

# Turning the Big 3-0 Was Totally Brutal at the U.S. Amateur Team East

**O**y by Al Lawrence  
ver the telephone from St. Louis, my brother Leo was having a hard time with what would take place at the U.S. Amateur Team East Chess Championship. "Team chess," he said, "wouldn't that be like four-man diamond cutting?" After a few forced chuckles, I said "No, it's more like having four brothers backslapping each other up in a schoolyard scrap." From our old days on South Chicago's playgrounds — in an era when fights were barehanded and forgotten as soon as the shiner faded — he understood the point.

As tournament chessplayers, we're normally lone operators. In more jet-age terms, we sit in a room full of would-be top guns whose weekend happiness is a net-sum war game. For every ace exhilarated to see black smoke pouring out of his counterpart's engines, there's a wounded pilot spinning miserably down in flames. Strangers, friends, roommates — all morph into hoped-for airplane silhouettes painted below the cockpit glass, pluses on the wall chart.

Team chess is the exception and the relief. Suddenly I have a parachute. My loss is canceled out by your win. I can root for someone other than myself. It feels very, very good.

Add to that the fun of competitions for best teams, best board results, best team names, and even best costumes. Then add more prizes, in fact, dozens and dozens of prizes for almost any excuse. Listen to 25-year Team impresario Steve Doyle at the podium in front of the nearly 1,000 participants before a round:

*"Anyone wearing green socks wins a book. Who's got a subway token? Come up, get your prize. Who's carrying a book on politics, a Heuer clock? — show them and get your prize." On and on he goes, a reverse-auctioneer who exhorts people not to give but receive.*

Then add even more: old friends, new friends, serious competition and top

grandmasters — and finally you've got the 30th Anniversary of the U.S. Amateur Team East. Organized by legendary USCF president and current FIDE VP Doyle, it took place February 19-21 in Parsippany, New Jersey. Sponsored by USCF and the New Jersey State Chess Federation, the 2000 USATE brought together 219 teams and nearly a thousand players for six rounds of fun-and-blood chess despite the worst East Coast blizzard of the year and the lack of a single red cent in the prize fund. You bring your "brothers" and "sisters" to play in the Team for the honor. Well, okay, the trophies are magnificent, numerous and memorable, like everything else at the event.

## SIBLING STRATEGY

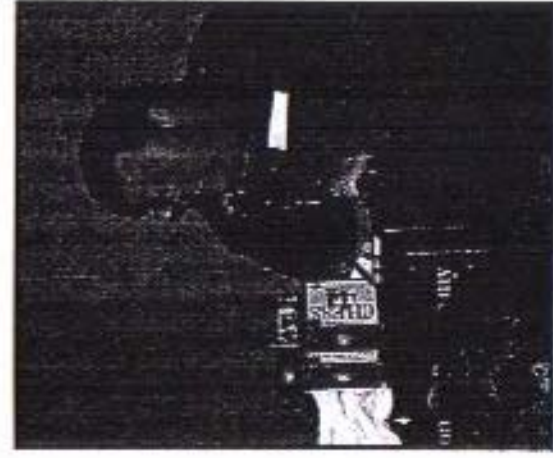
As in all top-level team sports, the strategy begins months before the first move, with team selection. Teams must play in rating order and are restricted to an average rating of below 2200. The top 13 teams were all rated 2180 or above. (The USATE is friendly, not easy!) *Total Brutality*, top-rated with an average of 2198.5, lived up to its seeding and reaffirmed the efficacy of a three-master team. It finished with  $\frac{3}{2}$  out of a possible six points to take first place on tiebreaks over second-place *CX Fishers*, led by IM Ron Burnett, and third-place *Chess in Schools 2K*, led by popular IM Ben Finegold.

In board order, the 30th Anniversary champs *Total Brutality* are IM Igor Shilperman, IM Saudin Robovic — who won top Board 2 honors with a perfect 6-0 — NM Mark Kurtzman, and Phillip Sorge, a 1617 player who upset an expert.

If you missed the 30th USATE, you missed simply the most fun people can have at chess. The good news: there will be many more years of the original Team, and we can only hope that Steve Doyle will help do at least another 25 of them. So you'll have the opportunity to root for someone other than yourself and still play chess. You'll get your chance to see what it feels like to have four siblings on your side.

## MR. TEAM, THE COLONEL, AND STEVE

Nowadays USCF offers four national amateur team events — the East, Midwest, South, and West — after which there's a cyberchess playoff for overall



Stephen Doyle at the microphone.

team champ. But the granddaddy of them all and the biggest by far was begun 30 years ago in a deal struck by Mr. Team, Denis Barry, with then-USCF Executive Director Colonel Ed Edmondson.

Edmondson wasn't easy to convince, but finally Barry, ever persuasive and ever the savvy organizer, got to roll out the boards. For three decades, Barry nurtured his brainchild almost entirely in New Jersey, where it now remains as the Presidents' Day Weekend chess equivalent of a "Swifty" Lazar Hollywood Oscar party. It's the place to be. For 25 of the 30 years, Steve Doyle, organizer of more national tournaments than anyone else in history, has been a key to the Team's success, and in charge as chief organizer, after Denis Barry and Glenn Petersen retired.

## UT-DALLAS CHESS SCHOLARS

UT at Dallas took the Best College Award. They came backed by one of the strongest chess scholarship programs in the U.S., supported from the top by UTD President Frank Jenifer, himself a chess-player. The University gives competition awards to the winner of the Denker Tournament of High School Champions, to this year's winner of the sixth-grade open section of the National Elementary in Dallas, to the winner of the PanAm Scholastics, to the top Texas high school player, and in other events both region-

Please turn to page 38

The U.S. Amateur Team East Championship is one of over 25 national title events co-sponsored by the USCF and participating affiliates.

Al Lawrence, president of Danfoss Corp., is the author of eight books on a variety of subjects. His recurring nightmare re-enacts the 1982 term round Board 1 USATE showdown, when he snore/bleats/roars. Suffering the worst 5-0, four narrowly to four players actually calling themselves "Missband" in the Missband. He one, he says, should have to carry around that match number.



**Top College Team (and a top finisher overall) University of Texas at Dallas, (seated l. to r.) Taras Odushkin, Andrey Dokuchayev, Yuri Shulman, Andrew Wantley (standing) UTB Professor Tim Redman.**

(Continued from page 36)

al, state, and national). UTD also offers academic excellence scholarships that take chess skill into account. (For information write to the Associate Director of the Chess Program, Dr. Alexey Root, at aroot@utdallas.edu.) It's no accident that Dr. Tim Redman, former USCF president, current USCF Executive Board Member, and a leading scholar on the American poet Ezra Pound, is a professor at UTD.

## THE NAME GAME

In the landmark made-for-TV miniseries *Roots*, millions of Americans viewed the ritual of a father, after days of heart-searching consideration, hold up his infant to the star-filled sky and ceremoniously bestow his man child with the carefully chosen name Kunte Kinte. This scene closely parallels the solemnity — well, at least the importance — involved in naming a chess team. At the USATE, the best team names are announced to the players, and applause decides. We all have our bygone favorites, but here's a short list garnered from polling the 30th Anniversary players. Over the years, these names have made many a chess-player laugh at the inside joke. After so many years, some now also remind us of other epochs in our lives.

- ◆ Future Schach
- ◆ My Flag Has Fallen and I Can't Get Up
- ◆ I Saw Elvis
- ◆ Little Schach of Horror
- ◆ Buenos NoChess
- ◆ Golts Tamasch Sachlam
- ◆ Tals from the Crypt
- ◆ Searching for Bobbitt's Slicer
- ◆ Benoni Saemtech on Play
- ◆ You Rook Marvibus
- ◆ Rook Shields
- ◆ EverRoi
- ◆ McWay/Rovos the Round Ashom
- ◆ One Knight in Bing Clock

## A HISTORICAL CROSSSTABLE OF THE U.S. CHESS FEDERATION



| Year | U.S. Open Business Meeting  | President (1)     | Executive Officer (2) | Membership (3) | Fund Balance (4) |
|------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------|------------------|
|      |                             | George Sturis     | Name                  | 1,000 (approx) | not avail.       |
| 1940 | Dallas, Texas               |                   |                       |                |                  |
| 1941 | St. Louis, Missouri         |                   |                       |                | \$ 1,371         |
| 1942 | Dallas, Texas               |                   |                       |                | \$ 3,131         |
| 1943 | Syracuse, New York          |                   |                       |                | \$ 3,941         |
| 1944 | Boston, Massachusetts       |                   |                       |                | \$ 4,681         |
| 1945 | Portland, Illinois          | Elmer Wayner      |                       |                | \$ 3,758         |
| 1946 | Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania    |                   |                       |                | \$ 3,558         |
| 1947 | Carroll Creek, Texas        |                   |                       |                | \$ 3,176         |
| 1948 | Baltimore, Maryland         |                   |                       |                | \$ 2,852         |
| 1949 | Orcutt, Nebraska            |                   |                       |                | \$ 2,107         |
| 1950 | Detroit, Michigan           | Paul Giers        |                       |                | \$ 1,255         |
| 1951 | Fort Worth, Texas           | Harold Phillips   |                       |                | \$ 638           |
| 1952 | Tampa, Florida              |                   | Kathleen Hutchins     | 1,127          |                  |
| 1953 | Minneapolis, Minnesota      |                   |                       | 2,486          |                  |
| 1954 | New Orleans, Louisiana      |                   |                       | 2,354          |                  |
| 1955 | Long Beach, California      | Frank Gares       |                       | 2,416          |                  |
| 1956 | Oklaoma City, Oklahoma      |                   |                       | 2,220          |                  |
| 1957 | Cleveland, Ohio             |                   |                       | 2,100          |                  |
| 1958 | Redwood, Minnesota          | Jerry Sparr       |                       | 2,568          |                  |
| 1959 | Omaha, Nebraska             |                   |                       | 3,520          |                  |
| 1960 | St. Louis, Missouri         |                   | Frank Brady           | 4,579          | \$ 1,158         |
| 1961 | San Francisco, California   | Ed Carter         |                       | 5,563          | \$ 1,740         |
| 1962 | San Antonio, Texas          |                   | Joseph Reinhardt      | 6,120          | \$ 6,313         |
| 1963 | Chicago, Illinois           |                   |                       | 7,854          | \$ 9,660         |
| 1964 | Boston, Massachusetts       | Ed Emswiler       |                       | 8,383          | \$ 12,546        |
| 1965 | San Juan, Puerto Rico       |                   |                       | 8,625          | \$ 15,252        |
| 1966 | Seattle, Washington         |                   |                       | 9,466          | \$ 11,563        |
| 1967 | Atlanta, Georgia            | Marshall Richard  |                       | 9,943          | \$ 25,552        |
| 1968 | Sioux Falls, South Dakota   |                   |                       | 11,202         | \$ 25,653        |
| 1969 | Boston, Massachusetts       | Long Dubock       |                       | 13,483         | \$ 40,691        |
| 1970 | San Francisco, California   |                   |                       | 22,623         | \$ 47,465        |
| 1971 | Vancouver, British Columbia |                   |                       | 26,536         | \$ 46,742        |
| 1972 | Atlantic City, New Jersey   |                   |                       | 30,844         | \$ 83,120        |
| 1973 | Chicago, Illinois           | Frank Staff       |                       | 59,250         | \$356,931        |
| 1974 | New York, New York          |                   |                       | 59,779         | \$31,692         |
| 1975 | Lincoln, Nebraska           |                   |                       | 51,842         | \$283,945        |
| 1976 | Farmington, Ohio            | George Goltzarski |                       | 49,179         | \$231,088        |
| 1977 | Columbus, Ohio              |                   | North Morrison        | 46,179         | \$150,354        |
| 1978 | Phoenix, Arizona            |                   |                       | 48,837         | \$273,746        |
| 1979 | Chicago, Illinois           | Gary Sauting      |                       | 48,707         | \$238,106        |
| 1980 | Atlanta, Georgia            |                   |                       | 47,215         | \$ 75,051(1)     |
| 1981 | Palo Alto, California       |                   |                       | 49,638         | \$154,584        |
| 1982 | St. Paul, Minnesota         | Tim Reiman        |                       | 51,925         | \$335,594(1)     |
| 1983 | Pasadena, California        |                   |                       | 52,576         | \$316,169        |
| 1984 | Fort Worth, Texas           |                   |                       | 52,576         | \$432,594        |
| 1985 | Fort Lauderdale, Florida    | E. Steven Doyle   |                       | 54,559         | \$315,701        |
| 1986 | Somerset, New Jersey        |                   |                       | 55,291         | \$128,531        |
| 1987 | Portland, Oregon            |                   |                       | 55,344         | \$ 1,198         |
| 1988 | Boston, Massachusetts       | Edward Weston     |                       | 52,354         | \$ 72,621        |
| 1989 | Chicago, Illinois           |                   | Al Lawrence           | 51,595         | \$ 8,933         |
| 1990 | Jacksonville, Florida       |                   |                       | 52,898         | \$127,371(1)     |
| 1991 | Los Angeles, California     | Abraham Chagy     |                       | 57,617         | \$ 59,571        |
| 1992 | Dearborn, Michigan          |                   |                       | 61,279         | \$102,001        |
| 1993 | Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania    |                   |                       | 68,746         | \$12,414         |
| 1994 | Chicago, Illinois           | Doris Barry       |                       | 73,485         | \$ 83,233        |
| 1995 | Concord, California         |                   |                       | 81,458         | \$133,671        |
| 1996 | Alexandria, Virginia        |                   | George Filizone       | 81,282         | \$128,003        |
| 1997 | Oakland, Florida            | Dorale Schultz    | Michael Orsini        | 83,291         | \$ 86,702(1)     |
| 1998 | Kona, Hawaii                |                   |                       | 84,329         | \$ 93,233        |
| 1999 | Rego, Nevada                | Bob Smith         |                       | 84,150         | \$130,291        |

1. A change of presidents occurs immediately after a business meeting. For example, Mark Dugg succeeded Harold Winston in August of 1950, six months after the 1950 meeting.
2. Mr. Ed Emswiler was named executive director in 1967; this position was called business manager.
3. Membership totals are given as of June 30 of each year. Totals exclude Junior Tournament Players and tournament members.
4. Figures enclosed in parentheses are deficits.
5. George Caronigan and Edward Wayner each served briefly between Morrison and Duffie.
6. The 1980 fund balance reflects an accounting change; namely, the revaluing of assets to cover the long-term liability to life and sustaining members.
7. The 1982 fund balance reflects a further accounting change, a write-off of \$432,214 in a "postoffice" asset that had been created to balance the liability owed life members.
8. The 1990 fund balance reflects the addition of \$370,000 to the Life Members assets and \$516,210 to the liability, as a result of a reappraisal.
9. Al Lawrence was Executive Director and George Filizone was Acting Executive Director for the first half of the fiscal year. Note that accounts of the change in the fiscal year, this 1997 figure is from May 31, and all other figures are from June 30.