

BCCF E-MAIL BULLETIN #292

Your editor welcomes any and all submissions - news of upcoming events, tournament reports, and anything else that might be of interest to B.C. players. Thanks to all who contributed to this issue. To subscribe, send me an e-mail (swright2@telus.net); if you no longer wish to receive this Bulletin, just let me know.

Stephen Wright

HERE AND THERE

Active Grand Prix (January 4)



Held at the Vancouver Chess School on the first Sunday of the New Year, the tournament brought together the twelve winners of the 2014 VCS monthly actives (or the next highest-placed individual, if that month's winner had already qualified). With a field which included many former and current B.C. closed, junior, and active champions along with several CYCC champions the competition was tough, especially since there was only one prize – \$500, winner takes all. With anyone being capable of beating anyone else on a good day it all came down to who was in form (or lucky), and on this particular day it was Tanraj Sohal. Last year's winner and current B.C. Closed champion Jason Cao was forced to concede a draw to Jason Kenney in the first round, and this turned out to be Tanraj's margin of victory – he drew with Jason Cao in round four and won the rest of his games to take first with 5.5/6, while Cao finished second with 5.0 points. Perennial active champion Mayo Fuentebella was a distant third with 4.0 points; he lost to Tanraj but was also beaten in the first round by Joe Roback, who is becoming a bit of a bête noire for Mayo – he also knocked Mayo out of contention in last year's event. Watch for upcoming VCS actives, where with a good result YOU could qualify for the next Grand Prix finale.

Chess Train

Back in [Bulletin 288](#) we reported on Brian McLaren's excursion on the chess train, a special rail journey between five Central European cities which features an onboard active tournament. Brian has now documented his travels in words and pictures in an article which can be found at this link – many thanks, Brian! <http://bcchesshistory.com/chesstrain.html>

Chess: “as a pastime and a science”

In the issue before that, [Bulletin 287](#), we returned to the subject of the 1897 Victoria – San Francisco telegraph match, notably in light of a photograph and article in a long defunct B.C. periodical, *Western Recreation*. The article, written by [Thomas Piper](#), is an erudite apologetic and promotion of chess, as seen in the late nineteenth century. The entire article can now be found at <http://bcchesshistory.com/piperarticle.html>

2014 IN REVIEW

The end/beginning of the year is often a time for reflection and review of the events that occurred in the previous twelve months. With this in mind, here is a list of B.C. tournament winners for 2014, along with a few other highlights:

B.C. Active Championship – Mayo Fuentebella

B.C. Open – Tanraj Sohal

Grand Pacific Open – Peter Lessler, Jonathan Berry

Team B.C. won the 23rd INTERMAT vs. WA by the largest margin on record

Paul Keres Memorial – Georgi Orlov (for the twelfth time!)

National Chess Challenge – B.C. placed third, gold medals for Luke Pulfer, Joshua Doknjas, Tanraj Sohal

Stan Rogers Memorial – Matthew Ehrenreich

B.C. Senior Championship – Jose Kagaoan, Joe Soliven

FIDE Arbiters' Award – Jonathan Berry

CYCC – Uranchimeg Nyamdorj, U16G Champion

Canadian Open – IM norm for Jason Cao, Luke Pulfer U1800 winner

B.C. Day Open – Butch Villavieja, Davaa-Ochir Nyamdorj, Joe Roback

Bowser Builders Supply Open – John Doknjas

Langley Open – Bindi Cheng

B.C. Closed Championship – Jason Cao

Vancouver Open – Leo Qu

Portland Fall Open – Bindi Chang, Joe Roback

LakeCity Open – Kai Richardson

Vancouver West Open – Mayo Fuentebella, Davaa-Ochir Nyamdorj

B.C. Junior Championship – John Doknjas

Jack Taylor Memorial – Roger Patterson, Jason Cao, Ross Richardson

Vancouver West Open #2 – Joe Roback

World U16 Olympiad – brilliancy prizes for Jason Cao and Max Gedajlovic

REVISED B.C. CHAMPIONSHIP REGULATIONS

For those interested in playing in the B.C. Closed Championship, the following regulations governing that competition were recently approved by the BCCF Executive:

1. The B.C. Championship will be an 8-player round robin.
2. The following players qualify for the Championship:
 - a. The current B.C. Champion.
 - b. The highest finisher in each qualifying tournament who has not already qualified for the Championship and who has held a regular CFC rating of 2000 or higher at some point.

Qualifying events:

B.C. Junior Championship
Grand Pacific Open
Paul Keres Memorial
B.C. Open
Langley Labour Day Open

- c. The remaining qualifying spots will be filled from the last CFC rating list to be published at least six weeks before the Championship. To qualify by rating, a player must have played ten CFC regular rated games in British Columbia in the preceding twelve months not including the previous Closed.
 - d. If a player who has qualified through criteria 2.a.-c. is unable or unwilling to play in the Championship, additional players would be taken from the rating list as set out in 2.c.
3. All participants in the Championship must reside in B.C. and:

- a. have resided in B.C. for a total of at least six months in the twelve months prior to the start of the Championship; or
- b. have resided in B.C. for the three months prior to the start of the Championship.

4. The following prizes will be provided by the BCCF:
- a. First place: \$300.
 - b. Second place: \$200.

"Participants in the BC Closed must be members of the CFC. A tournament membership is not allowed for this tournament."

BRUCE HARPER ANNOTATES

Harper, Bruce - Opponent [A00] ICC 3 0 Internet Chess Club, 01.01.2015

1.g3 [0:02:58] **1...h5** [0:02:59] This is the kind of move you can expect in 3-minute chess. In the interest of exhaustive analysis, White has two choices - he can answer 1...h5 or he can ignore it. **2.h4** [0:02:56] **2...d5** [0:02:58] **3.Bg2** [0:02:54] **3...c6** [0:02:57] **4.d3** [0:02:53] **4...e6** [0:02:56] **5.Nc3** [0:02:52] **5...Nf6** [0:02:55] **6.Bg5** [0:02:51] **6...Nbd7** [0:02:54] **7.e4** [0:02:49] **7...Be7** [0:02:53] **8.Bxf6** [0:02:46] This is not necessarily any good, but White has no other particularly obvious continuations. **8...Nxf6** [0:02:51] **9.e5?!** [0:02:43] **9...Nd7?** [0:02:49] After 9...Ng4!, White would have problems. **10.f4** [0:02:42] **10...g6** [0:02:47] **11.Nf3** [0:02:41] **11...a6** [0:02:46] **12.Ne2** [0:02:36] **12...c5** [0:02:45] **13.c3** [0:02:35] **13...b5** [0:02:44] **14.d4** [0:02:34]



White has recovered from his opening and is equal! But he's a little bit behind on time. **14...a5** [0:02:42] **15.0-0** [0:02:32] **15...b4** [0:02:41] Black is getting excited and is ignoring his development. White, having righteously castled, decides to try to open the position and confuse his opponent. **16.c4!?** [0:02:29] **16...dxc4** [0:02:36] 16...Nb6 was fine as well. **17.Ng5** [0:02:23]



This looks scary but it's still all bluff. **7...Ba6?** [0:02:34] Black's first real mistake. Well, his second if you count taking only two seconds to remove Black's bishop from the h3–c8 diagonal, where the blows will fall. But Black can't resist offering an exchange sacrifice, which White obviously refuses. **17...Ra7** **18.d5 Bxg5** **19.hxg5 exd5** **20.Qxd5 Qe7**. **18.d5!** [0:02:20] Now White realizes his idea, for whatever it's worth. Black makes things worse by steadfastly refusing to exchange his e7–bishop for White's powerful g5–knight. **18...exd5?** [0:02:29] **19.Qxd5** [0:02:18] **19...0–0** [0:02:25]



20.e6! [0:02:10] I miss lots of moves in blitz, but usually not moves like this. White attacks the base of Black's kingside pawn chain. Black's a8–rook is not a legitimate target. **20...Nb6?** [0:02:17] This was Black's last chance to take on g5. **21.exf7+** [0:02:05] **21...Kg7** [0:02:16] **22.Ne6+** [0:01:54] **22...Kh7** [0:02:14] **23.Qe4** [0:01:45] This looks strong, but switching colours with **23.Qe5!** was stronger - after **23...Bf6** **24.Nxf8+!** **Qxf8** **25.Qxf6** White is a rook up and his attack continues. **23...Qd3** [0:02:08]



24.f5! [0:01:37] White actually finds the best move, probably because it continues the demolition of Black's pawn chain. **24...Qxe4** [0:02:00] **25.Bxe4** [0:01:37] **25...gxf5** [0:01:50] Sadly, **25...Rxf7** is impossible because of **26.fxg6**. **26.Rxf5** [0:01:34] **26...Kh6** [0:01:49] **27.N2f4** [0:01:30] Black resigns. It's mate after **27... Rxg7** **28.Rxh5#**, and **27...Bg5** **28.Rxg5** doesn't change anything. **27...Bg5** **28.Rxg5** **1–0**

ELOD MACSKASY (17 April 1919 – 21 January 1990)

Next Wednesday, January 21, will mark twenty-five years since the passing of Doctor Elod Macskasy, one of the most important figures in B.C. chess in the second half of the twentieth century. Given that his name might be unfamiliar or unknown to many who have joined the chess scene in the last decade, we here republish some of the articles used in connection with the memorial tournament held in his honour in the summer of 2005. The bare facts: born in Arad (now part of Romania), Macskasy emigrated from Hungary to B.C. in 1956 and became a professor of mathematics at UBC. He immediately outclassed all other chess players in the province; B.C. Champion 1958-1962 and 1967, Macskasy won the Canadian Open in 1958, placed third in the 1963 Canadian Championship, represented Canada in the 1964 and 1968 Olympiads, and tied for second with John Watson and Gyozo Forintos at Vancouver 1975 in tournament winner Paul Keres' last event. Macskasy was also a seminal influence on several younger B.C. players, as indicated below.

Nathan Divinsky:

Elod Macskasy was a gentle and generous soul who thoroughly enjoyed many aspects of life, and who preserved an impish sense of humour throughout his seventy years. He had absolutely no poison in him: envy, greed, and the other classical vices were simply unknown to him. When he beat you at chess, he almost apologized, and explained your loss away because of a hasty move or an unexpected quirk in the position. Macskasy was mathematician, teacher, stamp collector, football pools expert, horse racing handicapper, penny stock expert, bridge player, and gourmet, as well as a chess master. He loved to talk politics, medicine and human nature. He was not perfect. As a dreamer who seldom went to sleep before 3:00 am, he was often late for appointments. He always promised to write but seldom finished a project. But he never took himself too seriously and saw the humour in people and their foibles. He was especially amused by the petty jealousies of academia, the politicking and intense passions aroused over trivialities. He agreed with the observation that campus passions and feuds were intense because the stakes were so small. [First published in the April 1990 edition of *En Passant*]

An Interview with Duncan and Dobrilla Suttles by Robert North

This interview was conducted with Duncan and Dobrilla Suttles in their comfortable penthouse suite located in the University Endowment lands. The interview lasted approximately one and a half hours.

Counterplay: When did you first meet Dr. Macskasy?

Duncan: Oh, it must have been over thirty years ago. I think I was thirteen years old. I met him shortly after I learned to play. I started playing at the Vancouver City Chess Club and that's where I met him.

Counterplay: What was your first impression of him?

Duncan: Well, he was one of the leading players at that time. I think the Canadian Championship was the first time that we traveled together across the country by train ... I was fifteen years old. I saw a lot of Doctor Macskasy from that time on. I can't remember exactly when I met him. It was probably at the chess club.



Macskasy in play against Yanofsky in their December 1961 training match; on the left is Duncan Suttles, who had just turned sixteen two days before the match began.

Dobrilla: Duncan's mother said about Dr. Macskasy that he was a second father to Duncan.

Counterplay: Both in chess and mathematics?

Duncan: Chess, mathematics, stock markets, bridge, a few different areas. You know besides chess, one of his main interests was speculating in the stock market and he got me involved in that and eventually I became a stock broker. Also, I played bridge, but not very much.

Dobrilla: The news of his death was a tragedy. He would help people out, people like myself, he liked everyone.

Counterplay: Surely he must have had some bitter memories of Hungary.

Duncan: He had some. He would have had some bad things to say about certain political systems, but he was friends with almost everybody.

Counterplay: I gather from not only what you said, but also your tone, you felt quite close to him. Was he very supportive, kind and considerate not only to yourself and your wife but to others as well?

Duncan: I think he was, yes. He was very much involved in the chess arena, especially with the younger players. He would look after them and they would visit his house.

Dobrilla: You know Bruce Harper, when Bruce Harper was growing and learning to play chess he would visit the Doctor's house and play till late at night. He would drive Bruce home rather than let him walk home in the dark.

Duncan: He was the kind of person who had time for everybody but was never on time.

Dobrilla: That was a general joke. A lot of chess players grew up under his wing, Duncan, Peter Biyiasas, Bruce Harper, all those chess players grew up under his shadow and more or less he influenced every single one of them. I know he influenced Duncan.

Counterplay: In what sort of direction?

Dobrilla: A very positive direction. In chess, he would guide them. Duncan was left here (at the university) when his parents moved back to the United States. Macskasy would look after him like his own child. You know, he would try to look after him, make sure that he had at least one good meal a day, that he had clothes. He would buy Duncan clothes, just like his own child. In the first two years of our marriage, his wife would go to the Safeway to buy food for her family of five and would have another bag for a family of two, the two of us. Whatever she cooked for herself, she cooked for us. I mean you can't find that anywhere in the world. When he died, I lost a father for a second time, that's what I felt about it. And Duncan felt like he was his father too.

Counterplay: Was Dr. Macskasy involved in organizational efforts on a larger scale, was he involved in the CFC or the BCCF to any extent?

Duncan: I guess he was off and on, I don't know.

Counterplay: Were his efforts directed more towards individuals than, say, organizations?

Duncan: I would think so.

Dobrilla: Definitely.

Counterplay: Is there anything more you would like to say?

Duncan: I should say it was a pretty special relationship for me. He never would say no. He had a very wide circle of friends with different interests and he always seemed to manage to visit them and do things with different people. He was very active.

Dobrilla: To the last day. He never sat down, not for a minute. He still did, in the last day of his life, like he did years ago when I arrived. He was playing chess, he was still teaching at the university, he was collecting stamps, he was trading on the stock market, he lived everything to the fullest, he did not slow down, he lived his life full. He was happy. He was a very happy person.

Counterplay: That's a pretty full life.

Dobrilla: That's right. He met lots of American chess players. He played lots of them and entertained them at his house. Bobby Fischer visited him and Mark Taimanov.

Counterplay: Was that in 1971 during the Candidate's match?

Duncan: Yes, he was pretty well known around the world and respected.

Counterplay: As a player or as a host?

Dobrilla: Both, as a host and as a player. As a person generally.

Duncan: It will take a long time for us to get over it. It is not something your forget about in a day, in a year.

Dobrilla: When I met Duncan first and Duncan kept talking about Macskasy it took me about six months to realize that that wasn't his real father. And my family thought for a few years that was his real father.

Counterplay: How old was Dr. Macskasy?

Dobrilla: He was born in 1919. That makes him seventy-one. He was a stamp collector and had one of the best stamp collections in the world. He had stamps from around the world. I remember at one Olympiad in Europe he showed up at Customs with suitcases full of stamps. That caused some problems.

Duncan: We traveled to several Olympiads together. At one time I used to see him almost every day at the stock market. He used to come down there every day and talk about stocks and how they broke. I guess that was the only place where I sort of went into something that he didn't have much interest in - computers.

Counterplay: What was his professional field?

Duncan: He taught various types of mathematics. Some of it had to do with calculus, some of it with geometry. I know he never did get involved with computers or anything like that. I guess it was too impersonal to attract him.

Dobrilla: He tried, he came around to talk with Duncan about it to get a computer, but he never did. He believed in the human touch.

Duncan: It was the intuitive element, rather than the calculation that he liked. You know, play by feel.

Counterplay: So he was a player in the Emanuel Lasker mould?

Duncan: Yes. He was a player that would feel a good move and make it without too much thought to calculating all variations.

Counterplay: Your lives were really intertwined with Dr. Macskasy.

Dobrilla: I've never known Duncan to have a greater respect for anyone alive or greater feelings. Whenever Duncan needed something, he was there.

Duncan: Well, I guess the one thing that he taught me is to not take things too seriously. In other words, he was a person that was able to step back and see things without getting involved, you know, caught up. Playing the stock market... it had its ups and downs but it wouldn't bother him. And the same with chess ... I think that was a very valuable thing, and some players have never learned that.

[First published in *Counterplay*, June 1990]



Perez-Macskasy, 3rd Pan-American Championship, Santa Clara (Cuba), 1968

Bruce Harper:

Dr. Elod Macskasy had many friends who mourn his passing, and I count myself among them. The purpose of this article, though, is neither to praise nor to bury him, but rather to present to the reader a picture of Macskasy the chess player. In his case, as in almost all others, this is something quite different from Macskasy the person. It is customary, I suppose, to print a series of brilliant wins in such articles, but instead I present a personal view of Macskasy as an opponent. We played, as far as I can determine, sixteen tournament games. My lifetime score against Macskasy was two wins, five losses and nine draws. This doesn't count the first game we played, where I beat him (playing the Stonewall Dutch) in a simultaneous exhibition - I couldn't find the game, although I still have the trophy. Macskasy was many things to the chess players of this province. He was a star by which we could chart our progress. He was also an example to be followed, both as a person and a player. Elements of his style can be found not only in my games, but also in those of Suttles, Biyiasas, Berry and the others who made up the fragmented 'B.C. school of chess.' His play was richer and more creative than was sometimes thought. For me he was a difficult opponent. In the early years, of course, he was just better, although I had some surprising opportunities against him even then. Later, on paper, I was the favourite, but I had a tremendously hard time actually scoring the full point against him. This was partly psychological, but mainly because, as they say, he was a tough nut to crack. He may have realized his position was bad, or even lost, but you would never know it when you were playing him. For a player who always had trouble winning won positions, Macskasy was a challenge. The two games I did manage to win were brutal in their thoroughness - anything closer and he always managed to escape. When I conceived of this article, I didn't realize we played so many games. I also had forgotten how interesting and complex the games were, and how much of the struggle that is the best in chess can be seen in them.

Harper, Bruce - Macskasy, Elod [B70] B.C. Centennial op Nanaimo (3), 01.05.1971

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 Macskasy rarely played the Sicilian, and when he did he employed the Dragon variation. **6.Bc4 Bg7 7.Bb3?!** This is an inaccuracy which Black quickly exploits. It would have been interesting to see how Black would have fared in a main line theoretical duel, but since I didn't know the main line, that question will remain unanswered.

7...Nbd7! 8.Be3 a6 9.f3 Nc5 10.Qd2 Nxb3 11.Nxb3 It may be that 11...axb3 is better, keeping the knight in the centre. **11...b5 12.0-0?** This move is very suspect. The exchange of the bishop on b3 isn't the end of the world, but to exploit his lead in development, White must play aggressively. **12.Bh6 0-0 13.h4** is one way, and **12.0-0-0** is another. The move played leaves Black with a comfortable game because of the Bishop pair. **12...Bb7 13.a3 Rc8 14.Rad1 Qc7 15.Bd4 0-0 16.Rf2 Qb8** White has not committed an outright blunder, but his passive opening gives Black a chance to show his strength in a quiet, manoeuvring game. Black's plans are self-evident – he builds up pressure on the c-file and gradually opens the position for his bishops. It isn't so easy to see what White can do. **17.Re2 Rfd8** Threatening **18...e5** and **19...d5**. **18.Nd5 Bxd5 19.exd5 Re8** Black has given up one of his bishops, but still has good prospects. White's problem is his Knight on b3. Even if it gets to c6, this is not necessarily a stable outpost, because the pawn on d5 is artificially isolated and vulnerable. **20.Bc3 Rc4 21.Kf1** A strange move, but this position is hard to play. For example, **21.Na5** can be met by **21...Rxc3 22.Qxc3 Qb6+ 23.Kh1 Nxd5**, with more than enough for the exchange. Black now finds a creative and very strong manoeuvre.



21...Rh4! 22.g3 Rh5! 23.Bxf6 Bxf6 24.c3 The deployment of the rook from c4 to h5 had two ideas behind it. One was to force the exchange on f6, leaving Black with a good bishop against a bad knight. The other was to probe White's kingside and create weaknesses there, so that Black can attack on both sides of the board. The two ideas are related. **24...Qc8 25.Kg1 Qh3 26.Re4 Rc8 27.Qg2 Qd7** Naturally Black refuses to exchange Queens, as he intends to attack White's weakened Kingside. **28.f4 Qa7+ 29.Kh1 Qb7** Attacking the d-pawn - keep an eye on it. **30.Re3 Qb6 31.Red3 g5!** This sort of move is often missed, as it is only good

under certain circumstances. Those circumstances exist in this position - Black holds the initiative and has more active pieces on the Kingside. The idea is simple enough. Black wants to open the g-file and increase the pressure on White's King. **32.Nd2 Khg 33.g4 Rh6 34.f5** Keeping the kingside closed, but at the expense of further increasing the scope of Black's bishop. White was now in increasingly severe time trouble. **34...Be5 35.h3 Bf4 36.Nf3 Qb7 37.Nd4 Rc5 38.Nc6** Finally, but the Knight doesn't do all that much on c6. Now Black finds the sort of move that is hard to answer in a time scramble. **38 ... e5!** A psychological masterstroke. If White just ignores this move, the one weakness in Black's position, his backward e-pawn, is suddenly transformed into a protected passed pawn. The Knight at c6 is also cut off from d4 and the kingside, giving Black the possibility of **...Rh4** and **...h5**. **39.fxe6 fxe6 40.b4** An attempt to solve the problems on d5 by tactical means, but Black has seen this as well. **40...Rxd5 41.Na5 Rxh3+! 42.Rxh3 Rxd1# 0-1**

All told, a brilliant game by Macskasy. This was his best game against me, and impresses me still.

To return to the theme of Macskasy's place in Canadian chess history, I suspect that many players are unaware of his contribution to the "Suttles" (for want of a better term) style of play. There is little doubt that other B.C. players embarked on unusual and esoteric manoeuvres (such as Rc8-c4-h4-h5) more frequently, and sometimes for their own sake, than did Macskasy, but it would be

absolutely wrong to characterize his play as exclusively classical or technical. Macskasy had a strong creative streak, and while his results sometimes suffered because his optimism overrode the requirements of the position, this weakness was not the result of a routine approach to the game. It might be more accurate to say that a strong point in his character as a person sometimes proved to be inappropriate at the chessboard. I focus here, of course, on Macskasy's contributions to the development of B.C. chess as a chess player, not as an organizer or a person. Macskasy was not simply a very strong player who was necessary for the creation of a unique school of chess in the Hegelian sense - he was a member of that school in his own way. The preceding game, in my view, was a creative achievement by Macskasy and is very revealing as to his abilities and style. [First published in *Counterplay*, June 1990]

(Due to space restrictions a number of Macskasy's games can be found in the attached PGN file.)

UPCOMING EVENTS

UBC Thursday Night Blitz (note the change of format)

Thursdays, 6:30 pm, Henry Angus Building, University of British Columbia
Entry fee \$10+, depending on number of players and whether rated or not
Contact Aaron Cosenza, xramis1@yahoo.ca, or see <https://www.facebook.com/UBCChess>

2015 B.C. Active Championship

January 17-18, Vancouver Chess School
[Details](#)

6th UBCSUO Active Championship

January 24, Kelowna
[Details](#)

Vancouver West Open #3

January 24-25, Vancouver Chess School
[Details](#)

Knightmare January Quads

January 25, Burnaby
[Details](#)

International (Youth) Chess Jam

February 7, Ferndale, WA
[Details](#)

2015 B.C. Open

February 7-9, Richmond
[Details](#)

Knightmare February Quads

February 15, Burnaby
[Details](#)

Knightmare March Quads

March 8, Burnaby
[Details](#)

9th Grand Pacific Open

April 3-6, Victoria
[Details](#)

7th Bishops of Bowser Tournament

August 9, Bowser
[Details](#)