

UTB-TSC wins national chess championship

By KEVIN GARCIA
The Brownsville Herald

December 5, 2005 — The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College won the national collegiate chess championship over the weekend at the 2005 K-12/Collegiate Chess Championship in Houston.

* UTB-TSC finished first among the top five schools with 16½ points — ahead of the University of Texas at Dallas and Texas A&M University, which each scored 11 points. The University of Houston had 6½ points and San Jacinto College rounded out the top five with two points.

UT Dallas is generally considered the team to beat in college chess, said Russell Harwood, UTB-TSC assistant chess coach.

“Once I saw the list of players (Dallas) was sending to the tournament, I felt pretty good about our chances,” Harwood said. “Our team is very good. This is a national tournament and they won.”

The competition took place Friday, Saturday and Sunday in the George Brown Convention Center in Houston. More than 1,600 players competed, including 30 in the collegiate level.

Brownsville students have earned a reputation in recent years as top chess players, with students transferring from out of the area to participate in area programs. This semester, Ukrainian grandmaster Timur Gareev joined UTB-TSC team, and he came away from the tournament undefeated as the national champion.

Three other UTB-TSC players made it into the top 10 individually, Alejandro Nieto earned fourth, Erick Vallarino earned fifth and Luis Roy Gomez placed eighth.

Several other Brownsville teams did well at the tournament.

“Paredes Elementary won the kindergarten division and second place for fourth grade,” Harwood said. “Vela (Middle School) was second place in eighth grade.”

Top 5

1. UTB-TSC 16.5 points
2. UT-Dallas 11 points
3. Texas A&M University 11 points
4. University of Houston 6.5 points
5. San Jacinto College 2 points

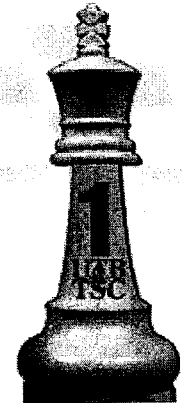


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