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News Release

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UMBC Edges Rival U. T. Dallas In 'Final Four' of College Chess

Miami Dade Finishes Third, Duke Fourth in Tournament Held in Dallas

DALLAS, Texas (April 2, 2006) — The University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) retained the title of "best team in U.S. intercollegiate chess" with a narrow win over its archrival, The University of Texas at Dallas (UTD), and two other challengers this weekend at the "Final Four" of Chess tournament in Dallas.

Coming into Sunday's final round, UTD needed a win, 2 ½ to 1 ½, against UMBC to capture the championship. UMBC, on the other hand, only needed to split the match, 2 to 2, with UTD to win the title. In the final seconds of the last game, with UTD ahead 2 to 1, UMBC's Bruci Lopez, in a difficult position, pulled out a win against UTD's Dmitri Shneider, ensuring victory for the Maryland team.

UMBC bested UTD, 9 points to 8, to take home the President's Cup, a trophy that has come to be emblematic of college chess supremacy. Miami Dade College finished third with 5 points and Duke University was fourth with 2 points at the event, held April 1-2 at the Marriott Quorum Hotel.

The teams earned the right to compete in this year's Final Four competition by finishing among the top four U.S. teams in December at the 2005 Pan American Intercollegiate Team Chess Championship, the most prestigious college chess competition held each year in the Western Hemisphere. UMBC won that tournament by the narrowest of margins, with 5 ½ points to UTD's 5. UTD had won the Pan-Am in both 2004 and 2003 and had tied for first — with UMBC — in both 2001 and 2000.

No team other than UTD and UMBC ever has won the Final Four of Chess in the six-year history of the tournament. UTD won the event the first two years, but UMBC has won the last four years in a row.

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"It should come as no surprise that the U.S. college chess title again came down to a battle between UTD and UMBC," said Jim Stallings, UTD's associate chess director. "We congratulate UMBC on a hard-fought victory and look forward to renewing our rivalry next season."

Dr. Tim Redman, a professor of literary studies at UTD and founder and director of the UTD chess program, praised the showing of the Miami Dade team, noting that "Miami Dade has joined the ranks of the nation's best college chess programs with a string of impressive accomplishments in recent years, including being named Chess College of the Year in 2004 by the U.S. Chess Federation."

UTD coach Rade Milovanovic singled out the play of UTD freshman Davorin Kuljasevic, who had a perfect performance over the past two days – three wins, with no losses and no draws.

"Davorin was the standout among all players in the tournament," Milovanovic said. "Had there been a most valuable player award, he would have won it hands down. He's also an MVP in the classroom, where he earned a 4.0 grade point average during the fall semester."

UTD was the number one seed in this year's Final Four. However, with two grandmasters in its lineup, UMBC was seen as a formidable competitor.

The UTD team was represented at the Final Four by two grandmasters — senior computer science major Magesh Chandran Panchanathan and freshman Alejandro Ramirez — and International Masters Shneider, a senior finance major, and Marko Zivanic, a sophomore computer science major. Sophomore Drasko Boskovic and Kuljasevic, both International Masters and both business administration majors, served as alternates.

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 nearly 14,500 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.