



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS
P. O. Box 830688 Richardson, Texas 75083-0688

News Release

For immediate release News contact: Jon Senderling, UTD, (972) 883-2565 jsender@utdallas.edu

In Its Four-Year Run, The Final Four of Chess Has Become The Final Two: UTD and UMBC

It's a Lock: Don't Put Your Money or Your Hopes On Improbable Longshots Stanford and Miami-Dade

RICHARDSON, Texas (March 9, 2005) – One of the longshots is Stanford University, universally regarded as one of the most prestigious institutions of higher learning in the galaxy; the other is Miami (Dade) Community College, one of the largest – and some say one of the best – community colleges in the United States. If Las Vegas took book on such events, Stanford, despite its rarified academic pedigree and otherworldly intellectual reputation, wouldn't attract much action in the upcoming Final Four of Chess in Kansas. And neither would Miami-Dade -- at least not from any of the wiseguys.

That's because the two other teams entered in the intercollegiate competition – The University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) and The University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) – simply **never** lose, except to each other. They are in gamblers' parlance what is sometimes called a "lock," a sure thing, or as close to such mathematical certitude as the laws of probability will allow. Only a patzer would ever bet against them.

In the four years that the Final Four of Chess has been in existence, only two teams have won the event – UTD and UMBC. Each has won the tournament twice. And only two teams have finished second – UTD and UMBC. Each has done it twice. To put it another way, UTD and UMBC are the only schools in the country that are unhappy if they finish second in a national college chess tournament..

In addition to Stanford, among the other Tier 1 universities that in Final Four competition have been overmatched, outthought, bullied, outmaneuvered, psyched, outplayed and, ultimately, checkmated or cowed into surrender by the two chess titans are four other elite institutions that are well-known among America's intelligentsia: Harvard, U.C. Berkeley, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Chicago.

-- more --

Page 2/Final Four of Chess Has Dwindled Down to Final Two

So when the fifth Final Four of Chess is held April 2 and 3 at the Karpov Chess School in Lindsborg, Kansas, on the same weekend that the basketball Final Four will be played in the Edward Jones Dome in St. Louis before many thousands more fans and a national TV audience, it will be fairly simple to predict who will NOT win the tournament and – almost inevitably -- will end up being relegated to third and fourth place – Stanford and Miami-Dade, although not necessarily in that order.

It will be quite a bit more difficult, however, to predict who will finish first – UTD or UMBC. The two schools arguably have the most intense – and evenly matched – rivalry in intercollegiate competition. It is so tight that no one would even think of having an office pool on this Final Four. UMBC has won the last two Final Four of Chess tournaments and, as one of the spoils of its victories, taken home the President's Cup that some say is emblematic of college chess supremacy. But UTD has won the Pan American Intercollegiate Team Chess Tournament, the premier competition of its kind held in the Western Hemisphere, the last two years, even though UMBC had two grandmasters and the higher-rated team going into the tourney.

“Statistically, we weren't supposed to win the last two Pan-Ams,” said Dr. Tim Redman, director of UTD's chess program and professor of literary studies in the university's School of Arts & Humanities. “But we did. Now we're not supposed to win the Final Four. But we've done that before, too.”

The UTD team is coached by International Master Rade Milovanovic. Representing UTD at the Final Four in Kansas next month will be four International Masters -- Magesh Chandran Panchanathan, 21, a junior majoring in computer science; Amon Simutowe, 22, a sophomore majoring in economics and finance; Peter Vavrak, 22, a senior majoring in business administration; and Dmitry Schneider, 19, a sophomore business administration major, along with FIDE Masters Michal Kujovic, 22, a senior majoring in statistics, and Andrei Zarembo, 22, a graduate student in electrical engineering who is known as a “clutch” player who performs well in critical matches.

About UTD

The University of Texas at Dallas, located at the convergence of Richardson, Plano and Dallas in the heart of the complex of major multinational technology corporations known as the Telecom Corridor, enrolls more than 14,000 students. The school's freshman class traditionally stands at the forefront of Texas state universities in terms of average SAT scores. The university offers a broad assortment of bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs. For additional information about UTD, please visit the university's web site at www.utdallas.edu.

#