

# CHESSWATCH

A NEWS UPDATE FROM THE FRAMINGHAM CHESS CLUB

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## *CURDO AND EPP TIE IN MARK BOND CLASSIC*

John Curdo of North Billerica and Dr. Edward Epp of Weston each scored 4.5-0.5 to share first in the 2nd Mark Bond Classic, ending December 15 at the club. A six-way tie for third place at 4-1 included Alan Shaw of Somerville, Pat Walker of Newton, Rob Huntington of Wayland, Kirk Petty of Milford, Dave Ferreira of Watertown, and Sergey Spivakovsky of Concord; Huntington, Petty, Ferreira, and Spivakovsky were also equal first under 2000. William McAllister of Framingham and Svein Abrahamsen of Needham shared first under 1750 at 3-2, while Jody Overland of Framingham, also 3-2, won top honors under 1500. The tournament, the only weeknight Grand Prix event in New England, attracted a 58-player field, which is believed to be the largest turnout for a weeknight tournament in Massachusetts in over a decade.

The tournament was a holocaust for the higher-rated players; of the twelve players rated above 2000 (four Masters and eight Experts) only six finished with plus scores. Second-seeded Lou Mercuri of Newton (2303) lost to Mike Grant of Boston (1933) in the second round, Bijan Haririan of Maynard (2232) lost in rounds one and three to Abrahamsen (1621) and Mark Fins of Newton (1821), Drew Sarkisian of Oxford (2122) lost and drew to Ferreira (1945) and Michael Dreese of Newton (1778), James Matthews of Dedham (2040) lost in rounds two and three to Slawomir Luczak of Worcester (1764) and Overland (1390), and Bruce Downing of Foxboro (2102), after collecting his Challenge Cup trophy, was

## CALENDAR

### **January 30-31 (Saturday-Sunday):**

WEST SUBURBAN WINTER GRAND PRIX. A major regional Grand-Prix tournament with over \$1200 projected cash prizes. 4-SS in four sections: TL 50/2, 25/1. American Legion site. OPEN SECTION: EF \$25, prizes \$175-150-100 (guaranteed, 5 Grand Prix points), 4th \$85 (b/20), 5th \$65 (b/24), 1st Under 2200 \$50 (b/6). PREMIER SECTION (Under 2200): EF \$21, prizes \$125-75-50. AMATEUR SECTION (Under 1800): EF \$18, prizes \$100-60-40. RESERVE SECTION (Under 1500): EF \$16, prizes \$75-50-25. Second-third prizes in three lower sections based on 18-22 players per section. All EF \$5 more at site. Reg. 9:30-10 a.m., rds 11-4:30; 10-3:30. NS.

### **February 2 (Tuesday):**

TIME-HANDICAP SPEED TOURNAMENT. RR-format. 5-minute games with time-handicap of 1 min/100 rating points. EF \$2; all entries returned as prizes.

### **February 9, 16, 23 (Tuesdays):**

FEBRUARY OCTAGONAL. 3-SS in 8-12 player sections. EF: FCC members \$8; others \$12. 1st-2nd \$30-20 each section.

hammered by Henry Blackwell of Newton (1591). Meanwhile, several of the lower-rated players were having the tournament of their lives: notable was Overland (1390), who drew Fins (1821), defeated Menno Koning of Dover (1777), defeated Matthews (2040), drew Petty (1961), and was only stopped in the final round by Spivakovsky (1937). Abrahamsen

(1621) notched wins over Haririan (2232) and William G. Michael of West Bridgewater (1921), while Blackwell (1591) defeated Downing (2102) and Mike LeBlanc of Westboro (1835), and had a strong game against Ferreira (1945) before succumbing to the clock.

Indeed, even the eventual prizewinners had no easy path. After three rounds only five players had a perfect score: Curdo, Shaw, Ferreira, David Drumm of Framingham, and Brad Merrill of Westboro. Epp had slipped off the pace with a draw against Petty in the third round. In round four Shaw (2287) was dumped by Ferreira (1945), while Curdo (2473) barely salvaged a draw from Drumm (2026). Merrill had to take a half-point bye, so Ferreira, the fifteenth-seed, was the sole leader going into the final round. In the finale Curdo dispatched Ferreira to secure a share of first; later Epp downed Merrill to join him. Shaw defeated Drumm to advance to 4-1; Walker, Huntington, Petty, and Spivakovsky won respectively against Grant, Jorge Godoy of Framingham, John Fanning of Scituate, and Overland to squeeze into the winners' circle.

The annual tournament is named in honor of Mark Bond, the club's co-founder and first President.

#### *MATHESON CLINCHES 1987 SCORING TITLE*

A desperate last-round draw gave Bob Matheson of Natick 22.5 points in club weeknight tournaments in 1987 and clinched the club's 1987 Player-of-the-Year title. Matheson finished only a half-point ahead of Mike LeBlanc of Westboro in the annual competition, which goes to the player who compiles the most points in club weeknight tournament during the year. At the start of the Mark Bond Classic, Rob Huntington of Wayland, James Matthews of Dedham, and Dave Palmer of Sudbury were also contenders, but Matheson scored 2-1 in the early rounds of the final tournament to eliminate mathematically Huntington and Palmer, and push a full point ahead of LeBlanc. Matthews, who led the race for much of the year, self-destructed with two

back-to-back upset losses in the Mark Bond Classic, ending his bid for the title. Fate intervened in the next-to-last round, when LeBlanc had a minor auto accident and could not play; however, Matheson could not clinch the title, losing to Spivakovsky. In the final round, only a Matheson loss coupled with a LeBlanc win could bring the contestants even (LeBlanc would then have won the title on the tiebreak, based on percentage), and in the early hours of the final round exactly that scenario appeared to be unfolding. LeBlanc crushed Kent Townley of Marlboro in a game so hair-raising LeBlanc inquired whether the TD knew CPR. Meanwhile, Matheson's game against Leonard Arsenault of Leominster steadily deteriorated. However, in a late rally Matheson fought back to secure a draw and become the club's fifth Player of the Year. At 1745, Matheson was the lowest-rated player by nearly 200 points to win the coveted title; he said he hoped his victory would be an inspiration to the lower-rated members of the club.

#### *YOUNG DEALS THE "WILD CARD"*

Club champion Jack Young of Acton scored 3-0 to win the top section of the "Wild Card" Swiss, held December 22. The 30-sudden death tournament required the players to play openings drawn randomly from a deck of cards. Young, known for the depth (and imagination) of his opening play, defeated Dave Ferreira of Watertown (playing the Black side of a Polugaevsky Sicilian), Adam Ehrlich of Athol (Grunfeld Gambit), and Jorge Godoy of Framingham (Caro-Kann Fantasy Variation). Meanwhile, Svein Abrahamsen of Needham was mopping up the second section 3-0, winning against Richard Seltzer of West Roxbury (Boleslavsky Sicilian), William McAllister of Framingham (Nimzovitch Defense), and David Greenberg of Brighton (Anti-Meran Gambit). Jody Overland of Framingham cruised through the third section, picking some of the most swashbuckling cards: he won against David McGilvray of Southboro (Sicilian Dragon), Dominic Nocera of Watertown (King's Gambit--Kieseritsky), and Tony Costa of

Randolph (King's Gambit--Muzio).

### *DRUMM SURMOUNTS MATERIAL HANDICAP*

David Drumm of Framingham scored 3-0 in the championship finals to win the Material-Handicap Speed Tournament on December 29. In the 5-minute games of this tournament, the higher-rated player gave material odds averaging a pawn for every hundred rating points; thus Experts were giving rook odds to Class C players. Despite the odds, the higher-rated players generally finished on top; the exception was Bruce Biewald of Wayland--rated 1486, he won one preliminary section 8-1 (losing only to Lee Denis), with Dr. Edward Epp of Weston (2158) winning a playoff match against Mark Fins of Newton (1929) for the other playoff berth in that section, a point behind Biewald. Drumm (2026) and David Ferreira of Watertown (1949) tied at 7.5-1.5 atop the other prelim, edging Drew Sarkisian of Oxford (2145) by a half-point. In the finals Drumm (3-0) scored a clen sweep, ahead of Epp (2-1), Biewald (1-2), and Ferreira (0-3).

### *CURDO SURVIVES THE DAY AFTER*

Yes, chessplayers will show up for a tournament the morning after Christmas. John Curdo of North Billerica scored four straight wins to "Escape From the Tin Soldiers" on December 26. Kirk Petty of Milford finished clear second with 3.5-0.5, with Murray Turnbull of Weston, Stephen Brudno of Brookline, and Joseph DeVico of Arizona equal third at 3-1. Curdo defeated DeVico and Brudno in the last two rounds; earlier Brudno had dented Turnbull. Kirk Companion of Wellesley and Christopher Shea of Melrose scored 2.5-1.5 to share first under 1700. The TD kept busy trying not to pair the three brothers Hess against each other; they stayed together in the same score group until the final round. Former Chess Horizons editor Frank Niro of Watertown showed he still studies his former magazine, replaying exactly on an unsuspecting Andre Saint-Louis of Longmeadow an opening

innovation analyzed by IM Patrick Wolff in the most recent issue. The last-Saturday-in-December tournament, a tradition at the club, attracted 26 masochists.

### *CLUB ELECTIONS IN FEBRUARY*

The annual election of club officers will be conducted by mail ballot during February, with the term of new Board of Directors to begin with the club's Annual Meeting the first week in March. The club officers include President, Vice-President, Program Director, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, and several Members-at-Large. If you are interested in placing your name on the ballot for any of these positions, or have any questions, immediately contact Warren Pinches or Jack Martin. Deadline for nominations is February 10.

### *SAVE MONEY ON YOUR USCF DUES*

One of the least-exercised benefits of club membership is the option to renew your USCF membership through the club at a discount. Regular membership, usually \$25, is \$21 through the club, while Junior membership, \$12 direct, is \$10 through the club. There are no discounts for other categories. This savings alone represents one-sixth of your annual club dues! Also, in renewing through the club you immediately get a receipt which serves as a temporary membership card--if you wanted to pay in a tournament before you got your new membership card from the USCF, you might otherwise have trouble proving that your USCF membership was current. If your USCF membership is due for renewal any time soon, contact Warren Pinches.

*THE NEXT MAJOR WEEKEND TOURNAMENT:  
THE WEST SUBURBAN WINTER GRAND PRIX  
JANUARY 30-31  
AT THE FRAMINGHAM CHESS CLUB*

FRAMINGHAM CHESS CLUB

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