time working with students and promoting chess in Kern County schools as a means of improving academic performance. "Chess has been demonstrated to (among other benefits) improve memory; logic; creative thinking; reading skills; self-esteem; performance on standardized tests; focus and concentration," says Huff. "These kids are some of the best players in California".

All of the final results and standings for each section, and pictures taken during the tournament are posted at our website [www.youthchess.com](http://www.youthchess.com). For additional information, or for any questions, please call Tournament Organizers, Mr. David Huff and Ms. Grace Navea, at (661) 631-5870 or fax to (661) 631-3264 or log on to our website at [www.YouthChess.com](http://www.YouthChess.com). You may also send inquiries to the Youth Chess email address: [YouthChessOrg@aol.com](mailto:YouthChessOrg@aol.com).

Youth Chess Charitable Foundation

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