

**I.B.C.A. -**

**(1958)**

**(2000)**

# **OUR HISTORY**

**BY: HANS-GERD SCHAEFER**

## PROLOGUE TO CHESS BOOK

This sport has signified an important step on the road to achieving the normalisation and social acceptance of the blind in this century. The advances made in this field have proved decisive, particularly on the European continent, for the integral development of these persons. Unfortunately, however, the same cannot be said of most of the rest of the world where the situation is rather more dramatic.

While sport has been a significant driving force behind the social acceptance of visual impairment, ever since the turn of the century, chess for the blind has established the guidelines for this normalisation and has led to the recognition of an intellectual potential which, obviously, is no different from that of any other person, disabled or not. The characteristic that distinguishes human beings from all other living creatures is their intelligence. Chess demonstrates that blindness has no influence on the skill and capability of a chess player.

In competition, blind chess players provide evidence of the quintessence of the most exclusive values human beings possess: placing their intelligence at the service of a strategy, with a pre-determined goal and with a capacity comparable to that required, albeit at a lesser degree, in order to be able to cope with any social or work situation that may arise in their immediate surroundings.

In short, it could be said that chess is a powerful weapon in the struggle for integration, given that it complements physical and mental effort at the highest level and, as a result, provides us with a more complete, valid view of our disability. Publications like the one now before us therefore constitute a highly useful tool for learning about chess and promoting its practice.

Finally, all that remains for me is to congratulate all the blind chess players who, since 1929, have been the true protagonists of the important progression of this sport. My admiration goes out to I.B.C.A., which, ever since 1958, has been promoting and fostering the practice of this incomparable sport throughout the world. This coming year, 2000, it will go on to form part of IBSA, joining this unique sporting movement in its drive to bring out the best in all blind sportsmen and women around the world, no matter what sport they may practice.

My congratulations for all the above and welcome to the International Blind Sports Federation.

Enrique Sanz.  
President of IBSA

## CHAPTER I

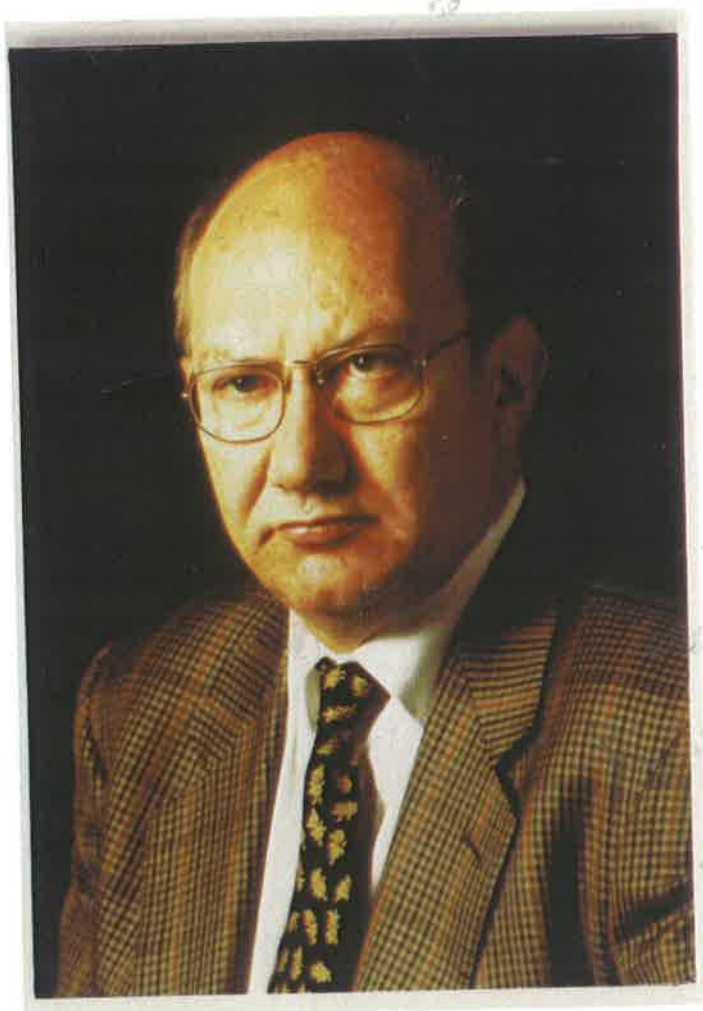
### Introduction iiiiiiiiiiiiiiii

People have a fundamental need to measure their skills and knowledge against those of others - to compare themselves. Surely it can only be the evolution of mankind as a living organism that has brought about such behaviour. The pre-human evolutionary stage in particular has not only favoured but positively promoted this conduct both in the daily struggle for survival and in the process of natural selection that governs the reproduction of the species. Man, the "thinking animal", proved to be such a superior life form that its reproduction greatly exceeded all natural bounds. Consequently, mankind's need to assert itself against other species was lost and the battle for survival could then only be waged against man's equals i.e. members of the same species. Increasingly, it was no longer other species but fellow men, who began to set the limits for mankind that influenced the personal development of humans as well as their daily hunt for food. For in order to survive as a species, mankind was forced to find rules and standards of behaviour for living together, which were tailored to the population density that had been reached at the time. In some parts of the world it must be many thousand or perhaps even several hundred thousand years ago when it became impossible for every "pack of humans", or extended family group to claim their own territory. Initially, these communities sprang up because of the requirement to hunt as a group and the equally communal need to protect the vulnerable women and children during rest periods. Communal living substantially improved the conditions for reproduction and the resulting increase in numbers generated a momentum, which led to the hunt for meat being replaced with the domestication of animals and the gathering of fruits and grains being superseded by agriculture. The growing population density necessitated an extension of the rules and standards of behaviour for living together and as a result hamlets, villages, towns and national communities were formed. On the one hand, as the communities grew they became interspersed with specialised manual expertise and other skills, but on the other hand, each individual retained the instincts that had made mankind such a successful species. The inclination or even struggle to be the best is present in man, every man, from birth. He wants to be superior to others of his species, even if it is only in certain ways. Solely in this respect, social equality actually preserves some of mankind's unpleasant characteristics. Man, due to his very nature, is always fighting for individuality. It is for this reason that games are known in all cultures. Games keep man's competitive spirit constrained within civilised boundaries and virtually ritualise it. Furthermore, there are suitable types of these ritualised competitions for practically all age groups from infants upwards. Also, the rules universally change according to age and increasing intellectual abilities as well as the degree of physical development. Each individual has the opportunity to discover and develop his own abilities in order to make his mark.

Nowadays this fundamental human need is met by organised sports, in which the spectator serves a peculiar twofold purpose. Firstly, he fulfils the active sportsman's need to be recognised and wondered at on account of what he can do. Secondly, by adopting the identity of the community (village, town, nation or whatever), he satisfies the inherently human needs and instincts that he was born with.

For nearly three thousand million years there has been life on our planet. The forms it has taken have become more and more involved and complex. Over the course of time, one or other life form has developed to perfection each one of the skills supported by the various environments. Every ecological niche has been filled. Man developed only his intellect. In every other discipline -





**ENRIQUE SANZ, I.B.S.A. PRESIDENT**

running, jumping, climbing or swimming - everyone can name dozens of species, or even "specialists", whose level of skill demonstrates that the abilities and chances given to man are so hopelessly inferior that no sportsman would ever even think of wanting to compete with them. Who would race against a cheetah? Who, in all seriousness, could compare his swimming abilities to those of a dolphin? Who believes he can climb through the jungle like a gibbon? In proportion to the size of his body, the take-off power of a human competitive sportsman is practically non-existent when you consider the same ratio in a flea. And which boxer, wrestler or all-in wrestler, however well trained, could take on an orang-utan? We are superior to all other creations of nature merely on account of our intellectual abilities. For every non-intellectual type of sport there can only be one single justification: In corpore sano mens sana. (A healthy mind in a healthy body.)

ffffffffffffffffffffff

## CHAPTER II

### The Basic Requirements ii

For mankind, the definition of sporting achievement is a somewhat difficult matter, as it is usually associated with some sort of physical movement or agility for which the species simply has not been designed. Instead, we have been given the intelligence to enhance our limited physical prowess in the way that we need to, or perhaps only wish to, by using specialised techniques and equipment.

It is precisely this use of our natural intelligence, which makes us vastly superior to all other life forms. And we certainly do use our abilities. The pleasure that children get out of learning is continually fascinating; they soak up knowledge like a sponge soaks up water. There are countless other comparisons which could be made in this area, but generally speaking they are not connected with sport. And why not? Accumulating knowledge, making deductions and drawing conclusions are after all profoundly human activities, just as specialised physical abilities are assigned to particular species of animals.

If physical exercise is to be meaningful, there must be an identifiable goal. When a goal is not set, or is no longer recognised, sport, which is traditionally always associated with meaningful exercise, can only be practised in a very limited way. The aims of a person who was blind at birth or has been robbed of their sight as a result of war, accident or illness, are to seek out other abilities, strengthen their remaining senses and adapt to their own special circumstances. Naturally, the instincts that have evolved in humans over time are also abundant in such people.

In a passive way, we are, to some extent, continually absorbing sound waves and any visual stimuli that lie within our field of vision. The sense of touch, on the other hand, is a faculty, which invariably requires physical activity. Visual defects and hearing impediments can be partially or completely corrected by wearing glasses or using a hearing aid respectively. Yet there is no device whatsoever that can enhance the sense of touch, apart from perhaps extending ones reach by means of a stick. However, only very basic information can be derived using this method. The specific development of the sense of touch is, in the main, dependent on how intensively it is trained and exercised. It will never be possible to make someone who was blind at birth comprehend what colours are and why they have such a huge significance in everyday life. But these are deficiencies, which can only be appreciated by those who have already experienced for themselves what it is like to lose the sense of sight.

A further, more important point relates to the power of the mind. A white stick following the edge of the station platform leaves the body largely unprotected. The blind person envisages that, at least in comparison with an approaching train, the platform can hold no great hazards for them. Keeping things in order in the home as well as in areas of public thoroughfare plays a necessary and important part in the life of a blind or









partially sighted person. To take another example, a mediaeval Gothic cathedral, can only really be grasped, literally "grasped", by touching the individual Gothic or Romanesque elements, found perhaps in the choir stalls, in the decoration around the entrance, on the door, on picture frames or in other adornments. When guided around a building such as this, a blind person can use their keen sense of touch to explore all the features within reach. The rest has to be pictured in the mind of the individual.

Naturally the ability to picture something, both within an enclosed space as well as outside of it, can also be influenced and sometimes even determined by reflected sound waves. Interference from other sounds generated by the civilised world can have fatal consequences for a person's orientation, in which the sense of hearing and, most importantly, familiar sound patterns, play a crucial role. However, it should be stressed that registering everyday surroundings in great detail has not in fact been reduced to the status of a mind sport, despite quite clearly sharing many common features.

General exercise is in no way redundant in the realm of mind sports, but it can be reduced to that which a sport should be: A means of maintaining the body in as fit a state as possible, thereby providing the fundamentally necessary conditions that allow the brain to function properly. Exercise which stretches the body's capabilities is a pre-requisite for mental work and therefore also for this type of competitive challenge.

Since physical self-expression is only available to blind and partially sighted people in a very limited way, if at all, games such as cards, board games, and above all chess, because of the virtually unlimited number of possible combinations, are an extremely important means of self-realisation for them. This word sounds somewhat trite, but there is in fact no more fitting term to convey the intended meaning.

The blind and other disabled people were traditionally positioned on the edge of society until well into the twentieth century. This must surely be the reason why the blind and partially sighted suffered lengthy delays when they first began to turn chess into a game for them. Louis Braille (1809-1852), who lost his eyesight in an accident when he was still a young child of three years old, invented an alphabet for the blind, which was named after him. The Braille alphabet, together with the development of technological aids for the blind, facilitated the integration of the visually handicapped into society and the workplace, albeit in a very restricted way at first. From then on the blind were able to play a role in society and indeed also become active in many areas of sport.

Chess was perfectly suited to blind people! This form of sport immediately attracted interest amongst the visually impaired, as it even allows a blind person to compete against sighted sportsmen in certain ways. After that it was only a question of time before the blind began to organise themselves into chess groups or clubs, in many cases with the schools for the blind providing the initial driving force.

When playing chess, the action is transferred to a level on which the blind and partially sighted can appreciate and

experience it to the full.

Whilst all parts of the body, even the feet, can in fact be used to touch things and receive sensory information, it is primarily the hands and more specifically the fingers, which are the most important when it comes to gathering this information. Moreover, it should be stressed that the majority of tactile sensations are received via the tip of the index finger of one hand i.e. a mere few square millimetres of skin surface. It is precisely for this purpose that at this very point, the skin is equipped with a dense distribution of nerve endings (approximately 35 per square millimetre). A blind child learns to utilise this physical attribute in school and the child learns to read using only this faculty, the sense of touch. The appreciation of the spatial context in which a person finds himself and the direct assessment of the size and scale of things are limited by how far the hand can reach. This is where a keen sensitivity is developed, which a blind or partially sighted person must maintain throughout their life. For this reason it is incomparably more difficult for an adult to adjust to the loss of eyesight than it is for a child. The sensory compensation achieved by people who were blind at birth is by far the most effective for after all the affected person has only ever experienced his surroundings in darkness. Adaptation is certainly also a question of a person's intellectual abilities, the development of which essentially depends on the individual's interests and inclinations.

The extent to which people are able to use other faculties to compensate for ones they have lost is convincingly demonstrated in the case of a keen German chess player who, as a young man, lost not only his sight but also both his hands in an explosion during the Second World War. When he wanted to play chess, a helper noted down his moves. For decades he was one of the best blind chess players in Germany, even though for him the chessboard, the pieces and above all the relationship between them could only ever exist in his mind.

In every single case, a keen interest is an essential pre-requisite for general learning and for the development of compensatory skills. It can always be taken for granted that children either already have such an interest or that it can be awakened in them. Though amongst adults, it is the exception rather than the rule.

However, the ability to play a game, especially chess, is dependent on the availability of an interesting opponent. For the blind and partially sighted, this is not an easy problem to resolve. Thankfully, local chess clubs are in fact always happy to accept blind and partially sighted members, but it was difficult for this group of people to develop a method of playing which would allow them to compete on equal terms with the sighted. This was the reason why the blind and partially sighted tried to make and maintain contacts with one another right from the start. They were continually concerned with devising and perfecting the special equipment that was needed to enable those who do not possess the power of sight to play chess.

After the initial internal tournaments, the blind and partially sighted clubs began to mingle with the greater chess playing

public in order to test the methods they had devised. They engaged in competitions against sighted chess enthusiasts, but it was only after World War II and primarily in the 50's and 60's when there was a decisive upturn in chess for the blind in many countries. It was no wonder that as rapid technological developments brought people closer together, including blind people from different countries, strong contacts were formed between them and the first international correspondence chess matches were arranged. From then on the problems outlined below began to be discussed at an international level.

1. A person who cannot look at his chessboard must be permitted to touch the pieces.
2. A person who touches the pieces must be confident that the pieces will not fall over or inadvertently be moved to another square.
3. The hand that examines the chessboard creates two further problems. Firstly, the sighted player is used to being able to see the board all the time so that he can think about combinations even when it is not his turn to move. However, the hand of the visually handicapped player will conceal the position of the pieces from him. Secondly, the hand might possibly reveal the plans and deliberations of the visually handicapped player to the sighted opponent thereby giving him an advantage.
4. Normal chess clocks were completely unusable for the blind and partially sighted. This was another area where a new solution had to be found, in order to make the chess activities of the blind and partially sighted largely independent of sighted assistance.
5. A method of recording games and presenting the requisite chess literature was needed, but this requirement had already been satisfied by the invention of Braille by the Frenchman, Louis Braille (1809-1852), in the first half of the previous century. It only remained to develop a specialised chess notation that could be used within the context of the Braille medium.

This clearly illustrates that from the beginning blind and partially sighted people were not merely interested in keeping in close contact with one another, but that it was in fact essential for them to exchange experiences and ideas regularly. As the number of blind chess players increased, the need for Braille chess literature also grew in order for people to be able to complete their chess knowledge and improve their game without outside help. In 1925, O. Brandt and W. Philipp, both teachers of blind children, created the Marburg chess notation, which was based on the algebraic system and which today, apart from some minor amendments, still forms the most important basis for the transcribing of chess books, the recording of games, etc. This notation made it possible to write and send correspondence chess moves for the first time. Since then many chess books have been produced in Marburg and Leipzig and these are available for the use of blind chess players.

Another problem still remained outstanding. The diagram of the chessboard clearly showing the position of each individual piece



could not be transferred into the six-dot pattern of tactile symbols. A completely new solution had to be sought. In fact, a Braille depiction of a diagram is far less easy to read and remember than a printed one, but nevertheless it is one practical solution for the blind and partially sighted. Starting with the square a8, each row in turn is condensed into an appropriate sequence of agreed symbols. A number represents one or more empty squares and occupied squares are shown by the usual letter that symbolises the piece. Furthermore, it has been agreed that symbols for black pieces are suffixed with dot 6, to enable readers to distinguish between the black pieces and the white ones.

The "Algebraic" system of chess notation defines each square on the board by combining a letter to indicate which file the square is on with a number to specify the rank of the square. The files run from the white pieces to the black ones and are lettered 'a' to 'h', starting from White's left hand side. The ranks run across the files and are numbered 1 to 8, starting from White's side of the board. Thus it is possible to give unambiguous co-ordinates for the square a piece is starting from and its destination square. This type of notation is familiar to the vast majority of chess players.

In comparison, the "Descriptive" notation can also be used to express an action on the chessboard. The algebraic system that is widely used in Germany is as strange to many of our chess-playing colleagues from England, for example, as the descriptive system is to us. In order to define a square using the descriptive notation, the following three points should be noted:

1. Both players, the one with white as well as the one with black, count the eight ranks starting from the one nearest to them.
2. When naming a square both players refer to the initial position of the pieces. The files are named after the piece that stands on it at the beginning of the game.
3. The pieces, bishop, knight and rook, are further defined according to which side of the board they are on. (Kingside or queenside.)

Taking these three points into consideration, a chess game is represented in the following way:

M. Arenas -- F. Infantes  
Tenerife 1992

Spanish Team Championship for the Blind and Partially  
Sighted

French Defence

1. Pawn to king four -  
- Pawn to king three
2. Pawn to queen four -  
- Pawn to queen four
3. Pawn to king five -  
- Pawn to king's knight three
4. Knight to king's bishop three -  
- Knight to queen two

5. Bishop to king's knight five -  
- Knight to king two
6. Queen to queen two -  
- Bishop to king's knight two
7. Queen to king's bishop four -  
- Castle kingside
8. Bishop to king's rook six -  
- Knight to king's bishop four
9. Bishop to king's knight five -  
- Queen to king one
10. Bishop to queen three -  
- Pawn to queen's rook three
11. Pawn to king's knight four -  
- Knight to king two
12. Bishop to king's rook six -  
- Pawn to queen's knight three
13. Bishop takes bishop on king's knight seven -  
- King takes bishop on king's knight two
14. Pawn to king's rook four -  
- Knight to king's knight one
15. Pawn to king's rook five -  
- King to king's rook one
16. Knight to king's knight five -  
- Pawn to queen's bishop four
17. Knight takes pawn on king's rook seven -  
- King takes knight on king's rook two
18. Pawn takes pawn on king's knight six -  
- King to king's knight two
19. Rook to king's rook seven -

MATE!

When written in this way the whole thing appears very complicated and exotic to someone who is accustomed to the algebraic notation. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the descriptive notation is actually very illustrative for the player at the board. Try it for yourself! It possibly ought not to be written down, unless it is in the abbreviated format that has been developed by our fellow chess enthusiasts in Great Britain. But regardless of the way in which players announce or record their moves, they are all united by their enjoyment of the "Game of Kings".

Since it was founded, the International Braille Chess Association has chiefly concerned itself with arranging chess playing opportunities for blind and partially sighted in the best possible way. At the 2nd I.B.C.A. Congress in Meschede (West Germany), held alongside the 1st Blind Chess Olympiad in 1961, playing equipment was already an important topic of discussion. At this time the organisation was still run along the lines of an "International Blind Chess Club" in the German-speaking countries. Since that time this theme has run like a thread through all congresses. Here is an extract from the relevant minutes:

"Uekermann and Cohn propose that chessboards and clocks should be made as uniform as possible as this is of great benefit, particularly at tournaments. It is clear to everybody present that however many obstacles there may be at the moment, this is a goal worth striving for."

In many countries of the world, quite well established "Hobby Groups for the Disabled" grew up as a result of forming contacts

between the directly affected people so that they could exchange their experiences. Then in 1951, it was Reginald Walter Bonham, teacher of mathematics at the college for the blind in Worcester (England), who organised the first correspondence chess tournament for the blind.

Reginald Walter Bonham was born in East Anglia in 1906. He was from a large family. Two of his siblings were also blind. He attended Worcester College for the Blind, where he learned how to play chess in 1922. As early as 1924 and 1925 he won the college championship. In his spare time, alongside chess, he was also involved with rowing and swimming. During his time as a maths student in Oxford he was even nominated for the famous "University Eight". It was only his rapidly failing eyesight which finally prevented him from taking part.

He achieved a very good pass in his mathematics exam and was subsequently taken on as a maths teacher at his former school, Worcester College, where he stayed until he retired in 1966. But over and above that he was also always interested in general matters affecting the blind. In particular, he occupied himself with helping to extend the Braille system for use in mathematics. A highly respected figure, Bonham passed away early in the year 1984 and was widely mourned.

Bonham won the first English Blind Chess Championship in 1956. He was also the undisputed winner of the first three correspondence chess tournaments, which resulted in the I.B.C.A. being founded. It was as a result of the initiatives, from Reginald Walter Bonham and Victor Nelson that the first contacts with the World-wide Esperanto Union of the Blind and Partially Sighted were formed in 1949 and 1950. On the occasion of Bonham's 75th birthday, Heinz Reschwamm wrote in Information Circular 1 1981: "It was on his initiative that the first international correspondence chess tournament was held in 1951. On six occasions he earned the title of Blind Correspondence Chess World Champion."

However, Bonham was not only known within blind chess circles but was also very successful in the world of sighted chess. In both 1927 and 1928 he came second in the Oxford chess championship before winning it in 1929. He won the Hastings Reserve Tournament in 1931. He won the Birmingham Tournament on three consecutive occasions, was Worcestershire County Champion twenty times and was champion of the nine Midlands Counties three times. He won the "Birmingham Post Cup" twice. On six occasions he competed in the English Championship where his best result was ninth place. He was perhaps even more successful in correspondence chess. He was a finalist in the first Correspondence Chess World Championship and finished second behind Lundquist in the semi-final of the 3rd Correspondence Chess World Championship. He was British Correspondence Chess Champion in 1943, 1947 and 1951. In 1952 he took part in the Correspondence Chess Olympiad, playing on board one for the English team. Only for the most compelling reasons would he decline to give simultaneous displays in various clubs, where he would always win at least the majority of his games against ten or more players without even using a board.

With the start of the first international correspondence chess tournament, in which more than twenty players from ten countries



took part, chess gained worldwide significance amongst the blind.

Although only in an unofficial way at first, this event, together with the following two international correspondence chess tournaments, formed the basis of the amalgamation of chess enthusiasts from sixteen countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, East Germany, Finland, France, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the U.S.A., West Germany and Yugoslavia.

From 1955 a provisional committee was formed comprising of Reginald Walter Bonham (Great Britain) as president, Anton Grusch (Austria) as vice-president, Victor Nelson (Great Britain) as secretary and treasurer with Marcel Saurel (France) as his deputy and Heinz Reschwamm (West Germany) as director of correspondence chess tournaments with Hermann Uekermann (West Germany) as his deputy.

Victor Nelson was born in Manchester, England in 1905. Blinded and suffering from walking difficulties as a result of a childhood illness, he attended the world famous English school, Worcester College for the Blind, and studied English Language and Literature at Manchester University. Between the World Wars it was even difficult for such an exceptionally gifted person to find employment to suit his qualifications. Nevertheless, Nelson became the proofreader for Braille literature at the National Library for the Blind, where he made himself indispensable on account of his continually growing knowledge of foreign languages. In 1932-3 he was a co-founder of the very first blind chess association in the world, the British "Braille Chess Association", and was its secretary from 1948 until 1962. Together with the I.B.C.A. President, Bonham, he was responsible for the groundwork, which led to the production of the British blind chess publication, "Braille Chess Magazine" in 1934. In association with many fellow chess enthusiasts from Europe, he encouraged ideas on the I.B.C.A. and became its first secretary from 1951, when it was still only involved with organising an international correspondence chess tournament for the blind, until 1964. Apart from that he also served as treasurer from the start of 1958 until his premature death in 1965. His inexhaustible energy and the experience gained by the British BCA made a vital contribution to the construction and development of the I.B.C.A.. But above all, his knowledge of foreign languages, to which he added untiringly, won him friends in many countries and his postal contacts stretched over continents and oceans. He took a leading role at many international Esperanto congresses as well as in the British Association of Braille Esperantists.

The committee's most urgent tasks were to draft a provisional constitution and a set of rules for correspondence chess tournaments.

Despite all the hindrances mentioned, correspondence chess benefited greatly from the fact that Braille letters are delivered free of charge. This concession made it easier for blind and partially sighted chess players to keep in touch by post, initially on a national basis. But in Article 9 of the worldwide postal agreement, which deals with exemption from postal charges for articles for the blind, (in the most recent

edition of the Worldwide Post Handbook [Vienna 1964]: Contracts of the Worldwide Postal Union) it states:

Under the proviso of Article 54, Paragraph 2, postal items for the blind are neither eligible for exemption from charges nor for special rates in the case of recorded delivery, recorded delivery slips, special delivery, enquiries and cash on delivery.

Article 54, Paragraph 2 excludes airmail letters and parcels in as far as they are fundamentally not exempted from the airmail surcharges. And to comply with Article 114 I/g of the regulations of the World Postal Agreement, all articles for the blind that are destined for abroad, should be marked both as is customary in the sender's country and with the internationally used term "C, cogrammes". Such items will be carried free of charge. With the help of other international organisations for the blind, visually handicapped people rapidly made contacts in other countries and these friendships were consolidated by correspondence chess. Heinz Reschwamm came from Halle, Saxony Anhalt, situated in former East Germany. He was director of correspondence chess for the I.B.C.A. for nearly three decades from the founding until his death in 1987. He moved to West Germany in 1954. (At that time there were two states on German soil.) It was under his overall control that a set of rules for correspondence chess tournaments, which were at the forefront of the founding of the I.B.C.A. organisation, came into being. For example, an extract from an article in the Austrian blind chess association's "Announcements" of 1958 confirms that the origins of the I.B.C.A. lie in correspondence chess.

"From the 12th to the 16th of April 1958 representatives of blind chess from England, Sweden, Denmark, France, East Germany, the host nation West Germany and Austria got together to form international contacts on a personal level for the first time. The aim of this meeting was to learn about ways and means of spreading the 'Game of Kings' amongst the blind in various countries and about the successes, which had already been achieved. Comprehensive attempts were made to base the existing International Blind Correspondence Chess Association on a broader platform by encouraging over the board chess amongst the blind in the newly formed international organisation of chess for the blind."

Until 1961, apart from the tournaments mentioned here, the I.B.C.A. exclusively restricted its chess activities to international correspondence chess tournaments and maintaining the contacts between chess enthusiasts from the individual countries that inevitably resulted from them.

From the very beginning, correspondence chess played a key role. The first evidence of this was the correspondence chess tournament for the blind that began in 1951. R. W. Bonham issued the invitations. Amongst others, Hermann Uekermann and Franz Rauher were on the German side. E. Williams and J. Wall played for England. Further competitors were A. Hartig (Austria) and M. Saurel (France). However, the following sentence appears in a report on the 5th I.B.C.A. Congress in Pula (Yugoslavia) in "Schachbrücke" from 1972:

"A revised version of the rules for correspondence chess, which

more closely resembles the regulations of the International Correspondence Chess Federation (I.C.C.F.), was approved."

This indicates that the development was not and still is not finished. Today travelling is easier and cheaper than it was when the I.B.C.A. began its chess activities and this has led to increasing importance being placed on the over the board game. Nevertheless, the origins of the I.B.C.A lie in correspondence chess.

The question of whether the chess computer will be the death of chess is discussed time and time again in I.B.C.A. circles. On this subject, it should be observed that track athletics are not seen as uninteresting, superfluous or senseless now that technological developments have delighted us with vehicles, which make it possible to travel incomparably faster than the quickest of runners. The enjoyment of playing chess is not significantly reduced because the player does not, as a general rule have the makings of a world champion. After all this is true of every type of sport.

Mankind has devised many inventions to help him in the fields of travel and weapon technology as well as for making calculations and deductions using numbers and forces. All these aids are dependent on people for regular servicing as well as for the initial inspiration that leads to their construction. Yet such devices have limited uses. The ability to play chess is indeed constantly at hand in the form of a dedicated chess computer, perhaps even to a higher standard than in a person, but this can only be achieved as a result of a nonsensical accumulation of totally specialised processes. The outcome of these processes is first and foremost, quantity. Nowadays computers possess the ability to handle data at an incredible speed and this enables them to evaluate up to 200 million positions each second. Therefore it is possible that "quantity results in quality", as Gary Kasparov put it during his match against DEEP BLUE at the start of May 1997. And then, of course, there is another factor coming into play, one which is typically human, or perhaps more accurately, something which is characteristic of all life. Namely, that well designed and serviced technology does not become tired. At worst, it wears out at a predictable rate and this is ultimately a problem, which can easily be solved by proper care and maintenance. In the end, every piece of technological apparatus - even the computer - can only achieve things when each individual function is continually supervised, controlled and optimised by humans.

[illegible]



## Chapter III

### The Member Countries ii

The national chess organisations that made the most significant contributions to the formation of an international association of blind and partially sighted chess players were the "Deutsche Blindenschachbund" (DBSB) in West Germany, together with the appropriate section of the Blind and Partially Sighted Association in East Germany and the British "Braille Chess Association" (BCA). For this reason it may be of interest to the reader to look at the development of these associations in greater detail. The development of associations in other countries, such as, for example, Russia, Spain, Hungary, Switzerland and Lithuania, will also be described.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

The chapter on Russia, formerly part of the USSR, is a quite exceptional one on account of the sheer scale of the numbers involved. Relatively little is heard from Russia concerning chess for the blind, despite the fact that there are considerably more blind chess players there than in the rest of the world put together. Here are a few articles from the "INFORMATIONSBLETT" (Information Circular).

Information Circular 3 64-65 - Article by J. Krebca (Czechoslovakia) - In Russia chess is given pride of place by the sighted and the blind alike! In practically all of their large cities the All-Russian Blind Association, "VOS", runs workshops for the blind to which a group of blind chess players is usually affiliated. This fact alone explains the unusually high number of approximately 11,000 blind chess players in Russia.

Of course, many blind people also play against the sighted and have already achieved great successes. Accordingly, a young blind chess player, Gimadeyev, managed to finish on equal points with a sighted regional champion in the Stavropol district and qualified for the national championships.

In October 1963 International Grandmaster Korchnoi gave a simultaneous display on twenty-five boards at the Leningrad Blind Chess Club.

In 1964 the All-Russian Blind Association, "VOS", organised the qualifying event for the National Blind Chess Championship. Sixty-six chess players from 43 chess groups were entitled to play. Divided into six groups, battle commenced in six of this vast country's towns. The top two players from each group would qualify for the national championship. A further four players were presumably added to these twelve so that sixteen competitors took part in the final.

Neither was women's chess neglected. Thirty-five ladies from thirty blind chess clubs competed in three groups for victory and a place in the finals. The top four players from each group took part in the National Women's Championship, amongst them the

latest Women's Champion N. Larionova from Gorky.

Information Circular 1 1981 - The semi-finals of the 14th All-Russian Blind Association Team Championship were held at the end last year. It was played in five groups of twelve teams each. A separate venue was provided for each group. Only two teams from each group are entitled to a place in the finals, which will take place in Stavropol this autumn. The reigning Team Champion will also compete. When working out the composition of the groups, great care is taken to ensure that the strongest teams do not meet one another in the early rounds. The finalists are Bashkir, Bygorod, Voronezh, Ivanovo, Kuybyshev, Leningrad, Moscow (Region), Moscow (City), Omsk, Rostov am Don and Stavropol.

In the USSR, National Championships are held in addition to the Championships of the All-Russian Blind Association. The National Championship was held last year in September and October. One team from each of the fourteen republics of the USSR took part in this competition. The surprise winner was the team from Alma-Ata (Soviet Republic of Kazakhstan), ahead of the team from the Ukraine and the original favourite Moscow (City) who tied for second place. (Heinz Reschwamm)

Information Circular 2 1981 - This time the traditional International Match between the USSR and Yugoslavia was held in Ulci on the Adriatic from the 2nd to the 8th of October. The team from the USSR attained an unexpectedly convincing victory with 15.5 to 8.5 points. Only the six best players from both countries take part in this event. Here are the individual results:

1	Krylov - Baretic .....	2.5 - 1.5 Points
2	Rudensky - Djukanovic .....	2.5 - 1.5 Points
3	Gimadeyev - Negovanovic .....	3.0 - 1.0 Points
4	Strokov - Cabarkapa .....	3.0 - 1.0 Points
5	Strishniev - Avram .....	2.5 - 1.5 Points
6	Guzinin - Dragun .....	2.0 - 2.0 Points

The next tournament of this type will once again be held in the USSR on the Black Sea.

Information Circular 2 1982 - The semi-finals of the Team Championship took place in Orenburg in October. Out of the twelve teams competing, those from Perm and Voronezh have qualified for next year's Team Championships. The Individual Championship of the All-Russian Blind Association was held in May in Krasnodar where twenty-one players competed in an all-play-all. Anatoly Gimadeyev from Stavropol finished the tournament victoriously on 15 points and became the new champion. Only half a point behind was the young contender from Leningrad, S. Smirnov, followed by Krylov (World Blind Chess Champion), Strokov and Alpert, all from Moscow, in joint third place on 14 points. Fellow chess enthusiasts Rudensky and Kulakov occupied the next places with 12.5 points. Taking part in this event were an International Master, five Masters, nine Master Candidates and six USSR Class I players.

From a report by  
Paul Er"s, Budapest (Hungary)

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

Little information has been passed on from the countries that

belonged to the USSR for forty years or more. There was indeed a certain degree of individuality and they even held competitions amongst themselves or occasionally with foreign teams. However, chronicles give only sparse information, as for example in the following report from Lithuania:

At the beginning of July 1952, a Lithuanian team took part in a friendly tournament for Baltic teams for the first time. The event took place in Tallinn. The team members were: Antanas Ruginis, Bronius Petrokas, Napoleonas Kuolys, Viadas Kraucevicius, Gabrielius Stankevicius and a sighted chess friend, Jonas Kliunka.

For the first time in the history of the Soviet Union a blind lady chess player, Ingaunyt Stas, earned the title of Master. The award "Sports Champion of the USSR" was bestowed on her.

On the 19th of April, 1992 the chess section of the Lithuanian Union of Blind and Partially Sighted Sportsmen became a member of the International Braille Chess Association (I.B.C.A.)

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

The national organisation for the blind and partially sighted in Spain, O.N.C.E. (Organizaci6n Nacional para Ciegos Espanoles), was founded in the town of Burgos on the 13th of December 1938 as a consequence of the Spanish Civil War. It was primarily aimed at taking care of the war blind. To this end the organisation was granted certain privileges. It was given and still holds, a lottery license. Additionally, O.N.C.E. owned various production centres for the manufacture of brooms, wickerwork and confectionery. Today, O.N.C.E. is a real commercial empire. Although O.N.C.E. has invested its profits in numerous enterprises like, for example, TV-Tele 5, Travel Agency 2000, sports equipment, supermarkets, dry cleaning, Radio Onda Cero and others, 80% of its income (currently about 385 million Pesetas per annum) still comes from the lottery "CUPON PRO CIEGOS". The majority of the workers and all of the directors are blind.

Amongst those blinded in the Civil War there were, of course, some high-ranking officials. General Francisco Franco was greatly in favour of the idea behind O.N.C.E. and exempted the organisation from having to pay tax on its lottery sales, which is a privilege that it still enjoys today. Right from the start O.N.C.E. was economically strong enough to be able to help all the blind and to provide appropriate positions for the important high-ranking officials. Naturally, in the late 1930's a chess section of O.N.C.E. was brought into being in Madrid. From the very beginning, chess was the best-loved leisure pursuit amongst the blind. This was all the more true when the game began to be played seriously within the sports association and became fully competitive. In 1944 the chess section of O.N.C.E. took part in the Open Team Competition that was played in regional clubs. There, the best players, Ramon Bosch Climent and Juan Fiter Rocamora, a passionate chess theoretician with many international connections, proposed publishing the Braille magazine TABLERO DE AJEDREZ. It is still produced today and is an important means of maintaining contact and exchanging information for the blind chess players in Spain. Today, O.N.C.E. itself not only organises the Federacion Madrileña de



Ajedrez, but also other blind chess clubs in Murcia, Tarragona, Algeciras, Ingenie, Cantabria, Las Palmas, Saragossa, Tenerife, Alicante and Barcelona. Led by Lucio Baigorri and highly rated players like Jesus Ugena and Vernando Vargas, the O.N.C.E. team from Madrid soon reached the highest regional category. Even isolated blind chess players who were members of sighted clubs immediately joined in the competition. This was also the case in Murcia, where Antonio Hierro played in the Casino de Murcia Club's team and in San Sebastian where, Jos, Maria Lavin took part in "REY ARDID" with his club's team.

In the 1950's there was a radical change in blind chess. A new generation of players left the O.N.C.E. schools. The most important names were those of Jesus Ariste, who played for the "REUS DE AJEDREZ" club and became a member of the Spanish Olympiad team, and Delfin Burdjo Gracia, who, in the course of his long and brilliant career, won the titles of "Camp,on Provincial" (Provincial Champion) in Aragon Ja,m and Alicante. On several occasions he took part in the finals of the "Camp,onato de Espaya de Ajedrez Individual" (Spanish Individual Championship) and was also the Spanish O.N.C.E. Champion and a member of the Spanish Olympiad team for twenty years. These days he is a FIDE Arbiter and the president of the I.B.C.A..

The first "CAMP'EONATO DE ESPAYA DE AJEDREZ" tournament for the blind was announced in the 1960's. At the early tournaments people did not give much thought to public sponsorship. Therefore, in order to safeguard the future of the most important blind sport in Spain, whose long-term development was still uncertain, the chess players received only limited logistical assistance at first.

Up until 1978 our players reached the Finals of the "CAMP'EONATO DE ESPAYA". From 1970 it became free to enter and tournaments were played according the Swiss System.

In 1986 O.N.C.E. established the Sports Association Negociado de Deportes, which organised the oldest blind sport in Spain from then on. In 1986 Spanish blind chess celebrated their tenth individual championship, which was held in Las Palmas. Thirty-six players took part. Until September 1988, when 104 players appeared at the event, the number of competitors in the Individual championship was unrestricted. Thereafter however, the huge numbers made it necessary to hold qualifying events for national tournaments. So in 1990 it was agreed that fifty-four players would be promoted from the qualifying stages. The "CAMPEONATO DE ESPAYA for the blind" has since developed into a very demanding tournament of a remarkably high standard.

The second chess team championship for the blind and partially sighted was arranged by the Organisation des Negociado de Deportes in 1987 and since then the event has taken place every other year, alternating with the individual championship. The O.N.C.E. Team Cup was established in 1994 and is run on a knock out system. Likewise, according to the information from the organisers, young players have competed in a very challenging annual tournament since 1994.

Alongside the internal competitions, the main thrust of the development of Spanish blind chess was towards participating in international events. These efforts bore fruit both in terms of

the integration of the blind people as well as for the game of chess. Every year the players take part in more than ten international open tournaments in Spain. Spanish blind chess has even provided the impetus for new competitions on an international level: the 1st WORLD CUP, the strongest team event organised by the I.B.C.A., was contested in the old royal town, Segovia (Spain) in 1990; the first European Championship, an open competition with a number of invited players from the member organisations, was held in 1995 in Benasque, Huesca in the Spanish Pyrenees.

# CAMPEONATO DE ESPAÑA DE AJEDREZ POR EQUIPOS PARA CIEGOS Y DEFICIENTES VISUALES

Year	Winner	Region	Year	Winner	Region
1979:	Barcelona ..	Alicante	1991:	Barcelona ..	Tenerife
1987:	Madrid .....	Santander	1993:	Barcelona ..	Majorca
1989:	Madrid .....	Linares	1995:	Madrid .....	Valladolid

## O.N.C.E. CUP

Year	Winner	Region	Year	Winner	Region
1994:	Valencia ...	Tudela	1996:	Madrid .....	Algeciras

## Individual Championship

Year	Winner	Runner-up	Year	Winner	Runner-up
78:	Burdio ..	Fiter	88:	Sabanez ..	Rubio
80:	Burdio ..	Ugena	90:	Martinez	Palacios
82:	Enjuto ..	Burdio	92:	Durban ..	Martinez
84:	Martinez	Rubio	94:	Enjuto ..	Palacios
86:	Rubio ...	Martinez	96:	Durban ..	Martinez

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

Delayed until after the Second World War, local blind chess clubs were founded in Copenhagen in 1947 and then in almost all large cities in southeastern Europe. For example, the "Wiener Schachrunde" (Viennese Chess Circle) was set up in 1952 and the Zagreb club in 1956. On an international level the inaugural dates are generally a little later. The Swiss Blind Chess Association was founded in 1958 and the Austrian one in 1970, although there had already been national championships in Austria in 1951 and 1955.

I have drawn my information about the British BCA chiefly from a document, which was compiled and published by a member of the BCA and temporary secretary of the I.B.C.A., Jack Horrocks, on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of the BCA in 1982.

In England the earliest chess activity can be traced back to the year 1902. The name F. H. Marick is associated with the Braille Chess Club at this time. In around 1910 the club had some thirty members. Until the end of the 1920's the Braille newspaper "PROGRESS" published a supplement on the subject of "Chess" that contained games, information and a problem section, edited by F. H. Marick. Then in the summer of 1931, Ernest A. H. Eaton initiated the formation of a countrywide organisation. On the 15th of October the idea became a reality. One of the eleven founder members was Reginald Walter Bonham. In 1934 he was instrumental in producing the "Braille Chess Magazine" that contained, in essence, contributions from the various chess

magazines. Bonham remained the editor of this publication for twenty-five years. Blind chess clubs of the type that were emerging in Germany at this time and then again after the second world war, either did not exist in Great Britain or were restricted to the schools for the blind, as was the case in Worcester. English schools attach great importance to equipping pupils for life in the community and working on communal projects. Therefore, the blind chess club for former Worcester pupils in London that was founded in 1952 was the only one to last for any length of time.

In Germany the development of chess progressed very slowly at first, as is often the case with central organisations. The text that follows illustrates this point. The sections of it, which refer to Germany, have been drawn from a report on the 10th Jubilee of the German blind chess association in the year 1961. The overview of the development of the I.B.C.A. originates essentially from the Information Circular 2/83 and was published for the 25th anniversary of the I.B.C.A. by Heinz Reschwamm, who at that time was in charge of correspondence chess and was responsible for editing the Information Circular. I have taken these documents, and added, expanded and extrapolated certain points.

At the end of the nineteenth century, E. Kull (Berlin) had already written the first chess textbook for the blind and had also had the first blind chess set made. For a time progress was hindered by the World War of 1914-18, but afterwards, assisted in no small way by the involvement of those who had lost their sight in the war, the positive developments were revived once again. Organised chess for the blind in Germany came into being on the 2nd of February 1924 when the first chess club for the blind was formed by chess inspired pupils at the Chemnitz School for the Blind. This club still exists today.

In 1929 chess societies were established in the Schools for the Blind in Kiel and Dren. The Kiel society continued to exist even after the closure of the school for the blind and is now independent.

The first chess supplement appeared in a Braille magazine on the 1st of January 1926. It is particularly worth mentioning that in Leipzig in 1936 the first chess newspaper containing news of chess for the blind was produced. Today it is turned out on a large scale and appears monthly under the title "Schachbrücke" (Chess Bridges) in the Leipzig Central Library for the Blind. Above all, it delights its readers with its up-to-date articles and chess theory supplements.

In Saxony, chess for the blind was clearly blossoming in the hands of the former pupils of the Chemnitz School for the Blind. The result was the establishment of a union of blind correspondence chess players from that area in 1936. The blind and partially sighted were discovering correspondence chess for themselves. There was already correspondence chess activity here before the nationally and internationally organised over the board tournaments. Broadly speaking, these were actually informal groups of pen friends that had found one another through and were now held together by their enjoyment of chess. Both before and after the Second World War it was suggested time and time again that groups of chess enthusiasts should be



established on a regional and national level.

Esperanto provided the most important international links that helped chess to gain international status. As early as 1921 the first congress of blind Esperanto speakers was held in Paris. The association's publication "ESPERANTA LIGILO" was even expanded to include a chess appendix, KORIERE, which it kept for decades. In fact, it reports that after the Second World War, the German section of blind Esperanto speakers was re-established in Munich in 1951. Yet even before that, sufficient copies of the Braille magazine, "ESPERANTA LIGILO", produced in Sweden by Mr Harald Tilander, were finding their way into occupied Germany. From the 1st of January 1951 blind and partially sighted chess players in international correspondence chess groups, were playing in the first international correspondence chess tournament. A few German players from each of the occupied zones took part. It is also reported that the International Congresses of Esperanto Speakers were often asked to hold chess tournaments. The last of these took place in 1972.

In 1955 the first preparatory body for international over the board matches was set up. It became an international effort, which finally extended beyond correspondence chess in 1958. Here I refer, for example, to the extract from the Austrian Blind Chess Association's "Announcements" in the previous chapter, which identifies seven founder organisations. Here is another short text from the 3rd I.B.C.A. President, Dr. Aren Bestman.

#### Chess and the blind

Chess was already being nurtured in the first schools for the blind and as a consequence of this it became a much-loved game for many blind people. In the 1930's competitions were already being held on a national level. Correspondence chess was the pacesetter for international competitions and the first competition for the blind was announced in 1951. It was logical that discussions then turned to forming an international chess organisation. In 1958 the idea became reality in the shape of the International Braille Chess Association. Understandably, correspondence chess remained the primary activity at first, and Individual World Championships were held. Team competitions, the so-called Correspondence Chess Olympiad, followed later. In 1961 the first Blind Chess Olympiad was held in Meschede (West Germany).

#### Two additional notes:

1. The founding of the "Fédération Internationale des Echecs" (F.I.D.E.), whose president for twenty-five years was the unforgettable Dutchman, Alexander Rueb, dates from the 20th of July 1924. Only nineteen member organisations took part at the start. Today more than 150 countries belong to F.I.D.E..
2. German chess players also made a contribution to the idea of founding a World Chess Organisation: together with representatives of the All-Russian Chess Union, they put in a request for this at the Congress of the "Deutscher Schachbundes" or DSB (German Chess Union) in Mannheim in 1914. Sadly, amongst all the upheaval and confusion of the

First World War, this idea was once again discarded.

The first worldwide correspondence chess association, the "internationale Fernschachbund" (ISFB), was set up in 1928. Therefore, F.I.D.E. is the older of the two organisations. Correspondence chess is a very interesting form of the game. Many of our great chess masters were and are skilled correspondence players. It is said of Mikhail Tal that as a young man he often played up to a hundred correspondence games at one time. People who send off their moves by post, after thinking about them for two to three days, can use every theoretical principle available to them, and can explore all possible variations: those that lead to a dead end as well as those that result in a supposed winning position. This is where the disadvantages of being blind have far-reaching effects. Consider for a moment that chess literature, which is relatively easily available to a sighted opponent, is only of use to a blind or partially sighted player once it has been transcribed into Braille. Also bear in mind how much a blind or partially sighted chess player must pay for this literature and how much room it takes up. Braille books are not only very expensive, but also very cumbersome. The use of computers will perhaps reduce the amount of space needed, but will certainly not decrease the cost. It is decidedly true that to a certain extent a player retains the knowledge gained and preparations devised during intensive concentration on correspondence chess games for use in over the board games. Correspondence chess experience gives a player a good theoretical grounding, which is intended to save a lot of thinking time during the game.

In addition to the valuable incentives emanating from Saxony, the intensive chess activity in the schools for the blind in Kiel and Dören also had a beneficial effect on the further development of chess for the blind in Germany. In the early 1930's, teams from both schools were already competing regularly in sighted tournaments. Their many successes made an important contribution to enhancing the reputation of blind chess players in particular as well as of blind people in general.

On the 11th of October 1943, in the middle of the Second World War, the Westphalian Blind Chess Association was founded thanks to the authoritative co-operation of the brothers, H. and F. Uekermann. The members competed in correspondence chess tournaments.

1948 saw the return of direct encounters between chess enthusiasts in the form of the "Three Towns Challenge" involving Chemnitz, Leipzig and Halle. This was the first inter-regional event in German blind chess after the Second World War.

In the very next year the first blind chess championships of the then Soviet-occupied zone of Germany were held in Wernigerode (Harz).

There was also plenty of chess activity in West Germany. Once again it was the Westphalian chess enthusiasts who forged ahead with their efforts to establish a blind chess organisation in West Germany. They were led by Hermann Uekermann (Herfort), who later became one of the initiators in setting up the I.B.C.A., its vice-president and then the second president from 1972 until his all too early death in autumn 1977. Finally they achieved

their goal. In 1951 sixteen blind and partially sighted chess players from virtually every part of West Germany accepted an invitation to the first German Chess Championship for the Blind in Stukenbrock (District of Paderborn). West Germany was initially a state-like structure made up of the zones occupied by the three so-called Western powers, the U.S.A., Great Britain and France. During the tournament, on the 2nd of May 1951, they founded the "Deutschen Blindenschachbund" or DBSB (German Blind Chess Association). In doing so they laid the foundation stone for a national blind chess organisation, which, alongside the British one, would become one of the most active in the I.B.C.A..

The Spaniard, Juan Fiter, one of our best correspondence chess players, was a member of the I.B.C.A. committee for many years. He died in September 1981. Fiter finished in the top three in all of the recent World Correspondence Chess Championships in which he took part. In the 11th Championship of this type he even became the Blind Correspondence Chess World Champion. He was not only the editor of the Spanish Blind Chess newspaper, but also an official in the Spanish authorities for the blind.

Information Circular 2 1982 - There was a strong entry of twenty-nine players in the Spanish National Blind Chess Championship which took place in Cordoba from the 24th to the 31st of January. There was a lot riding on the result for the winner would be entitled to take part in the 5th World Blind Chess Championship in Hastings.

Quite surprisingly, the winner was Roberto Enjuto, just twenty years old, who scored 6.5 points and finished ahead of the previous champion, Burdío, on 6 points. Joint third to fifth were Rubio, Lopez and Florencio with 5.5 each and Garcia was sixth on 5 points.

It was pleasing that so many young chess enthusiasts took part in this competition.

The 6th Spanish Team Championship of December 1995 illustrates how much is currently done for blind chess by Spain, specifically by O.N.C.E., the Spanish organisation for the blind. Nine blind chess clubs were represented at the event - two teams from Madrid and as many as three from Barcelona. Each consisted of four players and most teams also had a reserve. On top of that, each team brought its own coach with them. Madrid "A" won with 35.5 board points, ahead of Barcelona "A" on 33.5 and Valencia on 28. Yet the result of this encounter, which takes place every second year, is of secondary importance. Of greater significance is the fact that the playing of chess, as a means of helping to integrate the blind and partially sighted, benefited from this event.

Smaller countries like, for example, Hungary, often have to battle with the same sort of problems but on a different scale - everything seems to be compressed into a small number of decades or even years. Before the Second World War there were already a few Braille chessboards in Hungary that had been manufactured specifically for the blind, but only on their own initiative at first. However, chess tournaments for the blind and partially sighted were still unheard of. Organised chess



for the blind did not begin until the end of the 1940's. Chess enthusiast, József Zichő, a music teacher at the Vakok Iskol...ja school for the blind, started organising the Chess Circle for the Visually Handicapped in Budapest in 1952. It was here that the first national blind chess championship was held in 1954. In the border town of Szombathely the idea of matches between blind and partially sighted chess teams had been around since the beginning of the 1950's.

The music teacher, József Zichő, a gifted organiser and himself an excellent chess player, had chessboards made for the pupils. As he himself was partially sighted he was able to play in the Hungarian team at the 3rd Blind Chess Olympiad in Weymouth (Great Britain) in 1968 and at the 4th in Pula (Yugoslavia) in 1972.

József Miskei, an official from the state government in the capital, who brought with him an interest in and a dedication to both chess and the blind, arranged for young chess players at the school to participate in the championship held by the Pioneers. He was an honorary co-worker in the Hungarian Chess Association.

Eventually, all these activities and endeavours led to the founding of the first blind chess club in Budapest in 1950. In the initial phase it consisted of a dozen players at most. Money was short so the privilege of being able to play chess was restricted to those who could afford to buy their own board. Nevertheless, further blind and partially sighted chess clubs were established in the region, specifically in Zagreb, Novi Sad, Ossijek, Subotiza and Zombor. They often engaged in competitions with one another. It was still difficult to make progress at this time, but slowly but steadily things improved. In the hands of the association for the blind, chess activity continued to develop. From 1967 onwards, blind and partially sighted chess players from Hungary were often invited to Czechoslovakia, Austria and once even to Romania. In the Comecon countries, as they were known at the time, a growing interest in safeguarding social diversity became evident and this was also encouraged by the State. After two years the chess scene was livened up by the introduction of its own chess newspaper and a chess coach. 1956 saw the appearance of the first chess clocks that had been specially designed so that the blind could operate them without any assistance. They were manufactured by the "Hungarian Optical Factory" (MOM). At this time the chess club in Budapest already had more than thirty members. The membership peaked in 1960 when it stood at about sixty. The first match between teams from Budapest and Szombathely took place that year. On the recommendation of the influential party functionary, Zoltán Gábor, a Hungarian team was granted the opportunity to take part in the 2nd Blind Chess Olympiad in Kehlhorn on the Baltic (East Germany) in 1964. For quite some time Zoltán Gábor attended various blind chess events in Hungary with interest and commitment. Visually handicapped chess players in Hungary owe him a great deal. The reports inserted here are drawn from the I.B.C.A. Information Circulars 1964-65, 1981 and 1982. (Edited by Heinz Reschwamm.)

Information Circular 3 - 1964-65 - "As has been the case every year since 1954, the National Championship was again held in 1963 and 1964, after the preliminary qualifying rounds. In 1963

the highly sought after title was won by our chess colleague D,nes, but in 1964 it was fellow chess enthusiast Auffenberg who became the National Champion.

Both before and after the championship, the inter-town matches, that had quickly become a tradition in their own right, were held against blind chess groups from Zsombathely and Miskolc. The Budapest Blind Chess Club was fortunate enough to win every time. Paul Er"s writes, "Even when competing against our sighted chess friends, our teams fought with great success in the various sections."

In the latest Budapest Club Championship there was a tie between D,nes and Fauszek for the title of Club Champion.

A two-year long international correspondence chess match was held against Czechoslovakia (at the time this was a union of two states: Slovakia and the Czech Republic). Hungary won with 7.5 points to 4.5.

Also, we managed to win an eight board international correspondence match against West Germany that lasted for nearly two years, by 10 points to 6.

Our greatest success was undoubtedly the participation of a Hungarian team in the 2nd Blind Chess Olympiad, where it somewhat unexpectedly finished in second place!

From a report by J. D,nes"

The "Monday Championship", in which blind and partially sighted people from the capital, Budapest, have already achieved admirable success, has been in existence since the middle of the 1980's. From 1954 until around 1971 a great variety of chess activities were held in the two towns of Szombathely and Miskolc and naturally also in Budapest, where a large proportion of blind people live. These included, above all, the individual championship, as well as team competitions, which led to matches being held twice a year for a while. Additionally, a national championship was held on an almost regular basis at this time. Sadly, this event has tailed off a little in recent years. Since 1963 chess players and track and field athletes have been working together in the sports circle. Tandem riders, goalball players and mountain climbers joined them slightly later. But unfortunately, there was a gradual decline in chess in the whole country. Not until a few years later did Hungarian blind chess establish itself firmly in the sports circle alongside the other sporting activities for the blind and partially sighted. Here are some further extracts from the I.B.C.A. Information Circulars of 1981:

Team competitions against sighted clubs were held from the start, but the best results were not achieved until the 70's and 80's.

Information Circular 1 1981 - In this year's Individual Championship, in which nineteen players took part, Paul Er"s triumphed once again. It was an extremely hard-fought battle! With 8.5 points, Er"s successfully defended his titles of National and Club Champion, closely followed by fellow chess enthusiasts Nemes and R,v, with 8 points apiece and D,nes on 7.5 points. From the 29th of May to the 2nd of June, the Budapest Chess Club visited Zagreb where a team of Croatian players

in July 1958. At that time, Robert Gabriel, blind and severely disabled but full of energy and ideas, was living in central Switzerland high above Lake Lucerne. He had a dream of forming a Swiss Blind Chess Association. On the 15th of December 1956, Walter Möller and Max Winkelmann sought out R. Gabriel in Selisberg. They decided to arrange a correspondence chess tournament in Switzerland at the start of 1957, in order to generate interest in blind chess in their country. Ten people entered immediately. Before long there were twelve of these correspondence chess tournaments in Switzerland. Encouraged by this, the trio organised the first over the board Swiss Blind Chess Championship in the July. Sixteen players took part. The Swiss Blind Chess Association was founded at this event with Robert Gabriel as the first president, Hans Sticher as treasurer and Max Winkelmann as secretary and tournament director. As Braille chess literature was practically non-existent in Switzerland, Max Winkelmann tried as early as 1960 to fill this void with the world's first chess newspaper on tape. It appears quarterly and contains all sorts of information and theoretical examples, as well as practical ones from national and international chess events. Also, in November 1960 the first chess match between the Swiss Blind Chess Association and a team from Southwest Germany was held in Freiburg in Breisgau. Ever since then, with only one small interruption, this event has been taking place every autumn with the venue alternating between Germany and Switzerland. When Robert Gabriel died in 1961 at the age of only 34, Max Winkelmann became the 2nd president of the Swiss Blind Chess Association, which has around forty members today.

At the start of the 1960's Max Winkelmann became acquainted with Hermann Škermann, who was president of the DBSB (German Blind Chess Association) at the time. Switzerland entered one of the seven teams that took part in the 1st Blind Chess Olympiad in Meschede, Sauerland (West Germany) in 1961. The I.B.C.A. Congress of 1972 elected Max Winkelmann as treasurer, a task that he and his very supportive wife took care of for twelve years until he had to resign due to health reasons.

Admittedly, since the Congress in Weymouth, 1968, membership of the I.B.C.A. is restricted to national blind chess organisations only, as is the case in F.I.D.E.. However, the organisation's constitution allows for three types of exceptions: honorary members, which can be appointed by the I.B.C.A. Congress, patrons of the I.B.C.A. and individual players, who wish to compete at an international level, but have no national blind chess association in their country. Therefore it is important for the I.B.C.A. to strive for more national member organisations.

The type of chess clock that was familiar to most people could not be used by blind and partially sighted chess players. From the start, assistance from sighted chess colleagues was needed in order to use the clock because the blind or partially sighted player needed to ask someone how much time had been used. Naturally, there were both clocks and alarm clocks for the blind in existence, and by combining two of them, along with the appropriate mechanism for stopping one clock and starting the other, a chess clock for the blind was cobbled together. For sighted chess players, the usual timing device was the flag, which when it fell, indicated unambiguously that an hour had



defeated them by a relatively convincing margin of 10.5 points to 5.5.

Information Circular 2 1981 - A Hungarian team visited Varna (Bulgaria) from the 12th to the 16th of September and was defeated by 11 points to 9. Only a few weeks earlier Hungary had played host to an Austrian team and somewhat surprisingly, had also been defeated by them, by 11 points to 9.

After a short illness, Jozsef Zichő died very unexpectedly at the start of December. Our fellow chess enthusiast, Zichő, was a teacher of music at the Hungarian school for the blind in Budapest and a very active member of the blind chess club there. He represented his country as a delegate at the 5th I.B.C.A. Congress in Medulin, Pula (Yugoslavia). He was one of the most loyal followers of correspondence chess and had participated in the I.B.C.A. correspondence chess tournaments for many years where he had had great success.

Information Circular 1 1982 - On this occasion Paul Erős was unable to retain his title in the Hungarian Individual Championship and finished in joint second place with R,v on 7.5 points each, just behind Nemes on 8.5 points. Auffenberg came fourth on 7 points. However, another competition was held to determine which of the top three would take part in the 5th Blind Chess World Championship and this was won by Erős.

Information Circular 2 1982 - At the Individual Championship, which ended on the 20th of December 1982, R,v finished on 10 points in front of Erős, 9.5, and quite unexpectedly Auffenberg, with 8.5. All three were unbeaten. Fourth and fifth were Bathyny and the previous year's champion, Nemes, on 8 points each, followed by D,nes on 7.5 and Kovac on 7 points. The next six players followed after a substantial gap.

From a report by P. Erős, Budapest

In 1985 the Hungarian Blind Association in Szentendre established a new chess tournament, the IRIS Cup, which has since become a regular event, having been held every second year in varying formats and with varying participants. At the first tournament, which was won by Yugoslavia, two Hungarian teams were amongst the twelve four-man teams taking part. Additionally, there were teams from Poland, West Germany, East Germany, Holland, Finland, England, Austria and Bulgaria.

The organisation of the 8th Blind Chess Olympiad and the 9th I.B.C.A. Congress in Zalaegerszeg in 1988 was undoubtedly a proud moment for Hungary and the blind chess organisation there. This event was financed by an unexpectedly generous response to the national appeal made to raise funds for sending Hungarian disabled sportsmen and women to the Paralympics in Seoul, South Korea in the same year. It is undoubtedly thanks to the long-serving President of the Hungarian chess association for the blind and partially sighted, Jozsef D,nes, that this one and only opportunity to finance the Blind Chess Olympiad was recognised and seized upon. The organisation of this event was a memorable achievement for such a small country.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

Switzerland - The Swiss Blind Chess Association was also founded







## CHAPTER IV

### Historical Information ii

Many changes, both in the broad course of history, and in the fate of a single individual, are often not the result of detailed planning and precise calculations but rather the product of fortunate or unfortunate coincidences and favourable or unfavourable circumstances. So it was that Reginald Walter Bonham (1906-1984), who was himself blind and was not only a very strong chess player but also an enthusiastic one, as well as an excellent organiser, was teaching maths at the school for the blind in Worcester from 1929. At the same time Hermann Uekermann (1916-1977), a German who was equally enthusiastic about chess and who earned his living as a telephonist was residing in Herford, Westphalia. This chance combination of circumstances and people was an unquestionable stroke of luck for the expansion of international blind chess. In 1958 the two men joined forces for the greater good of chess for the blind on an international level and became the main initiators in the founding of the "Internationalen Blindenschachbundes" (International Blind Chess Association), which later adopted the English title of "International Braille Chess Association" (I.B.C.A.). Quite naturally, Reginald Walter Bonham also became the first president of the association and remained unchallenged in that post for fourteen years until 1972. After that he retired but immediately and gladly accepted the honorary presidency, which was offered to him by the I.B.C.A. in 1972. He died in 1984 at the age of seventy-eight, respected as both a teacher and a chess player.

The constitution that the I.B.C.A. adopted at the founding congress in 1958 in Rheinbreitbach (West Germany) defined the aim of the organisation, as is usual in this type of constitution. The main task was to provide for and cultivate the "Game of Kings" amongst the blind and partially sighted at an international level. The first set of tournament rules, including the appendix "Playing on Two Boards", was not passed until in 1972 at the 5th Congress in Pula (Yugoslavia). But even today the FIDE Rules still take priority, as is established in the I.B.C.A. tournament rules.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

On the initiative of the "Deutschen Blindenschachbundes - DBSB" (German Blind Chess Association) and under the leadership of its President, Hermann Uekermann (1916-1977), the first international blind chess congress was held in a holiday home for the blind, Burg Steineck, (Rheinbreitbach) from the 12th to the 16th of April 1958. There were representatives from seven countries, namely, Denmark, East Germany, France, Great Britain, Austria, Sweden and the host nation, West Germany. Amongst other things, it can be gathered from the report of this first international blind chess congress that, alongside the approval of the statutes and the rules for correspondence chess, there was already a detailed discussion on the membership of national blind chess associations, rather than of individual players from



the member organisations. The production of an international publication for the association was already called for; unfortunately, for financial as well as technical reasons, the I.B.C.A. Information Circulars appeared only sporadically over the years.

Over and above that, personal acquaintances between players resulted in close contacts being formed, which were, not least, extremely useful for the further development of the I.B.C.A..

The role of the committee, which had already been laid down in 1955 when one of the first face to face meetings had taken place, was now confirmed. In place of Mr Grusch (Austria), who resigned, fellow chess player Uekermann became vice-president and senior civil servant Anton Hartig (Austria), a new member of the committee, was appointed deputy director of correspondence chess.

Until 1961, with the exception of the meeting in Rheinbreitbach in 1958, which had naturally included a tournament, the chess activities of the I.B.C.A. were exclusively restricted to the organisation of international correspondence chess events and the associated maintaining of contacts with chess friends from the individual countries and national chess organisations.

---

Once again it was the DBSB that, on the 10th anniversary of its existence, issued an invitation for both the 2nd I.B.C.A. Congress and the 1st Blind Chess Olympiad, which would run alongside it. These were held at the holiday home for the blind, which existed at that time in Meschede, Westphalia, from the 26th of March to the 2nd of April 1961. Representatives from seven countries accepted this invitation. The conferences, which were always preceded by smaller discussions, were very extensive and productive. It was agreed that an annual Information Circular should be printed and the Director of Correspondence Chess, Heinz Reschwamm, was appointed editor.

In addition, a resolution to strive for a close collaboration with FIDE was drafted. This task was assigned to the President, R. W. Bonham. All committee members were re-elected to their posts. In a further resolution it was decided that the constitution and the rules for correspondence chess should be revised.

All delegates unanimously agreed to the suggestion from Knud Klausen (Denmark), that an I.B.C.A. Congress and a blind chess Olympiad should be held every four years, coinciding whenever possible with an Olympic year.

The question of standardising the chess equipment used at international tournaments was already being addressed at that time. Although several attempts have been made since then by both the third I.B.C.A. President, Dr. Aren Bestman (Netherlands), and the fifth and present President Delfin Burdio Gracia (Spain) respectively, a definitive solution remains elusive, which indicates just how difficult this is to implement.

The problems associated with playing on two boards first became evident at the 1st Blind Chess Olympiad. However, today it can be said that the resolutions passed by FIDE and many national chess organisations for the sighted, together with tangible good will and co-operation on all sides, have produced a satisfactory solution.

Not entirely unexpectedly, the Yugoslavian team took the gold medal at the 1st Blind Chess Olympiad, ahead of the West Germany (First Team) who were awarded the silver medal and the Austrian team who earned the bronze. Equal on points with the Austrian team, but with a worse tie-break, the team from East Germany occupied the somewhat unrewarding fourth place ahead of Great Britain, West Germany (Second Team), Denmark and Switzerland.

At this event the Braille Chess Association of Great Britain made an essential contribution to the further development of chess equipment for the blind and partially sighted when they introduced a chess clock with a flag. This confirms the value of international co-operation most effectively. In the end, techniques were developed in this area, that could also be put to use in devising other equipment for the blind and partially sighted.

Mr Linecke, the delegate from East Germany, delivered an invitation for the 3rd I.B.C.A. Congress and the 2nd Blind Chess Olympiad in his country in 1964, for which he was heartily thanked by all the other delegates.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

The 3rd I.B.C.A. Congress and the 2nd Blind Chess Olympiad took place from the 24th of March to the 3rd of April 1964 in K~~ü~~hlungsborn on the Baltic coast of East Germany. This time there were eleven delegates from eleven countries taking part in the congress, while teams from nine countries competed in the 2nd Blind Chess Olympiad.

The fundamental points dealt with at the congress were once again connected with the standardisation of playing equipment. Agreement was at least reached on the standard markings for chess equipment: the black squares should be raised and the black pieces should be marked with a point.

On the recommendation of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, the definition of blindness, an important criterion for the I.B.C.A., was set at ten percent of normal vision.

Furthermore, the Congress now confirmed that the name for the international blind chess organisation, which had not yet been decided, would be the English version, "International Braille Chess Association" (I.B.C.A.). Mr Quirnbach, the General Secretary of the German Association of Sport for the Disabled (DVfV), to which all sports organisations in East Germany, the host nation, belonged, attended the Congress in an advisory capacity. He suggested that some thought should be given to holding a women's individual championship at some point in the future. It was not until many years later that the I.B.C.A. took up this initiative and put it into effect.

The subscriptions, that up until then had been based on the English Pound, were now partially switched over to the Swiss Franc, which was a significantly more stable currency at the time.

Furthermore, the representatives of the host nation, East Germany, announced that as well as being prepared to produce a tournament bulletin for the 2nd Blind Chess Olympiad they were also willing to donate to the I.B.C.A. a flag of its own, designed according to the blueprint submitted by the President, R. W. Bonham.

The 2nd Blind Chess Olympiad was also won by the team from Yugoslavia, ahead of Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Great Britain and Sweden.

The German Blind Chess Association, which was not represented in K hlungsborn, sent their best wishes to all participants together with an invitation for the 1st I.B.C.A. Individual Championship in West Germany in 1966. This marked the beginning of a second regularly held event (in addition to the Blind Chess Olympiad), which could soon claim a tradition of its own.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

To mark their 15th anniversary, the DBSB (German Blind Chess Association) held the first individual championship, or perhaps more accurately, the first European Championship, for at that time the I.B.C.A. only had European member organisations under its administration.

The committee meetings that took place alongside the championship established, amongst other things, the names that should be used for the rows A to H on the chess board when announcing moves in I.B.C.A. tournaments (Anna, Bella, Caesar - now Caspar -, David, Eva, Felix, Gustav and Hector).

Also, the Secretary and Treasurer, Hans Cohn, put forward the possibility that the 4th I.B.C.A. Congress and the 3rd Blind Chess Olympiad might take place in Great Britain to mark the centenary of the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB).

Hans H. Cohn had taken over from Victor Nelson as secretary at the start of 1965 and then as treasurer in 1966 following Victor's all too early death. In Victor Nelson, the I.B.C.A. had lost one of its most important supporters and most industrious workers. At the end of 1964, Victor Nelson, a founder member of the I.B.C.A. had been obliged to give up the role of secretary for health reasons and on the 4th of January 1966 he died unexpectedly as a result of a heart attack. In the I.B.C.A. we will always honour his memory!

In various roles, Hans H. Cohn had been on the committee from the very start and his dedication to the sport of chess continued. His life and the work he has done for chess, both within the I.B.C.A. and outside of it, is worthy of a book of its own. Following the death of Dr. Aren Bestman in 1989 he took over as president of the I.B.C.A. until 1992.

The holiday home for the blind in Timmendorfer Strand on West



Germany's Baltic coast provided the venue for the 1st I.B.C.A. Individual Championship. Twenty-two players from seventeen countries competed in this event from the 3rd to the 11th of April 1966. Milenko Cabarkapa became the first European Champion, level on points with fellow Yugoslav, Djukanovic, on 7.5 from 9 rounds. Zeitler (West Germany) was third with 6.5 points.

Following him were Er's (Hungary) 6, Kristensen (Denmark) 5.5, Craciun (Romania), Bonham (Great Britain) and Pokorny (Czechoslovakia), all on 5 points. Joint ninth to sixteenth on 4.5 points were Mickeleit (East Germany), Krajewski (Poland), Winkelmann (Switzerland), Pastener (Austria), Bestman (Holland), Horrocks (Great Britain), Blom (Sweden) and Keating (Ireland). In addition to these, fellow chess enthusiasts from Finland, France and Spain also took part.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

As previously indicated, it was on the initiative of the British Braille Chess Association, chiefly the then Secretary, Hans Cohn, and thanks to the generous financial support of the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB), that the 3rd Blind Chess Olympiad, in conjunction with the 4th I.B.C.A. Congress, was able to take place from the 29th of March to the 10th of April 1968 in Weymouth on the south coast of Great Britain.

The main subjects dealt with in Weymouth at the 4th Congress were: to convert I.B.C.A. membership from individual membership of blind and partially sighted chess players to the membership of national blind chess organisations i.e. corporate membership. Each national blind chess association would send only one delegate to future congresses; this regulation remained in force until the 10th Congress in 1992. According to the constitution, individual membership, giving the right to contribute to discussions but no voting rights, would only be available to patrons of the association or to individuals whose country has no national chess organisation. Additionally, the Congress may award honorary membership.

It was in this context that a new regulation regarding subscriptions was passed, whereby national blind chess associations with up to fifty members would pay an annual subscription of 50 Swiss Francs to the I.B.C.A., one with fifty to a hundred members would pay 100 Swiss Francs and one with more than one hundred members would pay 150 Swiss Francs. This subscription structure remained in force until 1996.

At the election of the committee and its simultaneous expansion to a total of nine members, Mr Reginald Walter Bonham (Great Britain) was appointed as president, Herman Uekermann (West Germany) as vice-president, Hans Cohn (Great Britain) as secretary and treasurer, Anton Hartig (Austria) was now to be the press officer and Heinz Reschwamm (West Germany) was the director of correspondence chess tournaments. Chess colleagues Denes (Hungary), Kristensen (Denmark), Lap (Holland) and Sakic (Yugoslavia) were elected as committee members without offices.

Furthermore, it was decided that a secretariat comprising of Bonham, Uekermann and Cohn should be formed, which, when urgent

matters arose, would be able to act without consulting the whole committee in order to keep the I.B.C.A. running smoothly.

The question of the arrangements for future I.B.C.A. tournaments was settled by chess colleagues Lap (Holland), who gave the commitment that the 2nd Individual Championship would be held in the Netherlands in 1970 and Sakic (Yugoslavia), who undertook that the team championship (Blind Chess Olympiad) would take place in his homeland in 1972.

With a record entry of twenty teams from nineteen countries this tournament certainly ranks as a "Major Event". It gave the I.B.C.A. the chance to display its truly international identity: non-European teams from the U.S.A and Israel took part in the I.B.C.A. Team Championship for the first time. Another first for the organisation was the participation of the world's number one chess nation, the USSR. This provided the defending Yugoslavian team with strong competition and at the end of the tournament the team from the USSR emerged as the winner with a clear lead.

The Yugoslavian team took second place and behind them came the Romanian team, ahead of East Germany, Czechoslovakia (a unified state that existed at the time, and which was comprised of the Czech and Slovak Republics), Austria, West Germany, Spain, Ireland, Great Britain etc.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

Blind and partially sighted chess players from nineteen countries competed in the 2nd Individual Championship from the 28th of April to the 13th of May 1970 in Ermelo (Netherlands). This event was also the first World Championship for the blind and partially sighted because non-European members, the U.S.A. and Israel, had joined the association since the 1st Individual Championship had been held. The customary committee meetings took place in parallel with the 2nd Individual Championship of 1970, and along with other things, a revision of the rules for over the board play, with the assistance of the 2nd Individual Championship tournament director, Mr H. De Graaf (Holland), an expert in this field, was at the centre of the discussion.

The 2nd Individual Championship displayed a significantly higher standard of play. Milenko Cabarkapa (Yugoslavia), who had become the first Individual Blind Chess Champion four years earlier, had automatically qualified for this tournament, and this time he earned the title of the first World Blind Chess Champion with 8.5 points from 11 rounds. In second place was his countryman Dragun with 8 points, ahead of Novak (Czechoslovakia) on 7.5, Kristensen (Denmark) in fourth place on 7 points. Fellow chess players P. Er's (Hungary), W. Tiefenbacher (Austria), D. Bibas (Israel), P. Sand (West Germany) and S. Mitev (Bulgaria) were in joint fifth to ninth place with 6.5 points, whilst Sandrin (U.S.A.) and Traczyk (Poland) were tenth and eleventh respectively and Bestman (Holland) was twelfth on 5.5 etc. It only remains to mention that at the opening ceremony of the 2nd I.B.C.A. Individual Championship, the 1st World Championship for the Blind, the drawing of lots, amongst other things, was carried out by the former World Champion Dr. Max Euwe (Netherlands).

The 5th I.B.C.A. Congress (11th of April 1972), once again in conjunction with the 4th Blind Chess Olympiad, was held from the 6th to the 18th of April in Medulin near Pula (Yugoslavia).

The most notable event was the election of a new committee from which Reginald Walter Bonham (Great Britain), having served as president from the very start of the I.B.C.A., now retired on account of his age. However, he accepted the life long honorary presidency, which was offered to him by the I.B.C.A. Congress.

Other noteworthy points were that the positions of secretary and treasurer were finally separated and a FIDE liaison officer was incorporated into the committee.

Furthermore, the position of press officer was dropped owing to the discontinuation of the Information Circular, a decision that is difficult to understand and had consequences, which seriously endangered the cohesion of the I.B.C.A..

At this point it is necessary to add an observation made later by the 3rd President of the I.B.C.A.: in 1982 the member nations of the I.B.C.A. numbered thirty-four. The I.B.C.A. maintained close contact with the world chess association FIDE and finalised an arrangement with it in 1972. The I.B.C.A. and FIDE granted one another mutual permission to contribute to discussions at each other's general assemblies as well as the right to propose motions. The World Blind Chess Champion was to be awarded the title of "International Master" (according to the FIDE Congress in Malta in December 1980 [author's note]), and this was first bestowed on Sergei Krylov (Russia - at that time still the USSR). This award facilitated the integration of blind chess players by giving organisers an additional incentive to invite them to international tournaments.

The election of a new committee brought the following results:

President Hermann Uekermann

(West Germany)

1st Vice-President Milotin Sakic

(Yugoslavia)

2nd Vice-President Nikolai Rudensky

(USSR)

Secretary Hans Cohn

(Great Britain)

Treasurer Max Winkelmann

(Switzerland)

Director of Correspondence Chess Tournaments Heinz Reschwamm

(West Germany)

Assistant Director of Correspondence Chess McDonald

(U.S.A.)

FIDE Liaison Officer Dr. Aren Bestman

(Holland)

Committee member without office Jokic

(Yugoslavia)

Extensive consideration was also given to the proposed amendments and supplements to the I.B.C.A. statutes. Amongst other things it was established that in future each delegate could only collect two votes and that a maximum of two committee



members could be put forward by any one country.

In addition new versions of the Tournament Rules for over the board and correspondence chess were agreed, and as a result the correspondence chess program was significantly enhanced by the inclusion of the Correspondence Chess Olympiad.

McDonald (U.S.A.) declared that he was willing to organise the 1st Blind Correspondence Chess Olympiad.

As proposed by the USSR, the Secretariat, the I.B.C.A.'s executive body within the committee, was extended to a total of four members by the inclusion of the Director of Correspondence Chess Tournaments, H. Reschwamm.

The Congress also decided that in future, chess colleagues who had rendered outstanding services to the development of the I.B.C.A., and therefore to chess for the blind as a whole, should be awarded a Badge of Honour and that this award was first to be bestowed on Heinz Reschwamm (West Germany).

Twenty-two national member organisations took part in the 4th Blind Chess Olympiad - once again a new record. The 4th Blind Chess Olympiad, under the patronage of President Marschall Tito, was the first one to be run according to the system that is usually employed by FIDE:

Four preliminary groups - divided according to the results of the 3rd Blind Chess Olympiad in Weymouth, 1968 - compete for a place in the final group.

From the four preliminary groups, the teams from the USSR, Spain, Yugoslavia, Great Britain, Romania, Hungary, the U.S.A. and East Germany qualified for Final Group A.

At the end the two teams in front with a clear lead were the USSR with 21 points and Yugoslavia with 20.5 points. Once again, as in 1968, Romania finished third on 15.5, ahead of East Germany on 14.5, then Spain, Great Britain, the U.S.A. and Hungary.

In Group B Austria won through against Poland, while in Group C the Swiss had a surprise victory against the Danes.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

Earlier, Israel had made an offer to host the 3rd Individual Championship in 1974, but was obliged to withdraw it on account of the war which broke out in October 1974, the so-called Yom Kippur War.

So it was once again the "Deutsche Blindenschachbund" - DBSB (German Blind Chess Association), that stood in and held this tournament, albeit a little late, from the 17th of February to the 2nd of March in Bad Berleburg (North Rhine-Westphalia).

Twenty-four chess players from twenty-one countries took part. The tournament was under the patronage of the royal house of Sayn-Wittgenstein-Berleburg.

As is always the case at such events, committee meetings were also held to deal with the concerns that were current at the time. On this occasion Hans Cohn (Great Britain), secretary of the I.B.C.A., and Max Winkelmann (Switzerland), treasurer of the I.B.C.A., were awarded the I.B.C.A. Badge of Honour in recognition of their services to international chess for the blind.

For the first time in such a competition, chess players from Italy, New Zealand and the USSR were represented.

Nikolai Rudensky (USSR) became the new World Blind Chess Champion with 9 points from 11, ahead of Dr. Florian (Czechoslovakia), who had been hampered by a bad cold in the last third of the tournament. Nevertheless he managed to finish in second place, level with the defending ex-champion Milenko Cabarkapa (Yugoslavia), on 8.5 points.

After a clear gap, Zeitler (West Germany) and Mehidic (Yugoslavia) came 4th and 5th respectively with 7 points apiece.

Wünsche (East Germany) occupied the sixth place with 6.5 points, then Milotzki (West Germany), Manette (U.S.A.), Burdio (Spain), Walisiak (Poland) and Free (New Zealand) finished joint seventh to eleventh on 6 points each.

---

Just one year later, after other countries had notified the I.B.C.A. that they would be unable to hold the 5th Blind Chess Olympiad and the 6th I.B.C.A. Congress, Finland hosted these events from the 7th to the 21st of August 1976, which was a truly magnificent achievement.

Delegates from twenty-one countries took part in the Congress. The most important agenda item was first of all, as always, the election of the committee, which was presided over by FIDE representative and fellow chess enthusiast, Helme.

Committee officers Uekermann (president), Sakic (1st vice-president), Rudensky (2nd vice-president), Cohn (secretary), Winkelmann (treasurer), Reschwamm (director of correspondence chess) and Bestman (FIDE official) were re-elected. Newly elected committee members were Svein Tore Fesche (Norway) and Juan Fiter Rocamora (Spain).

At the request of several national representatives the duration of future I.B.C.A. correspondence chess tournaments was extended from 1.5 to 2 years.

The matter of standardising chess equipment was once again on the agenda and this time it was settled once and for all in favour of the suggestions that had been put forward some time earlier.

The Belgian representation generously declared that they were prepared to take on the organisation of the 4th Individual Championship, in conjunction with a possible Extraordinary Congress, in 1978. Also, the Netherlands was willing to make preparations for holding the 6th Blind Chess Olympiad in their

country in 1980.

At the 5th Blind Chess Olympiad, in which twenty-one national teams competed, there was almost a dead heat for first place between the teams from the USSR and Yugoslavia. Both had accumulated the same number of board points (34.5), so it was only the match points (USSR 10.5, Yugoslavia 9.5) that decided it in favour of the USSR, who took the highly sought-after gold medal for the third time. On this occasion the team from East Germany earned the bronze medal with 27.5 points, just ahead of Romania on 27. The tournament was under the direction of the Chief Arbiter, Vashesaar (USSR), who also works in this capacity for the "Fédération Internationale des Échecs" (FIDE) and the "International Correspondence Chess Federation" (ICCF).

The team from West Germany, which finished fifth, as well as the team from Czechoslovakia, which finished in seventh place behind the U.S.A. had substantially improved their performances. In eighth place was Great Britain, just ahead of Hungary, while the Spanish team had slipped back from 5th to 10th. The organisation of the event, which had principally been handled by International Master B"k (President of the Organisation and Tournament Director) together with fellow chess enthusiast Keijo Miettinen, was second to none.

---

Both the 3rd Individual Championship (9th to 23rd of September 1978) and the first Extraordinary I.B.C.A. Congress (15th September) took place in the old and historically very interesting town of Bruges (Belgium). One of the main reasons for holding the congress was the sudden death of the 2nd I.B.C.A. President, Hermann Uekermann (West Germany) on the 27th of October 1977. Chess enthusiast Uekermann, a co-founder of the I.B.C.A., had served as vice-president from 1958 to 1972 and as president since 1972. He had been president of the German Blind Chess Association until 1976 and was a leading figure who was responsible for running the following I.B.C.A. events; the Inaugural Congress of 1958 in Rheinbreitbach, the 2nd Congress alongside the 1st Blind Chess Olympiad of 1961 in Meschede, as well as the 1st Individual I.B.C.A. Championship of 1966 in Timmendorfer Strand and the 3rd Individual Championship of 1975 in Bad Berleburg. We will always remember him with gratitude.

The most important item on the agenda was the election of a new president, as had been called for by most of the delegates. On the suggestion of several delegates, committee member Dr. Aren Bestman (Netherlands) was elected to this office. Additionally, this had the big advantage that, as I.B.C.A. president, he would now be able to carry out the preparations for the 6th Blind Chess Olympiad that had been planned to take place under the best possible conditions in Holland in 1980.

Other items, for example the draft for a new set of tournament rules, a new version of the rules for playing on two boards, amendments to the statutes etc., were revised once again and then presented in a resolution to the Congress of 1980.

In addition, on the request of several national representatives, it was agreed that a half-yearly Information Circular would once



again be produced.

With twenty-six players from twenty-five countries competing in the Individual Championship, the I.B.C.A. could claim a new record number of participants. For the first time there was a player from Indonesia and one from Portugal. At the finish, there was a new World Blind Chess Champion, Sergei Krylov (USSR), who ended the tournament unbeaten on 10 points - he had only drawn against the players who finished second and third. In second place was the defending champion Rudensky (USSR) with 9 points, ahead of Baretic (Yugoslavia) on 8.5. Klaus-Peter Wunsche (East Germany), in fourth place with 7 points and Hans Zeitler (West Germany) on 6 points had changed places, while Delfin Burdio Gracia (Spain) had moved up from ninth to fifth. Considering the strength of the tournament, Dr. Florian (Czechoslovakia), the former silver medallist, who at the age of almost seventy was the most senior competitor in the event, could rightly be content with finishing in ninth place behind Atanasov (Bulgaria) and Dr. W. Tiefenbacher (Austria). Also, T. S. Fesche (Norway), who had been bottom in the 3rd Individual Championship due to illness, now finished tenth, thereby proving his true playing strength.

At the closing ceremony, Roger Dhaenekint (Belgium), the tournament director, was awarded the I.B.C.A. Badge of Honour, to the enthusiastic approval of the players.

---

The 6th Blind Chess Olympiad (13th to 25th of August, 1980) and the 7th I.B.C.A. Congress (17th of August), were held along with several committee meetings in the conference centre at Noordwijkerhout, near the old and respected university town of Leiden. The whole of this major event was under the patronage of Her Royal Highness, Princess Margariet of the Netherlands, who even insisted on being present in person at the opening ceremony.

The General Secretary of FIDE, Mrs. Bakker, together with many representatives of the Netherlands offered words of welcome to the participants.

The playing of the Chess Olympiad anthem was particularly impressive. Never before had an I.B.C.A. event been prepared with such thoroughness and generosity.

For the first time, the only way to work through the extensive Congress Agenda was to run meetings in parallel. But only a few points have been selected for inclusion here.

Once again the definition of blindness was up for discussion, because in previous tournaments as well as at the present one, many participants continued to suspect that some of their fellow chess players might have too much sight. It was decided to keep the previously established limit of 10 percent of normal vision or a narrowing of the field of vision by twenty degrees, which was a new condition.

Every participant in I.B.C.A. tournaments was obliged to present to the organiser a certificate either issued by an eye

specialist or validated by the appropriate national organisation for the blind, to indicate how much sight the player has. However, totally blind players only need to provide this proof on the first occasion when they enter an I.B.C.A. tournament.

Additionally, the statutes were extended to the effect that, in future, sighted supporters could join the I.B.C.A. and a maximum of two sighted people could be elected to the committee.

Furthermore it was decided that from 1981 an international chess calendar would be produced in which all of the larger international events that had been planned would be recorded. Unfortunately this calendar still left a lot to be desired because many countries either failed altogether to notify the I.B.C.A. president of the dates of their events or missed the deadline.

The British Braille Chess Association announced that they were willing to hold the 5th Individual Championship in 1982 on the occasion of their Golden Jubilee but at that point in time no organiser had been found for the 7th Blind Chess Olympiad and the associated 8th I.B.C.A. Congress.

In recognition of his great achievements at sighted international chess tournaments, chess enthusiast Baretic (Yugoslavia) was presented with the I.B.C.A. Badge of Honour.

Teams from a record number of twenty-three countries, including the first ever Italian team, took part in the 6th Blind Chess Olympiad in the Netherlands. On this occasion it was run on roughly the same system as in 1972.

The teams from the USSR, Yugoslavia and East Germany reaffirmed their positions in the 1976 event by once again taking Gold, Silver and Bronze respectively, while the team from West Germany finished in fourth place ahead of the U.S.A., Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia. The highest placed teams in Final Group B were Bulgaria then Austria and in Final Group C Ireland finished top just ahead of Norway.

The highlight of the 14 days of play, battle and work was the closing ceremony and prize-giving, which was carried out by Ex-World Champion Dr. Max Euwe (Netherlands), with a lot of participation from everyone present.

---

The 5th Individual Championship was held in Hastings, Great Britain from the 3rd to the 17th of April 1982. To mark the 50th Anniversary of the oldest national blind chess organisation, the British Braille Chess Association's committee had set themselves the goal of holding the 5th Individual Championship, together with a number of smaller tournaments, in their jubilee year. On the occasion of the centenary of the famous Hastings Chess Club, which was due to be celebrated in the same year, this lovely town on the south coast of England promptly offered itself as a venue. Twenty-seven players from twenty-four countries fought for glory and their tournament places over eleven rounds under the experienced control of three International F.I.D.E. Arbiters; Chief Arbiter and International

Master Mr. Harry Golombek (Great Britain), his assistant Mrs. Grzeskowiak (West Germany) and Tournament Director Mr. Gerry Walsh (Great Britain). For the first time there was a representative from the South American continent, namely Chile, amongst the competitors.

That fact that the final positions from second down were only decided in the last round shows just how hard-fought the event had been. The defending Champion, Sergei Krylov (USSR), played supremely well and followed his success in Brugge by becoming World Blind Chess Champion for the second time with 9.5 points from 11 rounds. In doing so, he also qualified for the title of International Master, which the FIDE Congress in Malta had bestowed on World Blind Chess Champions.

Narrowly ahead of Wönsche (East Germany), who finished in third place with 7.5 points, Rudensky (USSR) on 8 points managed to retain the second place that had been his at the 4th Individual Championship. On 7 points, fellow chess enthusiast Zier (West Germany) earned a respectable fourth place, just ahead of chess master Djukanovic (Yugoslavia).

Chess master Baretic, who had been somewhat unlucky in his games, was certainly not altogether pleased with finishing in sixth place on 6.5 points, whereas prior to the event Sandrin (U.S.A.) would hardly have expected to come seventh. Eighth to tenth were Atanasov (Bulgaria), ahead of the youngest competitor in the tournament, Enjuto (Spain) and Benson (Great Britain).

---

Unfortunately the U.S.A. was unable to keep its promise of holding the 7th Blind Chess Olympiad in conjunction with the 8th I.B.C.A. Congress in 1984. In 1985, Spain stepped in as a replacement.

The 8th I.B.C.A. Congress that was held as part of this event on the 11th of May 1985 in Benidorm (Spain) partially re-elected the committee that had been chosen in Holland. However, two important posts were filled by new incumbents, Roger Cosandey (Switzerland) as treasurer and Jan Berglund (Sweden) as secretary. During detailed discussions, the Congress mainly occupied itself with the relationship between the I.B.C.A. and the "International Blind Sports Association" (IBSA), the umbrella organisation of all sports for the blind and partially sighted, but was unable to reach a definitive decision. The committee was merely asked to continue talks with the IBSA.

The Tournament Schedule was expanded in two important areas: an I.B.C.A. Women's World Championship and Junior World Championship were to be included in the framework.

The 7th Blind Chess Olympiad brought no great surprises. Teams from twenty blind chess associations competed in the event, which was held from the 5th to the 19th of May 1985 and was won by the USSR. Here are the results of the competition:

Position	Country	Points
1.	.... USSR .....	24.0
2.	.... Yugoslavia .....	20.5



3.	..... Poland .....	15.5
4.	..... West Germany .....	12.5
5.	..... East Germany .....	12.5
6.	..... Great Britain .....	11.5
7.	..... Finland .....	8.0
8.	..... Israel .....	7.5

Some figures are included here to give an idea of the size of such an event: To start with there was a total of 98 players in Benidorm - a truly major event. In addition there were all the guides, the tournament control team and, not least, those taking part in the I.B.C.A. Congress, as well as people on the committee, by no means all of whom were playing in the event, and who therefore increased the number of people who needed to be present.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

On behalf of the I.B.C.A., the "Deutsche Blindenschachbund" DBSB (German Blind Chess Association) held the first Women's World Chess Championship for the Blind and Partially Sighted in Bad Liebenzell (West Germany) from the 13th to the 23rd of September 1986. Twenty ladies took part. The event was clearly dominated by Poland. Teresa Debowska became the first World Women's Champion of the "International Braille Chess Association" with 6.5 points from 7 rounds, followed by Krystyna Perszewska (both from Poland). Annamarie Maeckelbergh (Belgium) finished in third place with 4.5 points. The highest placed representative of the host nation, Hannelore K $\square$ bel, was fourth, also on 4.5 points.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

Also in 1986 the World Men's Championship was held in Moscow (USSR) from the 6th to the 20th of October. Twenty-three nations competed in this eleven round Swiss event. The following people were established as the top players in the I.B.C.A.:

1.	Vladimir Berlinski .....	(USSR) .....	8.5
2.	Piotr Dukaczewski .....	(Poland) .....	8.5
3.	Olaf Dobierzin .....	(East Germany) ...	8.0
4.	J"rgen Magnusson .....	(Sweden) .....	7.5

iiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii

The 9th Congress was held on the 23rd of May 1988 in conjunction with the 8th Blind Chess Olympiad, which took place in Zalaegerszeg (Hungary). Twenty-five national blind chess organisations were represented. It began with the remembrance of one of the pioneers of the I.B.C.A. and one of its most industrious workers, the Director of Correspondence Chess, Heinz Reschwamm, who had held this post since the foundation of the I.B.C.A. in 1958 right up until his death in January 1987 i.e. for nearly twenty-nine years.

The Congress in Zalaegerszeg (Hungary) resolved that the F.I.D.E. regulations regarding playing times should be adopted

by the I.B.C.A. - six hour playing sessions with two time controls (40 moves in two hours, then an additional hour for a further 20 moves). Only after six hours have elapsed and 60 moves have been played may the game be adjourned.

Once again the Congress looked into the problem of defining blindness, but without reaching a decision.

The top eight countries at the 8th Blind Chess Olympiad at Zalaegerszeg (Hungary), 17th to 30th of April, were as follows:

Position	Country	Points
1.	.... USSR .....	39.0
2.	.... Yugoslavia .....	35.0
3.	.... Hungary .....	30.5
4.	.... Poland .....	28.5
5.	.... Austria .....	25.5
6.	.... West Germany .....	24.0
7.	.... East Germany .....	24.0
8.	.... Great Britain .....	24.0

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

Twenty-two players from eleven countries took part in the 2nd Women's Individual Championship for the Blind and Partially Sighted, a ten round Swiss tournament that was held in Klimczoke Bjelskobiala (Poland) from the 1st to the 15th of October, 1989.

Within the framework of this event, the I.B.C.A. Committee met on the 13th and 14th of October. Firstly, they commemorated the death of Dr. Aren Bestman, third president of the I.B.C.A.. The committee agreed to entrust Hans H. Cohn with handling the current affairs until the Extraordinary Congress, which was scheduled to take place in conjunction with the 7th Individual Championship in Wunsiedel (West Germany) in 1990.

Spain offered to host not only the 9th Blind Chess Olympiad but also the 3rd Women's World Championship for the Blind and Partially Sighted. Furthermore Delfin Burdio Gracia (Spain), committee member and future 5th President of the I.B.C.A., proposed to the meeting that the I.B.C.A. should establish a new tradition by introducing the "World Cup Tournament". Each of the twelve highest placed member organisations at the last Blind Chess Olympiad would be invited to send a four-man team with up to two reserve players to the new event. The format of the tournament had already been considered: an eleven round all-play-all.

The committee deplored the fact that there were not enough tournament controllers available, who were sufficiently familiar with the concept of playing on two boards, as stipulated for I.B.C.A. tournaments. It is necessary for the president, a vice-president or other committee member to be on the organising committee of all events at which blind and partially sighted players take part, or at the very least, to be present at the more important meetings of these bodies.

In connection with the problem of those players who still have a sufficiently large degree of sight, there were also

discussions as to whether the use of boards other than the Braille ones specifically designed for blind people should be prohibited at official I.B.C.A. events.

## 2nd Women's World Championship for the Blind and Partially Sighted:

Position	Name	Country	Points
1.	.... Lubow Zsiltzova .....	Ukraine ....	10.0
2.	.... Teresa Debowska .....	Poland .....	7.5
3.	.... Hannelore K $\square$ bel .....	Germany .....	7.5
4.	.... Annamarie Maeckelbergh ..	Belgium .....	6.5

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

The 7th I.B.C.A. Individual Championship was held in Wunsiedel (West Germany) from the 7th to the 21st of April 1990. Twenty-four member organisations participated in the 2nd Extraordinary I.B.C.A. Congress, which took place within the framework of this event. Following the death of the 3rd I.B.C.A. President, Dr. Aren Bestman, in 1989, the hitherto 1st Vice-President, Hans H. Cohn, who had already been performing the role of president on a temporary basis, was elected by the Congress to be the new president. Furthermore, it was necessary to elect replacements for the retiring committee members, the Secretary, J. Berglund (Sweden) and the Finance Officer, O. Runtemund (West Germany). Delfin Burdio Gracia (Spain) was elected as 1st vice-president and Piotr Strijniev (USSR) as the 2nd vice-president. Hans-Gerd Sch $\ddot{u}$ fer (West Germany) was elected to the office of secretary. The F.I.D.E. representative, Frantizek Blatny, reported that, in Novi Sad, F.I.D.E. had rejected the idea of an I.B.C.A. team competing in the Chess Olympiad.

To strengthen the relationship with FIDE, the newly elected 1st Vice-President, Delfin Burdio Gracia, was designated as an additional liaison officer, a move that was to prove very beneficial for the organisation. The 1st vice-president offered to work on the arrangements for the 9th Olympiad for the Partially Sighted and Blind in Spain. In addition, he offered to bring another I.B.C.A. tournament into being later that year (1990): The World Cup, to which, according to its definition, the top twelve teams from the last Blind Chess Olympiad would be invited.

Thirty players from twenty-three national blind chess organisations took part in the 7th I.B.C.A. Individual Championship, the World Championship of the Blind and Partially Sighted. As expected, Soviet players dominated the competition. At the end of the eleven round Swiss event, the first eight places were as follows:

1	Khamdamov, S.....	USR	8.0	....	5	Dukaczewski, P...	POL	7.5
2	Berlinski, V.....	USR	7.5	....	6	Smirnov, S.....	USR	7.0
3	Avram, S.....	YUG	7.5	....	7	Lilley, G.....	ENG	6.5
4	Magnusson, J.....	SWE	7.5	....	8	Platt, I.....	ISR	6.5

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

The I.B.C.A.'s strongest team tournament, the World Cup, was



held for the first time in the old Spanish royal town of Segovia in the first half of December 1990. Eleven teams of four players each, plus reserves, made the journey to this all-play-all event. The experienced FIDE and I.B.C.A. Arbiter, Roger Dhaenekint (Belgium) controlled the tournament. Some good chess was on display here and the media took a keen interest in it. Here are the results of the first I.B.C.A. World Cup. The figure shown after the abbreviation of the country is the total number of board points.

1. USSR ....	32.5	7. HUN .....	19.0
2. JUG .....	27.0	8. ESP .....	17.0
3. POL .....	26.0	9. FIN .....	12.5
4. GER .....	24.0	10. IRE .....	10.5
5. ENG .....	23.5	11. ISR .....	6.5
6. CSR .....	21.5		

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

The 9th Blind Chess Olympiad took place in Ca'n Picaforte on Majorca (Spain). It attracted a record entry of thirty-three countries.

The tenth I.B.C.A. Congress, which was held on the 19th of April alongside this event, firstly honoured the memory of the deceased former President, Dr. Aren Bestman, as this was the first Ordinary Congress since his death in 1989. The president acknowledged his contributions. Afterwards, in his capacity as chairman of the committee for chess notation, Hans H. Cohn reported on the drafting of a chess notation for the blind, which can represent all the information from Chess Informator in a Braille format.

The following were newly elected to the committee: President: Delfin Burdio Gracia (Spain), 1st Vice-President: Ludwig Beutelhoff (Germany), Treasurer: Bernhard Sueess (Switzerland), FIDE Representative: Frantizek Blatny (Czechoslovakia), Director of Correspondence Chess: Jan J. Honing (Netherlands), Committee Members without offices: Lubow Zsiltzowa (Ukraine) and Saulo Torres Renifo (Columbia).

The medals for the 16th Individual Correspondence Chess Championship for the Blind and Partially Sighted were presented to the delegates of the appropriate national organisations. They had been won by:

Gold Klaus-Peter Wünsche ..... GER  
Silver Friedrich Baumgartner ..... AUT  
Bronze Erhard Hoffmann ..... GER

The top fourteen teams in the 9th Chess Olympiad for the Blind and Partially Sighted, an eleven round Swiss in which thirty-three national member organisations took part, were as follows:

1. RUS ...	34.5	8. ENG ...	24.0
2. JUG ...	31.5	9. CSR ...	23.5
3. UKR ...	31.0	10. ISR ...	23.5
4. POL ...	29.5	11. BUL ...	23.0
5. GER ...	29.0	12. SUI ...	22.5

6.	ESP	...	24.0	13.	ITA	...	22.5
7.	CRO	...	24.0	14.	ROM	...	22.5

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

The 3rd Women's World Championship for the Blind and Partially Sighted took place from the 18th to the 26th of September 1993, in the small Spanish town of La Roda (Province Albacete), approximately 200 Km south of Madrid. FIDE and I.B.C.A. Arbiter, Frantizek Blatny (Czech Republic) controlled this eight round Swiss event, in which eighteen competitors from eleven countries took part. From the start it was never in doubt that Lubow Zsiltzova (Ukraine) would successfully defend her title. It was indeed a clear runaway victory, although Olga Bondar (also Ukraine) came away with 7 points from the eight rounds as well. The four highest placed ladies were:

Position	Name	Country	Points	Tie-Break
Points				
1.	.... L. Zsiltzova .....	Ukraine .....	7.0 .....	32
2.	.... O. Bondar .....	Ukraine .....	7.0 .....	31
3.	.... T. Debowska .....	Poland .....	5.5 .....	26
4.	.... C. Salas .....	Spain .....	5.5 .....	24

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

The 2nd I.B.C.A. World Cup Tournament was allocated to Poland. It was held during the first half of May 1994 in a holiday home for the blind in Ustron on the Vistula. A completely delightful surprise was in store for the sixty players who made the journey there by plane and train on the 30th of April. Everything had been arranged in the best way possible: the production of the bulletin, the playing facilities, the accommodation and catering as well as cultural encounters with the country and its people.

It should be recorded here that in the committee meetings, which took place during this event, the I.B.C.A. president made a report on his participation in the 63rd FIDE Congress of autumn 1993 in Curitiba (Brazil). On this occasion the I.B.C.A. not only became entitled to a seat and a vote at the FIDE Congress, but was also given the right to send both a men's and a women's team to the 31st FIDE Chess Olympiad in October 1994.

A technical note regarding the following table: At the previous (9th) Olympiad in Ca'n Picafort, which by definition was judged to be the qualifying event for the World Cup, the Czech and Slovak Republics had earned their place jointly whilst playing together as Czechoslovakia. Despite the two states having separated politically in the meantime, they nevertheless competed in the World Cup as a single team. For this reason their team is still represented with the abbreviation CSR in the table below. Here are the results:

1.	RUS	...	35.5	7.	ISR	...	22.0
2.	UKR	...	32.5	8.	ROM	...	19.0
3.	ESP	...	27.0	9.	BUL	...	16.0
4.	CRO	...	27.0	10.	ENG	...	16.0
5.	GER	...	26.0	11.	ITA	...	11.0
6.	POL	...	22.0	12.	CSR	...	10.0

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

It was not until January 1995 that the 8th I.B.C.A. Individual Championship, with a record entry of thirty-six players from thirty-one countries, was held in Torrevieja, near Alicante (Spain) on the coast of the Mediterranean. An Extraordinary I.B.C.A. Congress took place alongside it. New committee members were needed because the treasurer and the director of correspondence chess were obliged to give up their posts on account of health reasons and overwork respectively.

The president stated that there was now hardly a single member organisation that was in a position to hold such a huge event and consequently the I.B.C.A. must tackle the problem itself. Therefore there needs to be an individual solution for every single I.B.C.A. tournament, as for the current event, which was arranged with the help of the Spanish Organisation for the Blind, O.N.C.E.. He also reported on his participation in the 63rd FIDE Congress in Curitiba (Brazil) in October 1993, where the I.B.C.A., as the only international organisation, had become entitled to a seat and a vote at the FIDE Congress, the same status as each of the national representatives.

This resolution, which the I.B.C.A. had long been striving for, came into effect in 1994. A women's and a men's team took part in the FIDE Chess Olympiad in Moscow from the 1st to the 16th of December 1994. The women's team consists of three players and a reserve. The men's team consists of four players and up to two reserves.

It is important to mention that, at the Extraordinary Congress Torrevieja (Spain), the I.B.C.A. completed work on the rules, including its own set of regulations in respect of titles. These had been drafted along the lines of the FIDE model by FIDE and I.B.C.A. Arbiter, Frantizek Blatny, and the I.B.C.A. 1st Vice-President, Ludwig Beutelhoff.

In the I.B.C.A., the radical political changes that began at the end of the 1980's manifested themselves most noticeably in the emergence of a number of new member organisations. The name of Russia reappeared and other new member organisations came forward from Latvia, Croatia, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Ukraine and Kazakhstan.

After that the President of the "International Blind Sports Association" (IBSA), Enrique Sanz Jimenez (Spain), made a speech to the delegates. He promised unified action and a united organisation of all blind and partially sighted people. Admittedly, the Congress was unable to reach a final decision to affiliate the I.B.C.A. to the IBSA on account of the frequent obstacles presented by state regulations in many Western European democracies. Even the relevant rules of the IBSA only allowed for national representations. However, since this time the two organisations have worked so closely together that the International Braille Chess Association is a de facto member of the IBSA.

The new member organisations were well represented in the results of the Individual World Championship for the Blind and



Partially Sighted. The new champion came from Asia (Kazakhstan). The top twenty places were as follows:

1. Jounoussow (KAZ) 7.0	11. Zsilzowa (UKR) ... 4.5
2. Berlinski (RUS) . 6.5	12. Rehorek (CZE) ... 4.5
3. Suder (POL) ..... 6.0	13. Torres (COL) .... 4.5
4. Krylov (RUS) .... 5.5	14. Alon (ISR) ..... 4.5
5. Wassin (UKR) .... 5.5	15. Rev (HUN) ..... 4.5
6. Durban (ESP) .... 5.5	16. Benson (ENG) .... 4.0
7. Sakic (CRO) ..... 5.5	17. Peltonen (FIN) .. 4.0
8. Irimia (ROM) .... 5.0	18. Palacios (ESP) .. 4.0
9. Markov (JUG) .... 5.0	19. Raigna (EST) .... 4.0
10. Cabarkapa (JUG) . 5.0	20. Doyle (IRE) ..... 4.0

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

In the first half of July 1995, following an idea from the I.B.C.A. President, Delfin Burdio Gracia, the first I.B.C.A Open Championship was held in Benasque, Huesca, in the Spanish Pyrenees. A player from each of the European member organisations was invited and a place was available to every member of these member organisations. Seventy-five players from Europe and Israel took part. The reigning I.B.C.A. Individual Champion from Kazakhstan finished in fifth place.

1. Krylov (RUS) .... 7.5	7. Durban (ESP) .... 6.5
2. Zsiltzowa (UKR) . 7.0	8. Wassin (UKR) .... 6.0
3. Berlinski (RUS) . 7.0	9. Pohlers (GER) ... 6.0
4. Zoltek (POL) .... 7.0	10. Gorbea (ESP) .... 6.0
5. Jounoussow (KAZ) 6.5	11. Muri (SLO) ..... 6.0
6. Strijniev (RUS) . 6.5	12. Bibas (ISR) ..... 6.0

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

For the first time a major I.B.C.A. event, the 10th Blind Chess Olympiad, was not to be held in Europe - nor even in the Northern Hemisphere. The planned venue was in Brazil. A Latin American country had been chosen for two important reasons: firstly so that the I.B.C.A. could justify its claim of being a world-wide organisation, and secondly so that the Latin American blind chess organisations had the chance to participate in the event in large numbers. In respect of the second aim, the 10th Blind Chess Olympiad was not very fruitful as only five Latin American teams entered. Nevertheless, the event, which had been heavily burdened with all manner of imponderables from the outset, can be described as a success and it was run in a thoroughly satisfactory way.

The 11th I.B.C.A. Congress took place on the 9th of July; twenty-nine national blind chess organisations were represented. The president summarised that over the last four years that he had been in office he had at least partly managed to realise his aims of increasing the membership and improving co-operation with other organisations for the blind as well as with FIDE. The number of member organisations had been increased. Relations with the IBSA had been considerably improved. The 63rd FIDE Congress in Curitiba (Brazil) in 1993, had granted the I.B.C.A. rights equal to those of a national representative i.e. a seat and vote at FIDE Congresses, and had accepted a Women's

and a Men's team to participate in the FIDE Olympiad.

The I.B.C.A. Congress elected the Spaniard, Jesus Montoro Martinez to the office of treasurer. Unfortunately, the post of director of correspondence chess could not be filled. The three committee members without office are:

Dr. Jos, Miguel Cabanellas Moreno (Argentina), Edgar Rico Hernandez (Columbia) and Sergei Krylov (Russia).

In principle, the Congress agreed with the president's suggestion to hold a European Team Championship.

A special honour was bestowed on Milenko Cabarkapa who, from 1961 onwards had actively taken part in all ten of the I.B.C.A. Olympiads.

Thirty teams took part in the 10th Blind Chess Olympiad in Laguna (Brazil) in the State of Santa Catarina from the 1st to the 10th of June 1996. The host nation entered two teams. The Olympiad took the form of a nine round Swiss and was controlled by FIDE and I.B.C.A. Arbiter, Frantizek Blatny (Czech Republic), assisted by Mrs Palas Veloso and Alexandru Segal (both Brazil). The top fourteen places were as follows:

1. Russia ..... 28.0	8. Hungary ..... 19.5
2. Ukraine ..... 24.5	9. Great Britain ... 19.5
3. Belarus ..... 22.5	10. Estonia ..... 19.5
4. Poland ..... 22.5	11. Macedonia ..... 19.5
5. Yugoslavia .. 21.0	12. Bulgaria ..... 19.5
6. Spain ..... 20.5	13. Austria ..... 19.0
7. Germany ..... 20.0	14. Croatia ..... 19.0

Here is a summary of the players who achieved the best results on each board:

Board 1:	Board 3:
I. Krylov (RUS) 8,0	I. Kaap (EST) 7,5
II. Gonzalez (ARG) 7,0	II. Gerold (AUT) 7,0
III. Wassin (UKR) 6,5	III. Rossikhin (BLA) 6,0
Board 2:	Board 4:
I. Berlinski (RUS) 6,5	I. Tatarczak (POL) 7,5
II. Katchanov (BLA) 6,5	II. Tchaitchis (BLA) 7,0
III. Benson (ENG) 6,5	III. Covas (POR) 6,0
Reserve	
I. Jatshyschin (UKR) 5,5	
II. Mikhalev (RUS) 4,5	
III. Manacias (GRE) 4,5	

AA

The 4th Women's World Championship for the Blind and Partially Sighted was held in Guadamar near Alicante (Spain) from the 15th to the 23rd of November 1997. It took the form of an eight round Swiss. For the third time Ljubow Sziltzowa (Ukraine) won the title very convincingly. Here are the results:

Name points	Country	Points	Tie-break
----------------	---------	--------	-----------

1. Ljubow Sziltzowa ..... UKR ..... 7.5
2. Teresa Debowska ..... POL ..... 6.0 ..... 22.5 - 27.5
3. Annamarie Maeckelbergh . BEL ..... 6.0 ..... 22.5 - 27.5
4. Irena Skerute ..... LTU ..... 4.5 ..... 21.5

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

The Spanish town of Logroño, situated half way along the river Ebro, with roughly 130,000 inhabitants played host to the 3rd I.B.C.A. World Cup from the 17th to the 27th of February 1998. Unfortunately, three of the teams who had qualified for this event by finishing among the top twelve at the last Olympiad (Brazil, 1996) were unable to take part for various reasons. Therefore there were only nine teams who presented themselves to compete in this event. Even the reserve teams who had finished 13th, 14th and 15th in the 10th Blind Chess Olympiad (i.e. Austria, Croatia and Sweden respectively) were unable to step in. Here are the final positions:

- |                            |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Russia .... 23.0        | 6. Yugoslavia .. 14.5 |
| 2. Ukraine ... 19.5        | 7. Belarus ..... 13.0 |
| 3. Poland .... 19.0 [11.0] | 8. Hungary ..... 11.5 |
| 4. Spain ..... 19.0 [09.0] | 9. Macedonia ... 9.0  |
| 5. Germany ... 15.5        |                       |

The individual board medals were won by (the number in square brackets indicates how many games the individual had played):

Board 1:

- 1 Dukaczewski (POL) 7.0 [8]
2. Krylov (RUS) ... 5.5 [8]
3. Wassin (UKR) ... 5.5 [8]

Board 3:

1. Martinez (ESP) . 5.0 [7]
2. Avram (YUG) .... 5.0 [8]
3. Kroeger (GER) .. 5.0 [8]

Board 2:

1. Zoltek (POL) ... 5.5 [7]
2. Berlinski (RUS) 4.5 [7]
3. Zsiltzova (UKR) 4.5 [8]

Board 4:

1. Mikhalev (RUS) .. 6.0 [7]
2. Yatsyshyn (UKR) 6.0 [8]
3. Mora (ESP) ..... 4.5 [7]

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

The Extraordinary Congress, which was held on the 40th Anniversary of the I.B.C.A. as part of the 9th World Championship for the Blind and Partially Sighted, took place over two days from the 10th to the 11th of July 1998 in Brno (Czech Republic). The usual reports on the various activities of the committee members were received. At this point it should be mentioned that the president announced the introduction of a championship for the American continent. He also reported the intention to set up similar events in Africa and Asia, provided that enough members could be found there. Four Indian players were taking part in the event. The I.B.C.A. president said that initial contacts with other countries had been made.

At the end of his report, the 2nd Vice-President, Tadeus Milewski (POL), invited the member organisations to the 2nd European Championship in Krynica (POL) in 1999.

The FIDE Representative, Frantizek Blatny, proposed that the Congress should appoint twenty-four I.B.C.A. Arbiters.



Frantizek Blatny gave assurances that only arbiters who had often controlled tournaments for the blind and partially sighted and who were familiar with play on two boards were included in this number. His suggestion was unanimously approved.

The President presented the medals for the 17th World Correspondence Chess Championship for the Blind and Partially Sighted. They were awarded to:

Gold: Herbert Z"chling ..... (AUT)  
 Silver: Klaus-Peter W"nsche .... (GER)  
 Bronze: Hans H. Cohn ..... (ENG)

The 9th I.B.C.A. Individual World Championship for the Blind and Partially Sighted was organised by the Czech association and took place in the town of Brno (Czech Republic). In order to arrange the tournament and the associated Congress, "40 Years of the International Braille Chess Association", in the most representative way possible, the committee decided that on this one occasion up to four players from each member organisation would be allowed to enter the 9th Individual World Championship. Eighty-six players from thirty-two member organisations took part. Our two chess friends from Yugoslavia, Milenko Cabarkapa, who had won the first and second championships (Timmendorfer Strand [GER], 1966 and Ermelo [HOL], 1970) and Predrag Milicevic, were regrettably obliged to withdraw after the second round because of an accident involving their guide. Mouret Zunusov (2425) from Kazakhstan (FIDE ID: 2010801), who had been the reigning world champion for four years, was unable to defend his title. He finished the tournament in twelfth place with 6 points. Sergei Smirnov from Russia finished in first place in the 9th World Championship and in doing so became the new World Champion of the Blind and Partially Sighted with 7.5 points from the nine rounds.

#### Table of Results:

1.	Sergei Smirnov ... (RUS)	.....	7.5			
2.	Sergei Wassin .... (UKR)	.....	7.0	36.0	48.5	38.0
3.	Vladimir Berlinski (RUS)	.....	7.0	35.0	52.0	40.0
4.	Juan Durban ..... (ESP)	.....	7.0	33.5	44.0	35.5
5.	Jan Tatarczak .... (POL)	.....	7.0	32.0	48.0	38.0

#### The following players all had 6 points:

6.	K. Bjering (DEN)	11.	V. Tchaitchits (BLR)
7.	S. Krylov (RUS)	12.	M. Zunusov (KAZ)
8.	I. Rossikhin (BLR)	13.	J. Martinez (ESP)
9.	P. Dukaczewski (POL)	14.	B. Rosican (LTU)
10.	T. Zoltek (POL)	15.	V. Smoliakov (RUS)

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

The International Braille Chess Association is associated with FIDE according to an agreement in 1973. Since the 31st FIDE Chess Olympiad in Moscow 1994 an I.B.C.A. team has played in both the Men's and the Women's events. The I.B.C.A. is the only non-national organisation to whom FIDE has granted this right. What about the results? Naturally they will follow shortly and they illustrate that blind and partially sighted chess players are capable of the same level of achievement that is sustained there. But it is much more important, to quote loosely from

Pierre De Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympic movement, that the blind and partially sighted have the chance to participate, as well as to show that they have developed techniques, which allow them to compete against sighted chess players. They should have the opportunity to demonstrate that they also can experience the joy of the "Game of Kings".

### 31st FIDE Olympiad

The I.B.C.A. Women's team comprised of the I.B.C.A. Women's Champion, Lubow Zsiltzowa [10.5 points from 13 games] (Ukraine), Olga Bondar [4 out of 11] (Ukraine), Teresa Debowska [4 out of 12] (Poland) and Concepcion Salas [1.5 out of 8] (Spain).

With a performance of 10.5 points from 13 games, the Ukrainian lady, Lubow Zsiltzowa, beat the best known female players in the world by winning the Gold Medal for the best results on board one.

AA

### The World Women's Champion

This section is dedicated to the Ukrainian lady, Lubow Wassiljewna Sziltzowa, multiple winner of the I.B.C.A. World Women's Championship for the Blind and Partially Sighted. The fourth child in the family of the teacher, Lyssenko, she was born on the 20th of October 1956 in the village of Beresnjaki in the Cherkassy area of the Smela district. All members of the family played chess and Luba, as she is known throughout the I.B.C.A. where she is valued as a person as much as she is feared as an opponent, naturally accrued her combinative powers. From virtually her first year in school onwards, her talent was discovered and was steadfastly encouraged by Roman Viktorowitsch Bojarintzew, who was the leader of the chess circle from the House of Pioneers and an excellent teacher. However, Bojarintzew always adhered to the principle that "sport should never disrupt a normal education". He also placed great emphasis on the necessity of fairness in chess.

Luba felt that her pursuit of chess and the skills she acquired from it were of benefit to her in daily school lessons. Whilst still a young girl she greatly enjoyed travelling, which, as a strong player she was able to do in order to get to the various tournaments and matches. In 1969, as a girl still in her sixth year at school, she attained the title of Smela Women's Champion - a great achievement.

She won many a tournament. What was her style of play? She preferred to be on the attack. Bojarintzew was a dedicated supporter of e4 openings. In her early years Luba played the King's Gambit; probably because the first chess theory book that was available to her had been written by Emanuel Schiffers in 1896 and the King's Gambit was very highly thought of at that time.

AA

Members of the Men's team were: Sergei Krylov [8.5 points from 13 games] (Russia), Piotr Dukaczewski [6.5 from 13] (Poland),

Durban [2 from 9] (Spain), Sergei Wassin [6 from 11] (Ukraine),  
N. Rudensky [3.5 from 9] (Russia), D. Burdio [0 from 1] (Spain).

Final Results:

With 20 points from a possible 42 the women's team came 54th out  
of 81 teams.

The men's team finished 80th out of 124 with 26.5 points from a  
possible 56.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

32nd FIDE Olympiad

Two I.B.C.A. teams (a women's and a men's) took part in the 32nd  
FIDE Olympiad. The women's team achieved 58th place out of 74  
teams and the men's team finished 71st out of 113. Playing for  
the I.B.C.A. were:

Women: Teresa Debowska [8.5 from 14] (Poland), Concepcion Salas  
[5.5 from 13] (Spain), Jozefa Spychala [4.5 from 12] (Poland),  
Angela Karnisian [0.5 from 3] (Captain - Armenia). A total of  
19 points. Coach: Richard Bernard (Poland).

Men: Sergei Krylov [7 from 13] (Russia), Vladimir Berlinski [9  
from 14] (Russia), Piotr Dukaczewski [4 from 10] (Poland),  
Dieter Bischoff [4.5 from 10] (Germany), Julio Mora [1.5 from 6]  
(Spain), Delfin Burdio Gracia [0.5 from 3] (Spain). A total of  
26.5 points. Coach: Victoriano Gallego (Spain).

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

□



## CHAPTER V

### The Specifics iiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii

As mentioned in previous chapters, children and young people have a basic desire to explore their surroundings as far as they are able both intellectually and physically. Equally, this exploration is an essential part of preparing them for adulthood. In the case of blind and partially sighted people, card and board games of all types play a vital role in the mental challenge, which inevitably takes precedence for them from the time they reach school age. Given the diverse types of electronic entertainment that are available nowadays, it is barely comprehensible that these things could capture the attention of young people to such a degree, but despite this, the attraction has not entirely faded away.

Even though chess is not as popular as it was a few decades ago, it is still played in schools, including those for the blind. There are records of chess games, which can be played through and archived to serve the purposes of instruction and study in the future.

To record a chess game, the blind generally use a Braille writing frame. Using pre-set forms, this writing tool arranges dots into meaningful symbols, which are based around Louis Braille's original template in the pattern of the six on a die. Admittedly, there are Braille typewriters, which make it much easier for the blind and partially sighted to record their chess games, but these take up a lot of room. The space allotted to each chess player is usually quite small. There is room for a chessboard and, to the right of it, a sheet for each player upon which to record the moves. This space is quite sufficient - for a sighted player at least.

But if a person cannot see which card his opponent has played or which piece he has moved on the board, then it has to be announced. This resulted in the need to use two boards for chess matches between blind and partially sighted players as well as those between blind and sighted players.

The internationalisation of the chess organisation made it imperative to establish a means of communication so that Russians and English as well as Spaniards and Germans could state their moves and understand the moves announced by their opponents. To this end it was most important for a standardised chess set to be agreed upon since the blind chess player needs to be conversant with his opponent's board as well as his own.

Difficulties ensued here, which an onlooker would hardly grasp, and which are illustrated in the following excerpts from the minutes of two previous I.B.C.A. congresses.

From the records of the third I.B.C.A. Congress, March 1964 in Kehlhorn, East Germany:

During the debate on the standardisation of playing equipment, it became apparent that there are many different styles of chess sets for the blind. The Yugoslavs have very large boards and

the pieces are marked at the bottom. In Austria, England and Ireland, the white pieces are marked, in Germany and the Soviet Union, the black. Similarly, in some countries, it is the white squares that are raised, in others it is the black. It is also evident that no country wishes to give up its customary design. In this respect, however, it is equally obvious that those countries, which still have no standard version of their own would like the I.B.C.A. to recommend a style of chess set. Many countries suggested the FIDE pieces. Anton Hartig (the Austrian representative) advocated the acceptance of an I.B.C.A. approved design.

Individual delegations also pointed out the psychological aspect of the problems associated with standardisation. Large boards and large pieces appealed to the partially sighted, whereas the totally blind preferred smaller boards with pieces to match. Furthermore, the partially sighted were in favour of having red pieces instead of black ones as this gives a better contrast for some players. Unfortunately, although this is hardly an unreasonable request, it could not yet be taken into consideration within the I.B.C.A. regulations. Finally there was a vote on whether black squares should be raised and black figures should be marked at the top. This motion was carried. Individual countries promised to try to persuade their manufacturers to comply with this decision.

At the 6th I.B.C.A. congress in Seinajoki-Kuortane, Finland, on the 14th of August 1976, it was indicated that the design criteria for the chess set, which is generally recognised today and is familiar to the blind and partially sighted throughout the world, were already well established:

Standardisation of playing equipment: The "Playing on two boards" Appendix to the I.B.C.A. tournament regulations stipulates:

"The chess board must be at least 20 x 20cm; the colours must be clearly recognisable and the black squares should be raised. The pieces should correspond to the Staunton pattern and the black pieces should be marked."

Two sighted players do not need to announce their moves. It is sufficient for the player who is making a move to start his opponent's clock in order to invite the latter to contemplate the move just made and execute one in reply. Alongside the general rules of chess, there are special supplementary regulations that apply to matches between blind players and also to those between the blind and the sighted. FIDE recognised the need for these rules and incorporated them into their rulebook as early as 1954, i.e. before the I.B.C.A. had been founded. These rules then formed the basis for playing on two boards, which is obligatory for the blind and partially sighted. A blind player generally uses a board that is smaller than normal. The rules for playing on two boards are in a special appendix to the I.B.C.A. regulations mentioned earlier, and these were incorporated back into the FIDE handbook with minimal editorial changes as protocol IV. Here it is even specified that the Braille chessboards used by the blind as second boards for them to touch had to measure at least 20 x 20cm. However, it is necessary for the blind and partially sighted to play on two boards since they are forced to ascertain by touch the position

of the pieces after each move and the ensuing combinatory possibilities.

Therefore, the I.B.C.A. established an appendix to their tournament regulations containing the following rules, which also form part of the FIDE handbook (Protocol IV). Here it is stated:

"In I.B.C.A. tournaments, it is compulsory to play using two chess sets, which have been specifically designed for the blind."

"Specifically designed for the blind", means that the pieces had to have pegs that slot into holes in the board so that they can be touched without being knocked over and that criteria by which the blind can differentiate through touch between the two colours of pieces and squares must be defined and agreed. It is written:

"The colours of the squares must be clearly distinguishable, and to this end the black squares must be raised."

"Raised" means that the black squares must be elevated by one or two millimetres, depending on the size of the board.

The minimum size required for the Braille chessboard was set at 20 x 20 cm for practical reasons, which can perhaps be summarised as follows:

a) Whereas the sighted chess player takes it for granted that the tournament organisers will supply the required boards, clocks and score sheets on which to record the moves, the blind player assumes that he himself must bring along all that he requires in order to play chess. One reason why Braille chessboards are small and often hinged so that they can be folded in two, is to allow for easier transportation. Even the I.B.C.A. tournament regulations state:

"Every player must bring his own equipment, a chess clock for the blind and writing materials or a Dictaphone."

b) When sighted players play against the blind, two boards that comply with the I.B.C.A. rules are set up in the same place designated for the single chess board supplied by the organisers. The blind player then still has to find room for the considerable amount of equipment that he needs in order to record the moves.

c) It is understandable that arbiters have problems in recognising positions on such a small board, particularly when they might be partially concealed by the hands. However, the problems of space outlined above, in terms of the lack of room as well as the transportation considerations, make it necessary for the blind to use small chessboards. Incidentally, the 20 x 20cm dimensions of the board in no way lessens its effectiveness as a memory prompt for the blind and partially sighted as they are accustomed to examining a position by touch. It should also be noted that touching the board has a tendency to betray the thoughts and plans of the blind player, and the larger the board, the easier it is for the eye to follow the movements of the hand.



The black pieces are marked at the top so that the finger can immediately differentiate between black and white pieces. In the appendix of the I.B.C.A. tournament rules it states:

"The pieces should correspond to the Staunton pattern with the black pieces carrying a distinguishing mark."

"Staunton" refers, of course, to the famous English chess player whose set of pieces was first introduced in 1848 and is now used throughout the world.

Obviously, the drawback of playing on two boards is that it necessitates verbal communication with the opponent. The appendix first of all establishes:

"The moves must be clearly stated in the order of being played. The opponent should repeat the move and both players should make the move on their boards immediately."

The actual announcement of the move is then precisely defined in order to eliminate as far as possible any potential misunderstanding. The regulations state:

"The following system should be used when announcing the moves:

a) The vertical lines, seen from White's left to right, are named as follows:

Anna	Bella	Caesar	David
Eva	Felix	Gustav	Hektor

b) The horizontal lines from White to Black have the following numbers:

1-Eins	2-Zwei	3-Drei	4-Vier
5-Fuenf	6-Sechs	7-Sieben	8-Acht

c) The following names are used for the pieces:

Koenig	Dame	Turm
Springer	Laeufer	Bauer"

So, as agreed, German became the official language for naming the pieces and announcing moves in international I.B.C.A. competitions, while the organisation itself takes an English name, the "International Braille Chess Association".

Although these regulations obviously admit no ambiguity, the necessity of announcing the moves means that a considerable risk remains, which must be taken into account in the appendix. With players of differing nationalities and language groups, linguistic misunderstandings cannot be entirely eliminated. The three points listed below address this issue and its implications thoroughly.

"A mistake in announcing a move must be corrected immediately and before the opponent's clock is started."

Despite great foresight and the use of subtle measures to avoid problems, the communication of a move and the subsequent act of playing it on the opponent's board can lead to differences. In such situations therefore, arbiters must be equipped with some rules of conduct, which entail neutral and mutually acceptable

solutions to such discrepancies. The I.B.C.A. endeavours to accomplish this.

"Should there be differing positions on the two boards, the arbiter must correct this using the records of the game that have been made by both players. Once corrected, the player who wrote down the correct move but played the wrong one must accept the consequences."

"The time used by each player up until the point when the error was discovered is to be divided by the number of moves and reduced accordingly."

It is possible that multiple errors will occur and that as a result, the match will take an entirely different course. This must also be taken into consideration:

"Should it occur that the records are also different, the moves must be reversed to the point where the two records agree. The arbiter must then reset the clocks accordingly."

As blind and partially sighted players can only perceive the position of their pieces through touch, another version of the touch-move rule needed to be established. It states:

"A piece is considered 'touched' when it is lifted out of the board."

On that basis, the completion of a move is defined thus:

"A move is considered made

a) when the piece is placed on another square.

b) when the player whose move it is removes from the board a piece he has captured."

This entire procedure already appears somewhat cumbersome and when one reads the following rule, which is quite unavoidable, it makes one realise that the blind and partially sighted have to accept a large time disadvantage on account of their disability:

"Only when the move has been stated may the opponent's clock be started."

Next, the Braille chess clock became a mandatory piece of equipment for official I.B.C.A. tournaments, and it is described thus:

"It is compulsory to use a Braille chess clock with raised dots at five minute intervals and a line on every quarter of an hour. The clock must also have a flag and hour and minute hands which are robust enough to be touched."

In 1994 technical developments necessitated a revision of this rule when the mechanical clock was rivalled by a speaking digital version which announced the time used up by both players. Apart from the fact that the digital clock is far more precise, there was the irrefutable argument of the president of the I.B.C.A. at the time, Delfin Burdio-Gracia, in favour of the speaking clock:

"We cannot ignore progress."

The digital chess clock has a large display, which is suitable for the partially sighted and furthermore it is equipped with a voice output for use by the blind. Naturally, in order not to disturb the vital quiet in the playing room, the voice can be turned off so that it can only be heard using earphones. Additionally, to allow for the international nature of the I.B.C.A., various languages are available. The minimum language requirement is for English and German, as these are the official languages of the I.B.C.A.. An extension to the rules was phrased as follows:

"A speaking chess clock, which uses English and German, or languages that both players understand, may be used in I.B.C.A. tournaments instead of a Braille chess clock. If the two opponents cannot agree on which type of clock to use, the preference of the player with White takes precedence."

Of course, this solution is quite unsatisfactory. It allows personal likes and dislikes to play a part and these are not easily put to one side when an "old habit" is discarded. It has taken decades for the blind and partially sighted to become familiar with the chess clock that, when read by touch informs them in a split second how much time they have left. But there are also some quite serious and justified objections to the speaking chess clock. Sergei Wassin, himself an excellent chess player, totally blind and President of the Ukrainian Association of Visually Handicapped Chess Players, commented on this:

"The electronic chess clock has some serious defects, which rule out the possibility of its use being made compulsory in official I.B.C.A. tournaments.

The blind player has to allow fifteen seconds in order to find out how much time is left because the announcement always wastes time by needlessly reporting whose move it is, whose time is being read out and nearly always the hour from which it is starting.

The digital display is unsuitable for the partially sighted, who complain that it is very difficult to read. The manufacturer has paid no attention whatsoever to a very important principle: "The device should facilitate the use of a person's remaining sight whilst at the same time protecting it".

In practice, the clock is very complicated to operate and totally blind people are unable to set it. It is a fact that two completely blind players cannot use this clock without sighted assistance. When adjusting the time setting the clock gives no speech or tone signals to the blind person, even though this is well within the bounds of possibility for the technology of today.

By combining various announcements and tones the clock must, on request, impart the following information to the blind player:

- a) There are three minutes remaining until the time control
- or else one minute, 54 seconds



- b) The flag has just fallen
  - c) The time setting has been changed
- and so on.

The clock is not at all reliable! To date, I have twice tried to play with it: once during the 31st FIDE Chess Olympiad in Moscow in December 1994. On both occasions problems associated with the clock arose.

Additionally, I must mention that the majority of the I.B.C.A. men's team rejected the electronic chess clock. Therefore I am convinced that in this matter the Congress is in danger of passing a completely arbitrary resolution. The majority of blind and partially sighted chess players will reject this model of the electronic chess clock and will refuse to buy it. It is already obsolete and reflects neither today's level of technology nor the current needs of the blind and partially sighted. It is even less in keeping with the anticipated future developments."

The next point in the rules, which is worth addressing, deals with something that is regarded as a routine requirement by all chess players. Once again, one of the special features necessitated by the emergence of national and international blind chess organisations is in evidence. When the I.B.C.A. first began, games were exclusively recorded in Braille. Initially the evolution from the tape recorder to the cassette recorder and, more crucially, the subsequent miniaturisation of the recording device enabled it to be used to record a chess game. The rule is worded as follows:

"Every player must keep either a written or a taped record of the game."

In the meantime, modern technology has even been used to develop a chessboard that has an integrated clock and can record the game automatically, sending the stored data to a computer if required. Unfortunately, such a board is not yet available for the blind and partially sighted. The manufacturers maintain that the projected number of sales would not be sufficient to meet the production costs.

The next regulation has often been applied already by mutual agreement between the affected player on the one hand and the opponent or tournament controller on the other hand and even in this form it has proved very worthwhile.

"Players who have only recently lost their sight, or who have multiple disabilities which make it impossible for them to perform the usual tasks, may, with the agreement of the tournament director, ask for an assistant to

- a) make the moves on the board,
- b) start the clock,
- c) record the game,
- d) tell the player, when requested, how many moves have been made and how much time has been used by both players."

The fact that it was as late as the 10th Congress in Ca'n Picaforte on Majorca (Spain) 1992, when the next and last point was added following a proposal from the British Braille Chess Association, gives a small insight into the difficulties that can arise even within an organisation like this, as "blind" does not necessarily always mean totally blind:

Partially sighted players have the right to request additional lighting if the light at their board is insufficient.

Despite all the obstacles listed here, playing chess is the source of much happiness amongst those who have to examine their boards by touch. Moreover, we hope that the "F,d,ration Internationale des Echecs" will increase the opportunities available to the blind and partially sighted to be able to enjoy playing chess, by incorporating the specific rules that apply to blind and partially sighted players into their own regulations and distributing them to the FIDE Arbiters. There are a few experienced I.B.C.A. Arbiters, who appear at the larger I.B.C.A. tournaments time and time again. The I.B.C.A. is much indebted to these people.

Yet unfortunately, one hears from time to time that the blind and partially sighted are discriminated against in a significant way. I am writing this by way of an appeal both to those responsible and to their instructors, not to focus on superficial considerations. Instead, let the importance of enjoying chess outweigh the small inconvenience of having to use two boards so that the blind and partially sighted can play against one another and more particularly against sighted opponents in an integrated tournament.

The blind or partially sighted chess player, who has already paid for his playing equipment himself, has had to carry it with him to tournaments and has then had to play at a table where space is often so very restricted, still has other considerations to bear in mind:

He is dependent on having a guide for travelling to the tournaments as well as for all manner of everyday assistance. This means that it is necessary for a second person to travel with him and stay in the same hotel. Roughly speaking, this doubles the cost of taking part in a tournament for chess enthusiasts who are blind or partially sighted. So alongside the physical obstacles, there are also significantly higher financial costs, which must be met by the blind or partially sighted chess player who wishes to indulge his hobby. Nevertheless, there are still chess players who do precisely this.

## CHAPTER VI

### Some Useless Information - and a Few Things Worth Knowing

AA

The seven founder members of the International Braille Chess Association could scarcely have imagined that it would nowadays have more than fifty blind chess organisations from various countries as members. When the organisation was formed in 1958, there was a chess tournament, in which twelve chess players from seven countries competed. Naturally this was not yet on the scale of the team event that one associates with the chess Olympiads of today. It was simply the enjoyment of the "Game of Kings" that had brought them together. Even a spacious living room would have been a sufficiently large venue for the four-day competition they held then.

Since then, things have completely changed. In the last two blind chess Olympiads in Ca'n Picaforte on Majorca (Spain), where thirty three teams competed, and in Laguna (Brazil), where thirty teams took part, there were 150 or more tournament participants to be accommodated. And this only included the chess players! In addition there were guides, congress delegates, the committee, the tournament control team and assistants such as interpreters, making a total of about three hundred people. Like all other chess organisations, whether in Germany or elsewhere, we have to contend with a problem which, although it is dealt with in a light-hearted way in the following section, is nevertheless a very real one.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

#### Chess officials.

The widely held view that chess is a sport still holds firm today. At the same time, nothing could be easier to dispel as nonsense. One has only to touch upon the subject of the "official". Let us take a typical sporting example, a completely normal German football player. As a rule he plays from his early youth right through for twenty or twenty-five years, until he is politely ushered out of his team, with a degree of firmness that is increased depending on how old he is. Afterwards, he might knock around with a few older men of the same age for another couple of years until gout, his grumpy wife and the feeling of constant annoyance with the referee finally compel him to hang up both his boots and his sporting ambitions. And then he becomes an official, for when all is said and done, he still wants to help the youngsters and make a contribution to his sport.

With appropriate modifications, the same is true for volleyball players, badminton players, shot-putters, figure skaters and show jumpers. But not for chess players. They only really come into their own as they get older. They inundate the Open and later the Veterans tournaments, where they sit around being quarrelsome and self-opinionated and stay until a ridiculous



hour. They often linger persistently at the board for far longer than the six hour playing session stipulated by FIDE, arguing, analysing, discussing and playing lightning chess, until one day in the near or distant future, they suffer a stroke. Not a single one of them would consider becoming an official. So where is the best place for the strange chess playing community to look for their presidents, treasurers, controllers and attendants of the future?

They are definitely not to be found within the chess organisations any more. Perhaps advertisements should be placed in "The Allotment Gardener's Companion" or enquiries should be made in psychiatric clinics. The ideal chess official should either not be a chess player at all, or he should keep his thoughts of chess so well under control, that nobody notices. He must possess the patience of an earthworm and the experience of a nurse who has had dealings with people who are partly or totally mad. When the landlord of the pub where the club meets starts to heave the chairs onto the tables shortly after midnight, the club chairman must heartlessly and recklessly pull the chairs out from under the last stubborn combatants, even during the most interesting of games. He must mercilessly throw the scattered pieces into their boxes and lock away the equipment paying no attention to the increasingly menacing insults. He must apologise to the landlord on bended knee for the cigarette ash and other mess on the carpet, whilst all the time wondering what kind of an explanation for returning home at the crack of dawn he can offer his waiting spouse this time. As the association's treasurer or secretary he must bring with him a professional training as a computer specialist. As the president he must lead clueless mayors, local dignitaries or other patrons by the hand when they are invited to play the first move. He must console sobbing ladies who have lost their games, acquire both the trophies and the sponsors who pay for them and attend boring committee meetings at which other officials prattle on endlessly about completely uninteresting problems.

In a word, if one takes it seriously, the ideal chess official must actually be some sort of crackpot. So this is the conclusive explanation for why, as far as one can see there is simply no such thing as an ideal chess official. All of them are chess players and some even have ELO ratings. Nobody knows how much they suffer when they see others pondering over their boards. Nobody believes them when they declare that this is absolutely the last time they will stand for re-election. Nobody applauds them when the whole thing passes off without fuss, complaint or a great deal of trouble. Perhaps one day the whole of chess organisation will allow itself to be computerised and digitised. Then officials will not be needed anymore, but at most only programs to perform the functions of officials, and chess will finally have become a respectable sport like football.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

A Best Game Prize was awarded to the following game at the 3rd Blind Chess Olympiad in Weymouth:

Sandrin (USA) - Loftus (Ireland)

### III Blind Chess Olympiad 1968 - Round 2

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 d5 4. Bg5 Nbd7 5. cxd5 exd5 6. e3  
(6. Nxd5? Nxd5! 7. Bxd8 Bb4)
6. - c6 7. Bd3 Be7 8. Qc2 0-0 9. Nf3 h6?  
(A mistake! Because Black has already castled and White  
has not yet done so.)
10. h4!?
- (Very active, but 10 Bh4 would surely have been safer.)
10. - Re8
- (With 10 - hxg5 11 hxg5 Ne4 12 Bxe4 dxe4 13 Qxe4 g6  
14 Qh4 White wins.)
11. 0-0-0 hxg5
- (11 - Ng4)
12. hxg5 Ne4
- (In case of 12. - Ng4 13. Bh7 Kf8 14. Bf5)
13. Nxe4
- (If 13. Bxe4 dxe4 14. Qxe4 then 14. - Bxg5)
13. - dxe4 14. g6 Nf6
- (In case of
- [1 14. - exd3 and now
- a) 15. Qc4 Rf8 16. Rh2 Bd6 17. g3 or
- b) 15. gxf7+ Kxf7 16. Qc4+ Kf6 17. g4 and  
Ng5 Kxg5 18. Qe6 White is winning] or
- [2 exf3 15. gxf7+ {or Bc4 wins} Kxf7 16. Bg6+ Ke6 17.  
Qf5+ Kd6 18. Qf4+ Kd5 19. Bf7 mate!])
15. gxf7+
- (or 15. Ne5 fxxg6 [15. - Be6? 16. gxf7+ Bxf7 17. Rh8!  
Kxh8 18. Nxf7+] 16. Rh8+ Kxh8 17. Nxf7+ winning the queen)
15. - Kxf7 16. Ne5+ Kg8
- (16. - Ke6 is answered with 17. Bc4+ Nd5 18. Qxe4)
17. Bxe4 Nxe4 18. Qxe4 Bf6
- (18. - Qd5 allows 19. Qg6! Be6 20. Rh7 - and 21. Rdh1)
19. Qh7+ Kf8 20. Qg6 Be6 21. e4! Qc7
- (Possibly better would have been 21. - Qa5 22. a3 Bxe5 23.  
Rh5 or
22. Rd3 Bxe5 23. Qg5! Qd8 24. Rf3+ Bf6 25. e5! or
22. Rd3 Qxa2 23. Ra3 with an advantage for White.)
22. Rh5 Bxe5?
- (Gives up an important position!
- After 22. - Ke7 23. Qg3 or
23. Kbl the situation is unclear.)
23. dxe5 Rad8 24. Rxd8 Qxd8 25. Rh8+ Bg8 26. Qh7 Qg5+
27. Kbl Kf7 28. e6+ Kxe6 29. Rxxg8 Kf7 30. Rxe8 Kxe8 31. Qh3
- (and White is winning)
31. - Qd8 32. Qh8+ Kd7 33. Qxxg7+
- (33. Qxd8+)
33. - Kc8 34. Qg4+ Kc7 35. Qf4+ Kc8 36. Qg4+ Kc7 37. Qe2 Qh4
38. a3 Qh1+ 39. Ka2 Qxxg2 40. Qe3 Qg8+ 41. Qb3 Qg7 42. Qg3+ Qxxg3
43. fxxg3 Kd6 44. g4 Ke5 45. g5 c5 46. a4 b6 47. Kb3 a6 48. Kc4
- Ke6
49. a5
- 1:0

Although the sacrifice cannot be described as completely sound,  
the game nevertheless contains many lovely combinations. For  
the players it must have been demanding in the extreme. Even  
for the onlookers the tension was almost unbearable for a while.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

In contrast, the next paragraph is once again intended to be completely serious, for it summarises a little about what the game and its organisation is based on today. Chess is an ancient game, which has developed into a really popular sport during the last century - a proper people's sport. Everybody can learn how to play it and you do not need to be a mathematician in order to master it well. In order to enjoy lasting success, one must of course have a talent and a feel for the game. Since 1851 international tournaments have been held, which popularise the game of chess, promote its reputation and enrich chess theory. Beginners and strong players alike make profitable use of chess literature, with its many interwoven theoretical supplements. Admittedly only professional players are able to gain an overview of the entire catalogue of literature, as it has become so prolific. In 1924 the world chess organisation, the "Federation Internationale Des Echecs" was founded in Paris. With approximately 150 members at the present time, FIDE numbers among the largest sports organisations in the world. With chess having been popularised in this way and with its multitude of supporters, it was inevitable that the game would also reach the visually handicapped.

#### The history of chess

The game of chess underwent a long course of historical development before it reached the relatively stable form of the game that we know today. Everybody agrees that chess originated in India, but there is still uncertainty over the date. According to the prevailing opinion (Boensch) it originated from the board game Tshaturanga approximately 2,500 years ago. It has been proven that by the 6th century the game had arrived in Persia (Sharandsh) and from there it spread further west. Progressing via Africa, it reached Spain and therefore Europe in the 8th or 9th century. It is believed to have spread into Russia from central Asia.

In terms of its rules the game was played very differently from the way it is played today. Efforts to create a quicker and more dynamic way of playing led to radical rule changes over the centuries. The invention of the printing press, which enabled games that had been played and theoretical analysis to be publicised more quickly, resulted in a sharp increase in popularity and a leap forward in the development of the game of chess. In 1497 the Spaniard, Lucena published the first printed chess textbook.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Spanish and Italian masters defined the fashionable playing style, a direct combinative attacking approach, bristling with pawn and piece sacrifices. In the eighteenth century, chess activity increasingly shifted towards France and England. For a long while the Frenchman, Philidor, was regarded as the best player and he established a new strategic style of playing chess at that time.

Howard Staunton was arguably the best player that England has ever produced. Between approximately 1840 and 1850 he was



certainly the best player in the world. In later years he ranked among the world's top three players together with the German, Adolf Anderssen, and the American, Paul Morphy.

The founder of the first English chess magazine, "The Chess Players Chronicle", dedicated himself entirely to his literary research from about 1860 onwards. He was an expert on the literature of the middle ages, Shakespeare's plays in particular, and it was on account of this that he almost completely gave up active play. Howard Staunton died on the 22nd of June 1874 at the age of 64.

The new direction, which led to the development of chess as a sport, began towards the middle of the nineteenth century. The era of tournament chess began with the first international tournament, which was held in London in 1851. It was won by the German, Adolf Anderssen, from Breslau. In 1866 the victor lost a match against Wilhelm Steinitz, who was to be proclaimed the first World Champion following his match win against Johannes Zukertort two decades later. The further history of the World Championship Matches was as exciting as it was instructive, for it was generally the case that a new epoch in teaching and style was established with each new World Champion. For example, the next World Champion, Emanuel Lasker (1894-1921), introduced philosophical and psychological aspects to the game of chess. His successor, Capablanca, on the other hand, cultivated a strictly positional style. He was regarded as the "invincible chess machine". But in 1927 he met his match in Alexander Alekhine, who played with utterly inexhaustible ideas and placed the emphasis on attacking. In 1935 he had to relinquish his title to the Dutchman Max Euwe but two years later his convincing play enabled him to win it back again and then hold it until his death in 1946.

After the Second World War chess was actively promoted in many countries on account of its important role in social education. In terms of chess achievements, the Soviet Union took up a position of supremacy, from where they dominated World Championship matches, Olympiads and international tournaments. After the break up of the Soviet Union, this position was bequeathed to the former member states. With the one exception of Robert Fischer from the Sunshine State of California on the west coast of the United States of America (1972-1975), it was Soviet, or more precisely, Russian players who held the title of World Champion (Botvinnik, Smyslov, Tal, Petrosian, Spassky, Karpov, Kasparov). At least amongst the ladies and the new generation there are now indications that their reign might be coming to an end.

Even today the board game, chess, takes many different forms, for example Chinese chess. Nevertheless, there is evidence that some common criteria have evolved:

1. Different pieces, which have a particular value according to the way in which they move.
2. Playing surfaces that are characterised by squares or lines, as required by the different moves the pieces can make.
3. Central figures (kings), around which the whole game is based. The

imminent or actual conquest of these pieces is the aim of the game.

4. An extensive, strategic and tactical way of conducting the game, that  
has no element of luck.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

Two Prize Games  
unannotated

5th Blind Correspondence Chess Championship

Cohn (Great Britain) - Winkelmann (Switzerland)

French

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. e5 c5 5. a3 Bxc3 6. bxc3 Qc7  
7. Qg4 f5 8. Qg3 cxd4 9. cxd4 Ne7 10. Bd2 0-0 11. Bd3 Nbc6  
12. Ne2 Bd7 13. 0-0 Kh8? 14. Rab1 Rab8 15. Rb3 Na5 16. Rc3 Qb6  
17. Nf4! Nac6 18. Qh4 Qd8 19. Bb5 Rf7 20. Rh3 g6 21. Bxc6 bxc6  
22. Bb4 Kg8 23. Bd6 Ra8 24. Rb1 Rg7 25. Qf6 Rf7 26. Nxe6 Qa5  
27. Rxh7!! Rxf6 28. Rg7+ Kh8 29. exf6 Bxe6 30. Rxe7 Kg8  
31. Rg7+ Kh8 32. Be5 Qxa3 33. h3 Rf8 34. Rbb7 Qc1+ 35. Kh2 Qh6  
36. Rge7 f4 37. Rxe6 Qh4 38. f7+ Kh7 39. Kg1 Qg5 40. h4! Qg4  
41. Re8 f3 42. Bg3 fxg2 43. Kxg2 Kg7 44. f3 Rxf7 45. Rxf7+ Kxf7  
46. fxg4 Kxe8 47. Be1

Black resigned!

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

2nd Blind Chess Olympiad

Cabarkapa (Yugoslavia) - Kusnierz (Poland)

Sicilian

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 a6 6. Bg5 e6  
7. f4 Be7 8. Qf3 Qc7 9. 0-0-0 Nc6 10. g4 Nxd4 11. Rxd4 e5?  
12. Bxf6! gxf6 13. Rd1 b5 14. Nd5 Qa5 15. Bh3 Bd7 16. fxe5 fxe5  
17. Nf6+ Kd8 18. Kb1 Be6 19. Nd5 Bxd5 20. Rxd5 Qb6 21. Rf1 Rf8  
22. g5! Ke8 23. Qf5 Ra7? 24. Rfd1 Qe3 25. Rxe5+

Black resigned!

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

An opening is deemed to be "old" when there is nothing new to be said about it anymore. The 200 year-old Ponziani Opening is of a very respectable age indeed. Nowadays it is hardly ever played in tournaments, yet it lives on in the memories of past successes. Some think its time has run out, but it is still a powerful weapon. In the following game an innovation lends new momentum to this old opening:

2nd I.B.C.A. Individual Championship

Ivan Novak (Czechoslovakia) - Milos Cabarkapa (Yugoslavia)

Ermelo 1970

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. c3

The opening is based on the principle of a strong centre, but does

not take into account time that is lost.

3. - d5

Theory books judge this move to be the strongest, but Black can also

equalise with 3. - Nf6 or 3. - f5, which is reminiscent of the Vienna

Game, and even 3. - Nge7.

4. Qa4

White's best move. Black has several possible moves to choose from.

4. f6 - recommended by Steinitz, but analysis by Keres shows that

White's position remains more favourable. Theory unanimously rejects

4. - dxe4. Caro recommended the pawn sacrifice 4. - Bd7, but in

practice there is not much success to be had with this move. The pawn

sacrifice looks right, but with Leonhardt's continuation

...

4. - Nf6 5. Nxe5 Bd6 6. Nxc6 bxc6 7. d3

After 7. Qxc6+ Bd7 8. Qa6 dxe4 ... White is admittedly a pawn up, but

has fallen behind badly with development.

8. - 0-0 9. Be2

Keres recommended this move. He established that after 8. - Re8 9.

Bg5 h6 10. Bxf6 Qxf6, Black has no adequate compensation for the

sacrificed pawn. Black now tries a new approach.

9. - Qe8

An interesting move that renders 9. Bg5 - ineffective, because after

9. - dxe4 10. Bxf6 exd! White's position is worse.

9. Nd2 Rb8 10. 0-0 -

If White had taken the pawn on a7, the central king position would

have become very dangerous.

10. - c5 11. Qc2 Bb7 12. Bf3

This protects the pawn on e4, but robs the knight on d2 of a good

position on f3.

12. - Qe5 13. g3 Re8 14. c4?

White wants to push towards the Black attack by force, but this is not

a good plan. Correct was 14. Bg2 - and then 15. Nf3 -.

14. - dxe4 15. dxe4 Nxe4! 16. Rfel

White was confident, but Black is safe.

16. - f5 17. Rab1 Qf6

This trap proves itself to be worthwhile as White promptly falls into it.

18. Nxe4 fxe4 19. Bxe4 Rxe4

White resigned! If 20. Rxe4 - Black wins with 20. - Qf3!

Sighted

players would not have been able to see any better than this. A

fabulous game.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA-A



When should one, and indeed when is one able to, play chess? It is important to determine the proper time, in which the powers of concentration are at their best and no other human imponderables distract a player from the contemplation, the deductions and the enjoyment of it all.

First of all it is necessary to define the conditions, which assist in the outstanding feat of playing a game of chess. It should not be too hot. After all, chess players must keep a cool head. It should not be too cold or draughty as this would put the physical well being of the players at risk, considering that playing chess does not involve a great deal of movement. Hunger can be just as detrimental to a player's performance as the feeling of being full. Obviously, playing chess is completely incompatible with the use of alcohol and any worries of a professional, private or financial nature can also interrupt a player's concentration.

Naturally, it is important to wear the right sort of clothing. It should be comfortable and airy. For men, at any rate, it is critical to bear in mind what Luca Goldoni writes about his dissension with those who squeeze themselves into blue jeans for reasons of fashion, and then no longer know how to sit down or how to arrange their "external reproductive organs". Similarly a tight denim skirt is definitely not an ideal piece of clothing for chess playing ladies. Fashion and chess simply do not go together. Fashion is purely external and can only be a nuisance to a person who is trying to think, because it has a disruptive effect on the concentration, as indeed it is designed to. But it is neither possible for a handsome, fashionably dressed youth to impress the lady of the chessboard nor for the opposing king to be enticed into a mating net by the charms of a beautiful woman.

What is the best time of day? Mornings? Definitely not! People have to get 'into gear' first. Apart from that, a person will no doubt have plans to settle a few affairs during the day and anything that is waiting to be dealt with will cause a distraction.

After lunch? This is absolutely out of the question because at that time of day a person needs all his body's resources to digest their food, a process, which some like to help along by taking a glass of wine.

In the late afternoon or evening? Impossible! Towards the end of the day the body begins to slow down, so this cannot be a suitable time for mental exertions. Generally speaking, there is sure to have been something during the day that did not go quite as well as had been hoped and then a quiet hour is needed, in which to reflect on what went wrong.

From the criteria specified above it also follows that certain times of year cannot be connected with chess in any way. For example, winter is quite unsuitable because playing rooms are either too cold or are overheated. In summer it is usually too warm, and apart from that, there is hardly anybody who has the time and the inclination to play chess. Young people are away on holiday with their families and older chess players drive themselves around to various Open events in their own country and abroad. No chance. Spring however, is a really lovely time

of year. This is undeniably true, but then the question inevitably arises as to whether you have anything better to do in spring than to sit hunched over a chessboard computing combinations of moves. On top of that there is the worry of planning the summer holiday. However, not one single objection can be raised against autumn. Autumn is a peaceful season when nothing disturbs the emotional equilibrium and nothing impedes concentration on the 64 squares, the contemplation and deductions. No chess player would disagree with this. Yet when everything is so well-balanced, calm and lacking in stimulation, when there is absolutely nothing to get annoyed or excited about, then everybody, including chess players, would prefer to use this time to take a refreshing nap.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

## A P P E N D I X

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

### The I.B.C.A. Individual World Championships:

#### Men's

- I. 1966 Timmendorfer Strand (West Germany) Milos Cabarkapa  
... JUG
- II. 1970 Ermelo (Netherlands) Milos Cabarkapa  
..... JUG
- III. 1975 Bad Berleburg (West Germany) Nikolai Rudensky  
..... USSR
- IV. 1978 Bruges (Belgium) Sergei Krylov  
..... USSR
- V. 1982 Hastings (Great Britain) Sergei Krylov  
..... USSR
- VI. 1986 Moscow (USSR) Piotr Dukaczewski  
..... POL
- VII. 1990 Wunsiedel (West Germany) Sergei Khamdamov  
..... USSR
- VIII. 1994 Torrevieja (Spain) Murat Jounoussov  
..... KAZ
- IX. 1998 Brno (Czech Republic) S. Smirnov  
..... RUS

#### Women's

- I. 1986 Bad Liebenzell (West Germany) Teresa Debowska  
..... POL
- II. 1989 Klimczoke Bjelskobiala (Poland) Lubow Zsiltzowa  
..... RUS
- III. 1993 La Roda Albacete (Spain) Lubow Zsiltzowa  
..... UKR
- IV. 1997 Guadamar near Alicante (Spain) Lubow Zsiltzowa  
..... UKR

### The I.B.C.A. Chess Olympiads

The first three teams at each Olympiad are listed:

- I. Meschede (West Germany) ...
  - 1. .... JUG
  - 2. .... BRD A
  - 3. .... AUT
- II. K hlungsborn (East Germany) ...
  - 1. .... JUG
  - 2. .... HUN
  - 3. .... DDR

III.	Weymouth (Great Britain)	1.	....	USSR
		2.	....	JUG
		3.	....	ROM
IV.	Pula (Yugoslavia) ....	1.	....	USSR
		2.	....	JUG
		3.	....	ROM
V.	Kuortane (Finland) ....	1.	....	USSR
		2.	....	JUG
		3.	....	DDR
VI.	Noordwijkerhout (Holland)	1.	....	USSR
		2.	....	JUG
		3.	....	DDR
VII.	Benidorm (Spain) ....	1.	....	USSR
		2.	....	JUG
		3.	....	POL
VIII.	Zalaegerszeg (Hungary) .	1.	....	USSR
		2.	....	JUG
		3.	....	HUN
IX.	Ca'n Picaforte (Spain)	1.	....	RUS
		2.	....	JUG
		3.	....	UKR
X.	La Laguna (Brazil) ....	1.	....	RUS
		2.	....	UKR
		3.	....	BLA

The I.B.C.A. Congresses:

1. Rheinbreitbach ..... West Germany ..... 12th-16th April 1958
2. Meschede ..... West Germany .. 28th March-1st April 1961
3. K~~ö~~hlungsborn ..... East Germany ..... 29th March 1964
4. Weymouth ..... Great Britain ..... 7th April 1968
5. Pula ..... Yugoslavia ..... 11th April 1972
6. Kuortane ..... Finland ..... 14th August 1976
7. Nordwijkerhout .... Holland ..... 17th August 1980
8. Benidorm ..... Spain ..... 11th April 1985
9. Zalaegerszeg ..... Hungary ..... 23rd April 1988
10. Ca'n Picaforte ..... Spain ..... 19th April 1992
11. La Laguna ..... Brazil ..... 9th June 1996

ii