

CalChess State Scholastic Championships 2007

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32nd Annual CalChess State Scholastic Championships

by Alan M. Kirshner, Ph.D.



I am pleased to announce that the CalChess Board has accepted my offer as a volunteer to run the 2007 State Scholastic Championships. I have been able to obtain the San Mateo Expo Center for the weekend of April 27 through 29. The Board authorized me to search for another site after they confronted a fair number of disgruntled parents, players and coach when they approved a date in San Jose that conflicted with the National High School Championships.

Last year, the tournament drew around 1350 players. I am hopeful we can match this number and perhaps exceed it for 2007. While we will have the same divisions divided into Varsity, Junior Varsity and Novice, I am sure you will be happy to learn that there will be more trophies awarded in each section. In fact, we will be providing far more than double the number of trophies awarded in the Novice sections due to the huge number of players.

Once again we will have a bughouse tournament on Friday night. Last year we skipped the Blitz due to the limitations of the site. We will have a Blitz tournament this year on Saturday night. Another change that came about after a vote at the Scholastic Coaches meeting and discussion at the Board level is that the Primary School (K-3) Varsity Division (the open championship) will be held on both Saturday and Sunday as have the Elementary (4-6), Junior High School (7-8) and High School (9-12) sections. The Kindergarten and the Primary School Junior Varsity and Novice Divisions will be contested only on Saturday as they have been in the past. Since we can set up the equipment on Friday, an advantage we did not have in San Jose in 2006, we will be able to start earlier on Saturday and, hopefully, get the children and their exhausted parents home earlier.

We will be able to move the different groups in and out of their play areas more smoothly as there are firewall dividers that can separate sections with separate entrances. We will be making some changes in the way the computerized pairings are handled and the pairings posted that we hope will provide far more efficiency. There will be more room for parents and Teams at San Mateo. However, there are not walls that can divide the Team areas. They will have to be divided by pipe and drape, but the cost to coaches/schools will be substantially less.

There are no hotels attached to the site. I am presently working with the San Mateo Marriott which is, I am told, the closest at about a mile, to get an exceptional discount for those who want to stay near the site. I will be able to provide you with more news on the cost and the official hotel shortly. Parking at the San Mateo Expo Center is plentiful and cheaper than it was in San Jose. Better news is that I have obtained permission for our participants to go in and out of the parking lot for no extra fee.

In my report on last year's event, I attribute the huge success to the excellent staff of tournament directors and volunteers. I am in the process of contacting these people for 2007. I hope to add dramatically to the number of volunteers. I look forward to any help I can get. If you would like to volunteer, please let me know as early as possible at info@CalChessScholastics.org or fill out the form I will be posting in about a month at the CalChessScholastics.org website. While I cannot offer volunteers a lot—due to the fact that they are volunteers :0)—I can follow tradition that includes staff T-shirts, reimbursement of children's entry fees and food.

I hope in subsequent announcements, newsletters and my FAQ, when I post the application on the CalChess Scholastics website, to answer most if not all your other questions. Meanwhile, you can contact me at info@CalChessScholastics.org. And, please be sure to mark April 27-29, 2007 on your calendar to attend the largest, by far, chess tournament in California—the CalChess State Scholastic Championships.

Chess is Forever!

Alan