

Nomination of Jack Yoos for the MN Chess Hall of Fame

by Joe Longen

On a Tuesday night in 1977, Jack Yoos walked into the Granite City Chess Club on the SCSU campus and started his journey to becoming one of the greatest chess players in Minnesota History. At the Granite City Chess Club Jack learned a 19th century style, playing open positions and gambits. Ever after, he always maintained a fondness for the romantic style.

His first rated game was in 1979 at the popular Resorters tourney in Alexandria. His progress was fast, aided by playing in the 1982 U.S. Open. After constantly finishing behind Mike Zelkind and Tim Radermacher for scholastic state titles, he became 1987 Minnesota State High School Co-Champion with Mike Zelkind.

From there he made the Minnesota Closed Playoffs seven times (1987, 1990-1994, 1998), and shared the MN State Closed Championship with Ed Zelkind in 1990.

His hard work and dedication were legendary. At 17 he reached master and later became a Life Master and FIDE Master. Overall, his highest USCF rating was 2473, and his highest FIDE rating was 2405.

During this time, Jack was one of the most active players in the state. He played in all the major events, and won the Minneapolis Open (1991, 1992), Castle Chess Club Championship (1989, 1991), Aqua Open (1989, 1992), Winter Carnival (1988, 1993), Minnesota Open (1990, 1993, 1994), Glacier Vending (1994), Winter FIDE event (1998) St. Cloud Open (1986, 1991), Region VI (1986), Sinclair Lewis Open (1986), and the MN Junior Championship (1989). Jack also was a great team player. One team won the 1989 State team championship held in St. Cloud. Another team had super results late 1980s and early 1990s in the Twin Cities Chess League (TCCL): "The Team that Jack Built" and "Don't feed the Animals." Yet his greatest accomplishments may have been playing for the University of Minnesota Team at the Pan American tourney. This he did four times: 1987, 1989, 1991, and 1992. In 1991 the team took 3rd place. The 1992 Team won it all with Jack scoring 4.5/6 on first board. That team was so strong:

Board	Player	Record
1	Jack Yoos	4.5/6
2	Leonard Johnson	4.5/6
3	Bill Harrison	6.0/6
4	Brian Campbell	5.5/6
Total		20.5/24

Several times he played in the famous Minnesota vs. Manitoba/North Dakota match (1984, 1986, 1991, 1992). The 1986 match against North Dakota featured the young Jack Yoos vs. the legend Stephen Popel in a tense game that ended in a draw.

Next, we move on to Canada.

His aggressive style gained him some amazing results. Twice the Manitoba Champion (1995, 1997). Five times the British Columbia Closed Champion (2003, 2004, 2005, 2009, 2010). Winner of the British Columbia Open (2011). Tied for 3rd three times in the Canadian Open (1994, 2009, 2010). But equally amazing is his six-time winning or tying for first in the Keres Memorial tourney held in Vancouver (1999, 2002, 2005, 2009, 2010, 2012).

The Keres tourney result is most fitting, since the playing style of Jack Yoos is, when compared to any other Minnesota player, most similar to the late Paul Keres.

Due to these great chess results, Jack Yoos was included in the Canadian Chess History page.

Jack displayed his team spirit again by playing on the Canadian Olympic team in 2000. In one of his matches, he defeated the 4th board of Yugoslavia! Overall, he had a 2-3 record against players with an average rating of 2434.

In addition to all these tourneys, he played at Biel, Gausdal, Lloyds Bank (where he won the 2nd Junior Prize), Budapest, Stockholm, and Reykjavik.

Jack has a great lifetime score against Ims. His first IM win was against IM Vaidyanathan Ravikumar in 1990, and his first GM win was against GM Rosendo Balinas in 1994. Some of the other greats Jack has had the chance to battle with include GM Hikaru Nakamura, GMPentla Harikrishna, and Leinier Dominguez.

For ten years, he was rated in the top 10 in Canada, with his highest rank being 4th, and his peak Canadian rating was 2483.

Two last things:

1. Jack Yoos put pressure on the opponent with the first move.
2. Jack believes the most amazing aspect of chess is the beautiful aesthetic quality of chess.

I highly recommend Jack Yoos for the Minnesota Chess Hall of Fame.