by Seilby Anderson

The University of Maryland, Baltimore County won its second Pan American Intercollegiate team title in three years, besting twelve other colleges that competed, Dec. 26-29 in Dallas, Texas. With one of the strongest teams ever assembled for the event, the UMBC A-team scored a resounding 6-0 victory, surpassing its earlier championship result in 1996. The University of Pennsylvania placed clear second with 4½. Four teams tied for 3rd-6th: in tiebreak order, they were Harvard University, the University of Chicago, Stanford University, and Worcester Polytechnic Institute, all with four points.

This year’s UMBC A-team had former World Junior Champion GM Tal Shaked (2556) on first board, IM Florin Felecan (2580) on second, IM Eugene Perelshteyn (2496) on third, and William Morrison (2364) and Erez Klein (2391) taking turns on fourth. With a 2477 average rating, they were 100 points above their nearest “powerhouse” rival from the University of Toronto. Having a Russian trainer doesn’t hurt either: Igor Epshstejn from Belarus, who once coached at the National Olympic Reserve School in Minsk, has been UMBC’s coach since 1994.

**BOARD PRIZES**

Board prizes went to Jacob Chudnovsky (Board 1 for Harvard, with six points), Peter Minear (Board 2, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, five points), Eugene Perelshteyn (Board 3, UMBC, six points) and Kit-Sun Ng (Board 4, University of Toronto “B”, five points).

Twenty-one college teams competed in the event, sponsored by the University of Texas at Dallas, the Dallas Chess Club, and the United States Chess Federation. A total of 92 players represented 13 schools from as far as Toronto, Canada and Lima, Peru.

In addition to the collegiate team event, there was an open tournament with 48 players and a scholastic with 64 players. The Pan American Open ended in a three-way tie, with Bosnian IM Rade Milovanovic, WIM Alexey Root, and expert Rudy Tia all scoring 5½. Milovanovic, who moved to Dallas last August, lost in Round 2 to Texas high school co-champion Justin Shih.

The Pan American Scholastic was won by Jonathan Walsh (1791) with 5½ out of 6. A high school sophomore in Dallas, Walsh scored a surprise win in the last round over heavily favored Andrew Whatley (2259) from Alabama. Whatley scored 5-1 to finish second on tiebreaks over Andrei Dokoutchaev (2170) of Missouri and Kris Littlejohn (1566) of Dallas.

**SCHOLARSHIPS**

All four players were awarded full scholarships (assuming they meet entrance requirements) at the University of Texas at Dallas. Three cheers for UTD undergraduate Dean Michael Coleman, who added three scholarships to the prize fund midway through the tournament.

USCF’s College Chess Committee chair (and former USCF president) has been an effective advocate for chess at UTD, where he teaches in the English department. UT-Dallas is a low-profile but high-caliber honors school in the UT system. All four of the top players were awarded full scholarships at the University of Texas at Dallas. Three cheers for UTD Undergraduate Dean Michael Coleman, who added three scholarships to the prize fund midway through the tournament.

Unexpectedly absent from the Intercollegiate competition was last year’s Pan Am champion, Borough of Manhattan Community College. The organizers were disappointed by the turnout, down by five teams from the 1997 event in Kentucky.

During the Fischer boom years of the 1970s, a typical Pan Am would have had anywhere from 50 to 100 teams. In the last decade a 30 to 40 team turnout has been the norm, at least when the event was in driving distance of East Coast schools. Excuses, excuses! The lack of representation from any Texas college besides UT-Dallas is at odds with the phenomenal participation in K-12 scholastic chess here. College chess development at the state level clearly offers a big challenge.

The chief tournament director was Gary Gaiffe, who had to pair teams by hand after learning his pairing program, Swiss-Sys version 2.04, had trouble with fixed roster teams plus alternates. (Swiss-Sys designer Thad Suits has since addressed the problem, and a fix can be downloaded at his website. TDs with version 2.06 need not worry.) The assistant TDs were George C. John, Manuel Espino, and Celia von Mering.

The co-organizers were Luis Salinas of the Dallas Chess Club and UTD sophomore Katie Stone, a natural promoter who added a nice touch with flowers on the stage by the top boards. News coverage was excellent, with three local TV stations and two papers running features. The playing site at the Westin Park Central Hotel in Dallas was first-rate.

At a meeting of the USCF College Chess Committee on Dec. 28, a bid on the 1999 Pan Am by the University of Toronto was approved. The event will be held Dec. 26-29, and FIDE rules will be used.

**Pan American Scholastic**

The Pan American Scholastic drew 64 players, including some prominent out-of-state high school players vying for scholarships. The surprise winner was seventh-ranked Jonathan Walsh (1791), a sophomore at St. Mark’s School in Dallas. In the last round Walsh, 15, defeated top-ranked Andrew Whatley (2259) of Pike Road, Alabama to finish in clear first with 5½ points out of six. Whatley placed second on tiebreaks over Andrei Dokoutchaev (2170) of Joplin, Missouri and Kris Littlejohn (1566) of Dallas, each scoring 5-1.

The top scholastic team was Porter High School of Brownsville, Texas. Team members Manuel Gonzalez (4½ points), Victor Flores (3½), Daniel Lopez (3½) and Johnny Urbano (3) racked up a 14½ point score, well ahead of local teams from Berkner High School (second on tiebreaks) and St. Mark’s School (a power dual — Jonathan Walsh and Matt Bradford), both of which scored 10 points. For the second year running, this
played by GM Joel Benjamin, gets its name from the way Black’s king bishop snakes its way around to the queenside. White has achieved some notable successes here with the full tilt approach 10.

d6, when 10. ... Ba5 11. 0-0 Nc6 12. Nfd5 Re1 13. Kg5; resembles Knaak-Hector with the moves 7. ... a6 8. a4 thrown in.

10. 0-0 d6 11. Qc2 Nb7 12. Ne4


26. Qf7+ Ke6 27. Nh5 Nh5 28. Qh5 c4+ 29. Kh2 Bd4 30. Rac1 Rh8 31. f4+ Kf6 32. Qg7 exf4?

The losing move. Black stands a little better after 32. ... Be3! 33. bxc4 Qxg5 (but not 33. ... Bxc1 34. Qxe5! with a mating net) 34. ... Qf5+ Bxh5 (and not 34. ... Kf7?? 35. Ra1+ Ba6 36. Rxa6+ Kxa6 37. Ra1 mate) 33. b5g5 Bd7, since White’s kingside pawns do not pose much of a threat.

33. Qxf4 Bc5 34. bxc5 Qxd6

 Worse is 34. ... Bxd6 35. c5+ Bxc5 36. Qxb8+ with a forced mate. Black could try to make a stand with 34. ... Bb7, but the best he could hope for is an uphill ending with bishop against three pawns.

35. Qxd6+ Bxd6 36. c5+

 White recovers his material deficit with interest. The game score soon runs out, but White is clearly on top.

36. ... Bxc5 37. Re6+ Ka5 38. Bxc5 Re8 39. Bf3 Bh7 40. Bg4, and White soon won.

UT-Dallas star Noureddine Ziane was proud of this miniature, which features a two-rook sacrifice.

**TROMPOWSKY ATTACK**

A45

1. d4 Nf6 2. Bg5 Ne4 3. Bxf6 4. f3 Qxb6 5. Bxe4 e5?

Sharper than 5. ... c5 6. e3 Bh6 7. Kf2 exd4 8. exd4 e5 9. Nf3 because now Black gets his queen out before White can play Ng1-f3.

6. e3


6. ... Qg5 7. Kf2 Bh6 8. Qe1 exd4 9. exd4 Qc1 10. Nc3!?


10. ... Qxb2?


11. Bb3 Bd7 12. Qxd2 Qxa1

13. Ne3! Qxb1 14. Nf5 d6?

After this White has a forced mate. Black can keep the game alive with 14. ... h3! 15. g6h3 Ne6 16. Nxe7+ Kd8 17. Nxa8 Rg8 18. Bf1, with an unclear position.

15. Qg5 Ne6 16. Bh5 Kb8 17. Qh6 Ke8 18. Qf6, Black resigns.

In Round four UMCB faced its only rival left with a perfect score, the University of Chicago (2128 average), and blew them away in a 4-0 sweep.

In Round five UMCB looked across an almost 300-point rating chasm as they played the 14th ranked NYU team. To be sure, the unrated NYU anchor Marcos Capistran had a 4-0 score, including a win over the U of Toronto’s Chris Chu (2281). But reality set in, beginning on Board 3, where Dimitry Karlin (1578) fell into a trap line in the Dragon Sicilian, losing to Perelshtein in 12 moves. Two more games were won by UMCB in less drastic manner, and on Board 1 GM Shaked conceded a well-fought draw to Dmitry Leykekhman (2206).

In the sixth and final round UMCB dispatched the UT-Dallas A-team without much trouble, winning all its games.
except on top board, where Shaked drew Nourdine Ziane (2319). Team MVP Eugene Perelshteyn came through with his sixth straight win.

SICILIAN DEFENSE
[D7]
Dragon Variation
W: FM Eugene Perelshteyn
B: Shivkumar Shriprakash

Pan Am Intercollegiate, 1998

Nf6 5. Nc3 g6 6. f4

The Levenfish variation, which Perelshteyn played three times in this event, his second round opponent, Nicolas Garcia from Catholic University of Peru, played the conventional 6 ... Nc6 7. Nxc6
bxc6 8. e5 Nf7 9. exf6 exf6 10. Bf4 b7 11. Qd2 Nf6 12. 0-0-0 Bg5 (better is 12 ... Be6) 13. Bb5 b6 14. Qxd3 Bb7 15. Qc1 e5 16. h3 Nh7 17. f4. Black managed to trade queens but fell into a mating net from White's rooks.

6. ... Bg7 7. e5 dx e5 8. fxe5 Nd7

A trap which continues to catch the unwary is 8 ... Ng4 9. Bb5+ K8 10. Ne6+. In Round 5, Dimitri Karlin of NYU went down in short order with 8 ... Nd5 9. Bb5+ K8 10. 0-0 11. Qf3 Qc7 12. Bf3.

Black resigns.

9. e6 Ne5 10. exf7+?

The main move has been 10. Bb5-, when Black is supposed to equalize with 10 ... Ne6 11. exf7- K8.

10. ... Kxf7 11. Be2 Nbc6 12. 0-0 Bb6
16. Kh1?

White is avoiding the exchange of queens that would follow 16. Qe3 Qb6 or 16. Ne4 Qd4- 17. Qe3.

16. ... Qb6?

It is essential to stop White's next move by playing 16 ... Bf5, answering 17. Rd1 with 17 ... Qa5. Perhaps "Shiv" was concerned about 17. Qe3 Qb6 18. Qg3, but 18. ... Nh4 leaves Black with an easy game.

17. Ne4 Be6 18. Be3

Black is being utterly dominated on his weak squares — first c5, and then e5 and e6.

18. ... Qc7 19. Ne5 Bf7 20. Bf4

This repeated diagonal switching is most irritating to Black's queen!

20. ... Qb6 21. Qc3 Ne4 22. Ne6 Bxe6
23. Qxe6 Na5 24. Be3

This final move of the restless dark-square bishop is unanswerable.

24. ... Qb7 25. Ba6! Black resigns.

My favorite pairing, Proudfoot-Shir from Round 6, lived up to its billing.

KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE
[F90]
W: Nick Proudfoot (2190)
B: David Eichel (2385)

Pan Am Intercollegiate, 1998

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 c5 3. d3 d6 4. Ne3 g6 5. e4 Bg7 6. h3 0-0 7. Nf3 e6 8. Bc2

Steering for quiet waters. 8. Bc3 exd5

9. cxd5 b5 is a topical line of the Benoni.

8. ... exd5 9. exd5 Re8 10. Bf4 a6

Probably best is 10 ... Ne4, a common idea in such positions to relieve Black's piece clutter.

11. d0-0 Nh5 12. Bg5 Qh6 13. Qd2 Nd7
14. Rae1 Nb8 15. Bd3 Bb7 16. g4 Rxe1

This falls into a nice trap. Better is 20 ... Qxb2 21. gxf5 b5, with counterplay.

21. Re7! gxh7 22. Qf7- Kh8 23. Bb6,

Observations of a First-time Organizer

by Katie Stone

As a first-time organizer, I guess I should have been nervous about taking on such a large task as organizing the 1998 Pan American Championships. In fact, I'm Redman, my supervisor, told me I should be. But for some reason I wasn't. I had the help of Luis Salinas, so I guess that is what calmed me, along with the confidence that I personally had in myself. I had also attended the 1997 Pan American event in Kentucky, so this helped in my gauging what needed to be done in order to host a successful event.

I think we had it pretty easy compared to other organizers. Back in October of 1997, we literally had hotels bidding for this event, so finding a location was not a problem. And any printing we needed was done compliments of Larry Grubbs at Forest Printing in Dallas. Mr. Grubbs' son Steven is a part of our chess program at UT Dallas. I can't tell you how thankful I am and what a relief it was to not have to worry about printing costs. Mr. Grubbs even printed beautiful stationery, which we used all year long, with the UTD and Dallas Chess Club logos for the Pan American Tournament.

I was very pleased with the media turnout. With the help of the UTD News and Publications department, we were able to have Channels 4 (FOX), 5 (NBC), and 8 (ABC) shoot footage of the event that appeared on that week's news. Each channel ran the spot on several of their news shows; so we had 10 (!) TV spots that weekend, plus one radio spot on WBAP-AM's show "AM Drive." We also had three articles appear in the Dallas Morning News and one in the Plano Star Courier. It seems that the Dallas media are very supportive of chess, as articles often appear about local scholastic events too.

Of course, the participation of a former world junior champion, GM Tal Shaked, didn't hurt in getting the media's attention! I was pleasantly surprised to learn what a humble and considerate young man GM Shaked is.

I was actually very surprised during this year's awards ceremony when UTD Dean of Undergraduate Studies Mike Coleman made a quick and unpublicized decision to give out four scholarships to UT Dallas to the winners of the scholastic section. As director of recruiting for UTD's chess program, I was very pleased to learn that two of the recipients are masters.

I am very proud of this year's Pan American in Dallas, but I am also glad that it is over! It took more than a year of work to ensure the success that we had. So while organizing this year's event was a wonderful experience, I think it will be some time before I think about organizing another national event. I think everyone who attended had a great time and thought it was very well organized. I look forward to next year's event in Toronto, Ontario. Hopefully though, the Pan American can come back to Texas in the coming years!